

# **English Language Learning Through Social Media Platforms**

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Final International University  
February 2024  
Girne, North Cyprus

# **English Language Learning Through Social Media Platforms**

by

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A thesis submitted to the Institute of Graduate Studies  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Art  
in  
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**FINAL INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**APPROVAL**

Title: English Language Learning through Social Media Platforms

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*To my mother and father  
for their love and support.*

## **ETHICAL DECLARATION**

I, Dariya Tulenova, hereby, declare that I am the sole author of this thesis and it is my original work. I declare that I have followed ethical standards in collecting and analyzing the data and accurately reported the findings in this thesis. I have also properly credited and cited all the sources included in this work.

Dariya Tulenova

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper examines students' viewpoints about using social media in English language instruction. Additionally, this study investigated how teachers can use computers, mobile devices, and the Internet to assess student learning methods, which will help them better understand how to teach students in the context of English language learning through social media platforms. The study aims to establish the connection between social media exposure and incidental English language learning. As time progresses, technological advancements become necessary parts of our daily lives. It is natural that due to daily exposure to a high amount of Internet, one could wonder if social media resources could be used in learning and teaching. In this regard, the study employed a mixed method comprising both quantitative and qualitative data. The questionnaire was used for quantitative data, while the main instrument of qualitative data gathering was student interviews. The findings concluded that most students were interested in using social media to improve their English language skills. These results also suggest that using social media platforms and embracing new technologies and tools has significantly impacted the academic performance of English language learners. Finally, the study highlights the negative and positive aspects of implementing social media networks for English language learning. Additionally, entertainment is the primary motivation for students to use social media resources to improve their English language skills.

**Keywords:** social media, English language learning, Final International University.



## ÖZ

Bu tez, öğrencilerin İngilizce öğretiminde sosyal medya kullanımına ilişkin görüşlerini incelemektedir. Ayrıca, bu çalışma öğretmenlerin öğrencilerin öğrenme yöntemlerini değerlendirmek için bilgisayarları, mobil cihazları ve interneti nasıl kullanabileceklerini araştırmıştır; bu da öğretmenlerin sosyal medya platformları aracılığıyla İngilizce öğrenimi bağlamında öğrencilere nasıl öğreteceklerini daha iyi anlamalarına yardımcı olabilecektir. Araştırma, sosyal medyaya maruz kalma ile tesadüfi İngilizce dil öğrenimi arasındaki bağlantıyı kurmayı amaçlamaktadır. Zaman ilerledikçe, teknolojik gelişmeler günlük hayatımızın gerekli parçaları haline gelmektedir. Günlük olarak yüksek miktarda internete maruz kalınması nedeniyle, sosyal medya kaynaklarının öğrenme ve öğretmede kullanılıp kullanılmayacağını merak edilmesi doğaldır. Bu bağlamda, bu araştırmada hem nicel hem de nitel verilerden oluşan karma bir yöntem kullanılmıştır. Anket, nicel verileri toplamak için kullanılırken, nitel veri toplamanın ana aracı da öğrenci görüşmeleri olmuştur. Bulgular, çoğu öğrencinin İngilizce dil becerilerini geliştirmek için sosyal medyayı kullanmakla ilgilendiği sonucuna varmıştır. Bu sonuçlar ayrıca, sosyal medya platformlarını kullanmanın ve yeni teknolojileri ve araçları benimsemenin İngilizce öğrenenlerin akademik performansını önemli ölçüde etkilediğini göstermektedir. Son olarak, araştırma, İngilizce öğrenimi için sosyal medya ağlarının uygulanmasının olumsuz ve olumlu yönlerini vurgulamaktadır. Ek olarak, öğrencilerin İngilizce dil becerilerini geliştirmek için sosyal medya kaynaklarını kullanmalarında birincil motivasyonun eğlence olduğu sonucuna varmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sosyal medya, İngilizce dil öğrenimi, Uluslararası Final Üniversitesi.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
ETHICAL DECLARATION .....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	vii
ABSTRACT .....	viii
ÖZ.....	ix
LIST OF TABLES .....	xii
LIST OF APPENDICES .....	xiii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....	xiv
CHAPTER 1 .....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Problem Statement .....	1
1.2 Purpose of the Study.....	14
1.3 Significance of the Study.....	14
1.4 Research Questions and Hypotheses .....	14
1.5 Assumptions .....	15
1.6 Limitations.....	16
1.7 Definition of Key Terminology.....	16
CHAPTER 2.....	17
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	17
2.1 Social Media.....	18
2.1.1 Theoretical framework.....	20
2.2 Social Media and language learning.....	28
2.3 Social Media’s role in education.....	31
2.3.1 Problems with Social Media.....	35
2.4 Social Media and Second Language Learning .....	36
2.5 Previous Studies Findings Comparison.....	40
CHAPTER 3.....	45
METHODS.....	45

3.1 Research Design .....	45
3.2 Population and Sampling.....	46
3.3 Instruments and Procedures of Data Collection .....	47
3.4 Data Analysis Procedures.....	48
CHAPTER 4.....	50
DATA ANALYSIS RESULTS.....	50
4.1 Quantitative Analysis of Gathered Data.....	50
4.1.1 Analysis of the Access to ICT Tools.....	50
4.1.2 Analysis of the Students’ Abilities Regarding Social Media Use.....	51
4.1.3 Analysis of the Students’ Motives for Using Social Media.....	52
4.1.4 Analysis of the Students’ Perspective on the Use of Social Media.....	54
4.2 Qualitative Analysis and Discussion of Conducted Interviews .....	57
4.2.1 Social Media Platforms.....	57
4.2.2 Students’ Point of View on Social Media Platforms’ Efficacy.....	59
4.2.3 Conditions and Time-Frequency of Students When They are Learning English through Social Media.....	61
4.2.4 Disadvantages of Using Social Media for Learning English.....	63
CHAPTER 5.....	66
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS .....	66
5.1 Conclusions and Discussions.....	66
5.2 Implications and Recommendations.....	70
REFERENCES.....	73
APPENDICES.....	88

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Frequency and average use of ICT tools.....	50
Table 2: Frequency, and average on the respondents' ability to use social media .. <b>Error! Bookmark not defined.1</b>	
Table 3: Frequency, and an average of the elements influencing the usage of social media..... <b>Error! Bookmark not defined.2</b>	<b>Er</b>
Table 4: Frequency, and average on the respondents' perceptions of the usage of the English language while utilizing Social Media.....	54
Table 5: Social Media Platforms.....	57
Table 6: Students' Point of view on Social Media platforms' efficacy.....	59
Table 7: Conditions and time-frequency of students when they are learning English through Social Media.....	61
Table 8: Disadvantages of using Social Media for learning English.....	63

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

APPENDIX A. Survey Questionnaire.....	87
APPENDIX B. Questions for Interviews.....	95
APPENDIX C. Ethics Committee Approval Document.....	96

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALN	Asynchronous Language Learning
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CMC	Computer-mediated communication
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language
FIU	Final International University
FRAME	The Framework for the Rational Analysis of Mobile Education
H	Hypothesis
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
L2	Second Language
RQ	Research Question
SNS	Social Networking Service
SPSS	Statistical Product and Service Solutions
TLC	Teachable Language Comprehender

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the research questions, as well as the assumptions, limitations, and definitions of key terms used in the study.

### 1.1 Problem Statement

It is not a secret that technology is of utmost importance in the modern educational environment. As time goes by, it becomes a more significant possibility that learners and educators alike will move on from paper-based tools and integrate technological tools exclusively in their professional activities. We live in the age of technological advancement, and it is no wonder that social media platforms have become the routine of our everyday lives. We could go as far as to say they have become our daily necessities to access world news or information. Social media platforms like TikTok, YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook all carry characteristics of use for entertainment, education, business, marketing, and advertisement around the world but not everyone is aware that they could be used for second language learning. Learning through social media in the framework of ESL could bring significant change as young people and children spend their time on social media platforms to a great extent.

Through Information and Communication Technology (ICT), students' ability to communicate in English can be significantly improved (Khaloufi & Laabidi, 2017). It has grown in acceptance in the current technology era and has become a noteworthy information, communication, and knowledge-sharing source (Ozdamli & Ozdal, 2015). It

can be argued that ICT has been used more commonly than ever, especially in the last decade (Fraillon et al., 2020). One of the most significant ICT platforms for communication is social media. In our technologically advanced age, people may communicate their ideas and opinions with friends, family, coworkers, classmates, and teachers easily from a distance or other time- and space-related obstacles (Charlesworth, 2014). It was already established that young people use social media platforms for various reasons like communication, popularity, and, to a lesser extent, English language learning.

Chou (2014) states that social media platforms share qualities like interaction, platform quality, and a method for information sharing, which may allow students to have various options. For instance, they can connect with and become friends with people from every location, city, and nation. Students can use social media sites like Instagram to access images and videos on the state of the world from various countries. Social media allows students to quickly update their knowledge about events in their environment than other media, such as newspapers. These features could create a potential for their use in language teaching.

If English language use was confined to a classroom setting before, now using this second language is an everyday routine. Through Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter, students get introduced to an array of colors of the English language, be it humoristic and simplistic or complex scientific terms. The utilization of the English language is much simpler and more accessible than before.

As time passed, technological devices became increasingly integrated into traditional classroom settings. Gikas and Grant (2013) state that mobile devices and social media enable students to work together in an academic setting, access course material, and interact with instructors despite being geographically isolated. Social media platforms



offer excellent potential for e-learning. Social media allows students to participate in different educational mediums and may reach them outside of traditional classroom settings. It links in-classroom lesson time and free time outside the classroom. During the coronavirus pandemic, social media and computer devices took an even more significant role, as during quarantine, the lessons were held purely remotely and with the help of technology. E-learning allows students to conduct research inside a classroom and helps them gather information not in the books. The use of web-based tools could also reduce the use of paper. According to the study conducted by Alsaif (2016), 38% of students agreed, and 16.6% strongly agreed that social media has a positive effect on learning; 40% disagreed, and 4.7% strongly disagreed that using social media is helpful for study purposes. Social media use in higher education demonstrates how mobile computing devices give occasions for cooperation, connection, and instant connectedness.

It is essential to dwell on various factors that contribute to language learning and understand how social media has characteristics that are relevant to these factors. Children with the right learning environment can learn new languages quickly and fluently, just like a native speaker. The active process of language acquisition begins at birth and continues throughout one's entire life. Students learn language when interacting with family and friends, communicating their ideas, emotions, and experiences, and trying to comprehend and organize their surroundings.

One of the most significant factors in second language learning is motivation. Richards et al. (1985) assert that motivation shapes a person's willingness to achieve anything. Of course, students who are motivated tend to do better than students who aren't. Gardner and Lambert (1972) studied the relationship between attitudes and motivations in SLA. They aimed to describe "attitude" as the "persistence shown by the

learner in striving for a goal” (Ellis, 1985, p. 117) and motivation as "the learner's overall goal or orientation" (Lightbown & Spada., 2000, p. 56). They distinguish between two types of motivators: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivators come from an inherent source to meet an intrinsic need or interest. External motivation is when motivation is provided by or under the control of others. It is not uncommon to see students lose motivation throughout their classes. There may be, however, ways to arouse and maintain their motivation. Social media can be among such ways to tap into students’ motivation. For example, Enginkaya and Yılmaz (2014), as cited in Krol and Zdonek (2020), looked into the factors influencing social media use. Five main incentive elements were found through exploratory and confirmatory analyses: brand connection, exploration, conversation, opportunity seeking, and entertainment. Given the reasons for social media use, connections can be made to the language learning experience. For instance, it could foster motivation for interaction with English language speakers or be presented with entertainment in the English language, which also helps to develop English language knowledge to some degree. It is also evident that most students use social media with no external force but use it because they enjoy the experience. This is why using social media in language teaching can potentially motivate language learners.

Another effective factor influencing language learning is self-confidence and self-esteem, which are prerequisites for success in many endeavors. According to Coopersmith (1967, as cited in Brown, 1994, p. 137), self-esteem was described as “the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains about himself; it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which an individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful and worthy” and social environment of a classroom could be a factor for some students to lose self-esteem or a challenging

space for those who already have low self-esteem. Thus, social media may increase self-esteem and capability for such students. Because interaction in social media usually goes through the screen monitor of a computer or mobile device, students with self-esteem and anxiety issues could feel relaxed as they are not interacting with a person face-to-face. With that, they can lower their worries about giving the wrong impression about their personality. Social media may also help such students in ways that indirectly influence their learning experience. For example, through YouTube videos, students may find mental health resources that are hard to access in the real world without stigma. They may effortlessly and comfortably seek resources to manage their issues concerning anxiety, self-esteem, and the like. Anxiety is another significant personality trait that influences language proficiency.

According to Brown (1994, p. 141), anxiety is a mental condition connected with “feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, and worry.” Social media may lower the anxiety that comes with making the wrong impression on others (O’Day & Heimberg, 2021). Motivation to learn a language is the driving force that compels us to study foreign languages, but for students, it may not be clear why it is so necessary for them to gain insight into the grammatical workings of a second language, they simply do not see any use in it and thus, they lack enthusiasm. But social media could subconsciously inspire them to want to learn English, as the means of communication between foreign friends or to help them understand the latest trends and news or just use it for entertainment purposes.

Learning styles refer to various hypotheses and approaches that explain how people learn differently (Coffield et al., 2004). A person's learning style is how they prefer to take in, process, understand, and retain information. The cornerstone learning styles are

tactile, aural, kinesthetic, and visual (Cherry, 2019). Flash cards are best for visual learners, who like to organize and articulate their concepts using diagrams, charts, and other visual elements. On the other hand, the auditory learner likes to listen to the class, discuss, debate, and remember information through audiobooks and auditory activities. Tactile learners are receptive to learning through touch and movement. They actively seek ways to participate in writing, model-building, and demonstration activities. Kinesthetic learners are hands-on learners and use their whole body to learn. They express concepts through gestures. Some learners may not always find experiences that match their learning styles in traditional learning environments and methodologies. However, tools like social media can add experiences to the spectrum of activities to address such learners. For example, learning English through social media is especially favorable for visual and aural learners, as they could visually increase their vocabulary or aural skills through audio or video communications with English speakers (e.g., using WhatsApp).

According to Krashen (1977), comprehensible input is a teaching method where language acquisition occurs only if messages are understood. Krashen states it is not enough to educate at any level of difficulty; a student's input must be comprehensible. To put it another way, the curriculum must actively engage a child at their current level and gently advance them up the learning curve through educational activities. If the topic seems complicated, the learner may feel "shut down" and have problems participating in the session. It is crucial to ensure pupils believe they can go to the next level of learning if you want to ensure their motivation to learn. Because of that, social media could allow them to feel at ease and partially comprehend language at the level they are comfortable with. On the other hand, there is another point of view from Long (1985), who considers

that meaningful conversational interaction encourages comprehensible input (Long, 1985), which social media provides.

Constructivism is an approach to education that teaches that human beings do not acquire knowledge and understanding through the natural transmission of knowledge. Instead, human beings acquire knowledge by combining what they already know (previous knowledge) with new insight and knowledge acquired through experience and social interaction. Interaction and communication are primary tools of learning and process thought. Knowledge can only be received with active verbal input and output. According to several constructivist theorists (Bruner, 1966; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978), learning is a social thing that happens when people talk and exchange information. Ajjan and Hartshorne (2008) further highlight that Web 2.0 tools offer communication and information exchange spaces to support the networks required for social and active learning. Social media technologies could enhance classroom instruction by giving the students an engaging, cooperative, and communicative learning experience through an online medium they are already familiar with.

Children communicate with sounds, gestures, eye contact, and facial emotions from the moment they are born. They cannot comprehend their significance until their caregivers consistently respond to these sounds and actions. Kids start actively communicating nonverbal messages when they gradually realize that these messages affect other individuals. When an adult reply to a child's message, whether vocal or nonverbal, and the child does the same, an interaction begins. These early back-and-forth conversations also ground a child's subsequent discussions. Since children learn languages through dialogues in ordinary settings and activities, the more opportunities a child has to interact with adults, the more opportunities he has to speak and learn the language. The

same train of thought and method of acquiring language could be used on older learners, such as university students.

In recent years, learning about how students interact in language classes has become one of the top research topics in teaching. This is all thanks to the work of Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky. According to the Vygotskian sociocultural theory (Hall & Walsh, 2002), learning a language is a social activity in which kids gain information by being guided and scaffolded by more experienced peers or teachers. Language classes are critical social activities that students engage in to build social skills, language knowledge, and self-esteem as competent language users (Luk & Lin, 2007).

To sum it up, social media positively influences some factors such as motivation, comprehensible input, self-esteem, anxiety, and communication, and could be described as Internet-based tools based on user-generated content and carry out the foundations of Web 2.0 within themselves.

Other positive aspects and outcomes of employing ICT in English language participation exist. Increased student involvement is one of them, and it is the main benefit of using technology in the classroom. Technology frequently increases students' involvement with the course materials, teachers, and other students (Online Learning Consortium, 2016). Additionally, according to Seaman and Tinti-Kane (2013), social media, mainly digital communications, had a favorable influence on faculty-student interactions 78.9% of the time. This illustrates that social media may be utilized effectively for purposes other than just enhancing participation, such as improving communication. Social media could increase motivational factors as the students associate learning and education with entertainment and various exciting activities, making the learning process entertaining.

Learning through social media also facilitates active participation in the classroom instead of being passive receivers of knowledge in a traditional classroom environment through lectures, as their self-worth decreases, they begin actively participating in the transmission of comprehensible input and move on to a higher level of knowledge. As they become responsible for their learning process, they begin to foster characteristics of autonomy and independence. Social media assists in enhancing students' academic performance and knowledge through data and information gathering. Students consult multiple websites to learn more and develop solutions when assigned various projects.

Building a social network is essential because it has been proven to improve mental health and overall well-being, particularly during periods of social isolation. By overcoming distance and time obstacles, students can interact with others with similar interests. This could be very helpful for minority adolescents who might have a hard time finding individuals who are similar to them. When students practice oral skills with native speakers and receive immediate feedback, there could be an occurrence of a rich cultural interchange between students and the people they interact with, which may give them a clearer perception of the culture and traditions of other nations. By interacting with them, students may develop insight into the history of words and the context they apply.

In the traditional classroom setting, students cannot understand why specific words should be applied in the proper context. Indeed, the attempt at creating authentic interaction between peers could be considered, but through social media, students already engage in an actual conversation with native speakers. For example, Slim and Hafedh (2019) conducted a research study involving two different students' groups. While one group used the Facebook social network in their tertiary-level language classrooms, the other was exposed to language instruction through more conventional in-class activities.

Results revealed that the group that utilized Facebook in a controlled, goal-oriented manner performed twice as well in the classroom as the group that received traditional in-class instruction. Although the authors noted that a closer examination revealed that the less prepared students showed a more significant improvement in their reading and speaking skills, both groups had been tested by an initial test for their L2 level. This led Slim and Hafedh to conclude that while integrating social media into the curriculum did not improve students' linguistic abilities, it boosted their motivation. One of the reasons social media platforms are excellent tools for L2 acquisition is that they have unlimited access to interaction with people of vastly different ethnic backgrounds.

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) tools such as email, chats, and blogging allow students to communicate with L2-born speakers of the target language without barriers such as time or distance. These tools enable unconscious learning without limiting itself to time constraints that exist within conventional classrooms. According to Saud et al. (2020) and Robb (2020), there was an increase in internet use during the last few years, but an even bigger increase happened after the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Taylor & Silver (2019), smartphone and tablet availability has increased dramatically, with a median of 76% of people owning a smartphone, while the overwhelming majority of 94% of people own mobile phones. The majority of users, roughly under the age of 35, owned technological devices, and there is evidence that these numbers are slowly rising. The study confirms the arising perceptions that this digitalized world is primarily popular among teens and young adults. It familiarizes them with the fast second language acquisition that may not be entirely grammatically or linguistically right but still helps them practice their language skills almost daily. After all, the mother



language is learned naturally only because the learners are constantly surrounded by native speakers and gain information about the language through dialogue.

Social media is one of the biggest motivators for learning a second language. The fact that multiple exchanges can be held synchronously as well as asynchronously shows that learners are participating in a dynamic exchange in which by associating language learning with simple and fun activities, students could lower their affective filter and begin approaching the English language with a bigger drive and enthusiasm, where they are motivated to be able to articulate their thoughts properly. Social media platforms may only be helpful if the students feel they need help understanding some words or grammar rules, it could also make them seek additional sources to improve their language skills within context of EFL (English as a foreign language) and communicate with foreign friends on, for example, Twitter or Facebook.

Manca and Ranieri (2016) stress that it still needs to be determined whether and why faculty members do or do not use these tools in their educational performances, despite assurances to the contrary about the positive qualities they would offer for the improvement of education and the professional workforce. In the study of Cuban (2001), about work on the implementation of modern technology in education, it was discovered that there is no apparent connection between the use of advanced technology for individual and professional use and their use for instruction or teaching. It was revealed educators mostly used these technologies for academic discipline, not to deliver education. The study by Cuban (2001) further highlights that numerous studies have documented the benefits that social media can offer for classroom instruction and student learning (Brady et al., 2010, Junco, 2012, Mbatha, 2014, Sadaf et al., 2012); as well as the

drawbacks or issues that can be problematic (Bennett et al., 2012; Hew & Cheung, 2013; Selwyn, 2012).

Many academics take a critical stance (James, 2014; Kirschner and Karpinski, 2010; Paul et al., 2012) or warn against the potential conflicts that could arise if participatory activities connected to social media are included in formal contexts of learning (Crook, 2012; Merchant, 2012). Ajjan and Hartshorne (2008) assert that most educators have positive views on incorporating social media tools into teaching. Still, the study highlights how only a few teachers planned to use them. Manca and Ranieri (2016) concluded that the main barriers cited were limited compatibility with present techniques and perceived usefulness. Rogers-Estable (2014) found out that teachers report that social media usage does not correspond to highlighted benefits and that the use of ICT in education is obstructed by extrinsic aspects (time, assistance, and training) as opposed to intrinsic (beliefs, motivation, and confidence). On the other hand, younger teachers are more likely to use social media during their lessons than older professors, according to a 2012 study by Moran et al., which showed that age is a factor. This study discovered that seniority influences the adoption of social media, with younger faculty members (those under 35) using it far more frequently than more experienced and older professors.

Ajjan and Hartshorne (2008) and Greenhow and Askari (2015) consider faculty members' reluctance to include social media networking sites (SNS) in their classes as one of the critical barriers to their use in education. In addition, Sobaih et al. (2016) noted other factors, such as a lack of institutional support for faculty members using SNS in higher education and issues with privacy and control loss. Akçayır (2017) investigated that teachers are motivated to use SNS in educational settings because social media platforms are suitable mediums for quick and efficient communication and practical

document sharing, as well as they offer the possibility to contact students anywhere and anytime. Overall, Akçayır (2017) concluded that security concerns are one main factor that limits teachers' use of social media for educational purposes. Some academic staff members might not know how to handle this complexity or may not want to waste their time looking into and modifying these settings.

The study done by Bıyıkoğlu (2017) revealed that among students of North Cyprus, there is a belief that student-generated social media content is more effective than that produced by universities. Final International University is an institutional academy of higher knowledge in North Cyprus, Girne. Its environment is student-focused, multicultural, safe, secure, and hospitable. Each classroom has one big interactive board that is used to record lectures and lessons. Final is one of the busiest publishers of books and magazines in Turkey. The overwhelming majority of the students use social media in and outside the classroom. According to Anderson (2018), students have access to smartphones in 95% of cases, and 45% of them report being online almost constantly. The rise in popularity of social media has altered, to a great degree, how individuals exchange information and converse online. As a byproduct of this popularity, companies now frequently use social media platforms for advertising their goods and services, raising brand recognition, and interacting with clients, while teaching professionals use building interest in social media to try to incorporate new web-based teaching techniques with their traditional in-class lectures. Still, multiple factors contribute to the limitation of the effectiveness of the utilization of social media in education.

## **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

This research aims to understand EFL students' opinions about social media use in language instruction, focusing on how teachers could use a computer and mobile-assessed learning could significantly improve our understanding of how such massive and widespread technological instruments could help us to develop approaches to students within the social media platforms context.

## **1.3 Significance of the Study**

After researching, one could conclude that the studies concerning this research topic were not investigated. Based on that, this study may be significant as it is one of the first research papers on the link between social media use and language acquisition in North Cyprus. The findings of this study may shed some light on how students' perceptions about acquiring English language skills through social media platforms, especially considering how much young adults spend time on the Internet.

Furthermore, the study offers several positive and negative effects of implementing social media platforms during the lessons. This study may increase public understanding and appreciation of integrating technological devices for language learning. This study may raise awareness of the role of mobile and computer devices in education. The study also offers information on several less-known educational theories, which could be helpful in the development of teachers' lesson plans.

## **1.4 Research Questions and Hypotheses**

This research aims to examine how students at Final International University are using online media to learn English. In order to accomplish this, the following questions were sought:

RQ1: What is the average amount of time FIU students spend on social media?

RQ2: How much exposure to English through social media is useful for FIU students?

RQ3: Does such exposure afford incidental language learning at all, if any?

RQ4: Is there a relationship between the use of social media and language learning?

RQ5: How does the international context of FIU affect the students' exposure to English?

After taking a thorough view on multiple articles dedicated to the subject material, the research presents following hypotheses that were developed on par with the research questions, because these ideas bring interesting viewpoints on the whole opinion of using modern technology to study languages:

H1: Incidental learning of the English language may happen after certain exposure to social media and Internet.

H2: The students mostly seek ways to entertain themselves when using social media.

H3: Social media is a useful and productive tool of learning English language.

## **1.5 Assumptions**

One of the key findings of this study is that students spend more time on social media and are welcomed with more English on social media platforms. The following assumption is that time spent on web-based social applications could lead to incidental English language learning and it could establish a link between learning a language and social media use.

## **1.6 Limitations**

The study possesses some limitations. The study was held solely within the territory of Final International University and because of that may not apply to the students of the English Language Teaching faculties of the other universities of North Cyprus. The other limitation is the small sample size of reported data, consisting of 100 people. For example, North Cyprus' population, consisting of 326000 people, may not reflect the generalized view of social media's advantages in English language learning. Thus, insufficient sample size may hinder the statistical findings' viewpoints. There was also the factor of having limited literature on the research topic, as not many research papers were investigating the role of social media in language acquisition.

## **1.7 Definition of Key Terminology**

**Social media:** Internet sites and programs that focus on communication, community, engagement, sharing, and collaboration between people online (Kietzmann et al., 2011).

**English as a Second Language:** The use of English by native speakers of other languages or the study of the English language by non-native speakers (Nordquist, 2019).

**Information and Communication Technology:** A group of technological resources and tools used to generate, store, distribute, and exchange information (Murray, 2011).

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter discusses the related literature on the boundaries of the study based on the research problem and the research questions discussed in Chapter 1. It synthesizes and summarizes the questions related to the utilization of social media tools within the academic research process. It emphasizes the student behaviors, adoptions, and attitudes to utilize social media tools in academic research.

The English language's emergence as the world's lingua franca can be attributed to television, radio, big-screen cinema, and later, the internet. Not a day goes by without people all across the globe surfing the internet for information and entertainment. In addition, they all check popular social media platforms and websites designed as interactive devices of communal activity between people across the Globe. These global virtual communication tools bring together people from different ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds.

As our society progresses, students' inner motivation to learn foreign languages expands and they start trying to facilitate communicative interactions with others. This holds especially true for those students who speak languages with such a small scope of use that they are not even registered as eligible for usage in the international communicative sphere. This drives students to try to build their English linguistic capabilities, as the English language seems desirable for all foreign students since this is the most widespread language in the world.

It is possible to theorize that by enhancing their level of English language, foreign students begin to actively participate in interactions and this inner drive may take their curiosity to learn even more foreign languages. The study by Namaziandost and Nasri (2019) found that the utilization of social media platforms for education and learning has led to significant improvement in the ability of learners to study foreign languages stress-free and at their convenience.

## **2.1 Social Media**

According to Kietzmann et al. (2011), social media are internet-based technologies that create interactive virtual platforms through which individuals of specific web communities can form, discuss, and modify user-generated content. To put it in easier-to-understand terms, it is the use of modern technologies to facilitate the exchange of information among users who also produce the content meant for sharing. According to Kemp (2023) and the article "Digital 2023: Global Overview Report", over 4.7 billion people, or almost 60% of the global population, use social media daily. Global Web Index reports that 46% of internet users worldwide get news from online sources. On the other hand, 40% of users go to news websites to learn about the latest events. Gen Z and Millennials were more inclined to acquire information about news from social media applications than other generations. While finding the exact one definition of social media may cause some difficulties (Tuten & Solomon, 2018), Obar and Wildman (2015) suggest that all social media platforms possess several characteristics in common, such as:

1. Social media platforms are Web 2.0 Internet-based applications;
2. The foundation of all social media is the engagement of users with their own generated content;



3. Individuals or groups create service-specific profiles for the applications or websites that the social media service maintains and designs;

4. Social media services connect a user's profile with other service users to encourage the development of virtual communication platforms.

According to McQuail (2010), a human conversation involving two or more electronic devices is called computer-mediated communication (CMC). There is also a definition by Levy (1997) that views CMC as “the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning” (p.1). Also, Harasim (1997) describes computer conferencing as “a group communications medium enabling groups of people to exchange ideas and opinions and to share information and resources” (p. 121). Wu and Hiltz (2019) emphasize that students can access a virtual classroom at any time and location using Asynchronous Learning Networks (ALN); CMC creates an exceptional atmosphere for debates that has removed many barriers for them to engage. Nguyen (2008) states that CMC is well-known for employing computers as input, storage, output, and routing devices to send and receive messages.

In the study conducted by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), it was stated that at the beginning of its creation, the Internet started as something named the Bulletin Board System. The BBS allowed users to exchange various kinds of information with each other, such as software, news, data, and messages. Khan (2018) believes that current social media platforms are similar to the early development of the World Wide Web, as they reflect those first stages by being tools of interchangeable communication and information between users. It can be argued that communication between people in person and through virtual means may be analogous. Still, they differ in the number of receivers of information output and that social media uses a monologic transmission

model. A study conducted by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) defines this phenomenon as a continuous flow of information transmitted from one intermediary to another, where the information is delivered in its entirety without any intermediate clarification or queries from the recipients of the information. It is analogous to reading a book, only they are able to respond to the message later.

According to Dijck and Poell (2013), Tim Berners-Lee created The World Wide Web in 1991 by fusing hypertext software with the Internet, launching the current networking and online communication era. The article continues that with the advent of Web 2.0, online platforms have evolved from serving as venues for virtual social interaction to becoming interactive channels for networked communication. This innovation allowed emailing sites, weblogs, and other services to create online circles and maintain offline groups.

### **2.1.1 Theoretical Framework**

The connection between computer-mediated communication and learning a second language will be discussed in this section. In order to understand this relationship, it is necessary to familiarize oneself with the following theories.

Below are some of the educational paradigms discussed at CMC. FRAME is the first comprehensive theoretical model that describes mobile learning as a combination of mobile technologies, human learning capabilities, and social interactions. By using networking mobile devices, students might be able to get in touch with peers and professionals who can assist them in determining the relevance, significance, and reliability of material. Mobile devices allow students to gain access to short explanations on topic matters that can enhance their learning.

**2.1.1.1 Social presence theory:** Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) highlight the two other critical elements of social media which simultaneously serve to distinguish them from other sites that occupy cyberspace; namely, they rely on several theories that they take from social processes (self-presentation and disclosure of information about oneself) and media studies (social media presence and media richness theory). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) shed further on the social presence theory. According to the Social Presence Theory (Short et al., 1976), the degree of "social presence," which can be obtained through auditory, visual, and physical contact, differs across all media; that is, how two communicating partners appear in front of each other. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) contend that social presence is dependent on the immediacy (asynchronous vs. synchronous) of the medium, as well as its intimacy (interpersonal vs. mediated). These factors are expected to be lower for moderated communications (e.g., Skype calls) than for interpersonal communications (e.g., real-life dialogue between two people) and for asynchronous communications (e.g., text messaging) than for synchronous communications (e.g., phone talk). Daft and Lengel (1986) describe another theory of media richness. This theory is founded on the idea that communication, which includes ambiguity resolution and uncertainty reduction, is the primary goal of social media. It claims that different media have varying levels of productivity or the quantity of information they allow to be transmitted in a specific length of time, and as a result, shows that some media are better than others at clearing up doubt and ambiguity. It is thought that when using the social media framework, a preliminary categorization can be made based on the size of the media and the level of social visibility it allows. According to the concept of self-demonstration, people want complete control over the impression they make in any social interaction (Goffman, 1959). Or, to put it roughly, self-presentation

depends on the context of interaction, with some being nervous and anxious with in-face communication but being more relaxed and bolder through virtual interaction and, in rarer cases, vice versa.

**2.1.1.2 Uses and gratification theory:** In the research conducted by Khan (2018), he pays specific attention to the Uses and Gratification theory, an audience-centered approach built around the comprehension of mass communication (for example, radio, television, newspapers, etc.) and why people seek particular media to gratify specific needs. Unlike the other theories concerned with how media affects people, it strives to understand what people do with media (Lasswell, 1948). He argues that audiences are not passive consumers but actively seek out which media will suit the seers' needs and interests best. Finding an appropriate medium grants them satisfaction. Social media could serve as an example where an audience actively searches for specific content; some aspects of theory even claim that the aim of mass media usage can be the results of supplied data by individual audience members themselves. Thus, users may actively seek out native or proficient English speakers from whom they receive interactional satisfaction and form a multilingual and multicultural linguistic communication exchange. This satisfaction could result in the increasing quality of their English-speaking ability. The study of Khan (2018) lists the examples of this communicative satisfaction as below:

- Socialization: Students become more interested in engaging in conversation and group activities to develop a sense of belonging and peer support for the group's special subject;
- Entertainment: students interact with the local community to seek amusement;

- Self-Seeking: through online group engagement, students seek out or uphold their standing as well as that of their peers;
- Information: students use the group to learn about relevant activities on and off campus.

The study highlights that these interactions facilitate communication, and their nature is not unlike that of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Similarly, the CLT approach stresses that authentic interaction between students drives them to increase their L2 language speaking and listening abilities. In both approaches, people utilize verbal communication (in the case of social media, oral communication could be achieved through the exchange of audio) and relevant conversation to discuss various topics and exchange thoughts and ideas.

Considering all these theories and how English is essentially the most used language across the world, being used in newspaper publishing, books, research studies, research articles, scientific discoveries, and information (Montgomery, 1993), one concludes that since online communication is quite similar to verbal in-face interaction. One significant difference is that people can be more in control of the dialogue and less anxious about giving a negative impression. Because users seek online communication to satisfy their interests and needs, social media platforms could be pretty efficient tools for second language acquisition (Khan, 2018).

The following literature sheds some light on how one could increase their English language knowledge even within the language barrier present in social media sites that mostly use English as the primary language of communication.

**2.1.1.3 Pattern recognition:** English is the most used language. It is impossible to stay in your disclosed community where the communication is solely expressed through your mother language. You would be exposed to an array of English linguistic words, some of them being modern vocabulary/terminology, some of them being longstanding literary terms, and as time goes on, your cognitive mind activity notices clear patterns, and it conditions itself to recognize the words, learn their meaning and eventually, helping you to use them for your benefit and general use (Eysenck & Keane, 2020).

In the description given by studies of Eysenck and Keane (2020), cognitive psychology aims to understand the inner workings of the mind by observing humans performing various cognitive tasks (problem-solving, memorization, language comprehension, learning in general, etc.). Thus, pattern recognition can be summed up as a mental process that corresponds information from a stimulus with information retrieved from memory.

The research of Snyder (2000) explains how pattern recognition transpires when the information we receive from our environment is received and arrived into short-term memory (the first stage of memory in the Atkinson–Shiffrin memory model, where any data or information initially enters the short-term stage and it can either be forgotten and discarded within a short period or may proceed further and enter long-term memory, where it can reside and be retrieved when needed) triggering activation of a specific content of long-term memory. The study gives an example in the form of a small child learning the alphabet for the first time: When a parent or a teacher repeats “A, B, C” several times to a child, they begin utilizing the cognitive pattern recognition by saying the letter “C” after hearing “A, B.” The child recognizes the order of letters and begins matching the information they were given with the one they received beforehand and the

one already stored in the brain. Thus, the connection between memories and perceived information is called identification. The study adds that there is also something called semantic memory, which is the type of memory that is on the subconscious level and is closely linked with recognition.

Lerner et al. (2014) state that speaking a second language is less dependent on one's language skills and more so on one's ability to recognize these linguistic patterns. While the following section will review how pattern recognition affects the Hebrew language and not the English language, it still may be applicable to demonstrate how it generally affects language acquisition. The study was conducted by Lerner et al. (2014) and co-authors at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, where they measured US students' ability to recognize word structure and sounds in Hebrew and their capacity to detect statistical patterns in visuals. Students were shown a stream of complex figures, and then tests were given to see if they could identify the pattern. The study concluded that the students expressed a robust statistical association between identifying patterns in the shapes and learning a new language. The results indicate that the possibility of widespread and combined principles of statistical learning could quantitatively explain an extensive range of cognitive processes across domains, be they linguistic or of a different nature.

**2.1.1.4 Teachable language comprehender:** In the research conducted by Collins and Quillian (1969), there is one of the earliest instances of a network model of semantic memory called the Teachable Language Comprehender. In this approach, each node is a word that represents a specific concept (ex. "Fish"); within each node, there are particular properties related to an idea (ex. "can swim" or "lives in the ocean"), as well as pointers to other nodes (ex. "shark"). A node is directly tied to those other nodes of which it is class or superclass (ex. "Fish" could be linked to both "Shark" and "Animal"). According

to Collins and Quillian (1969), "Comprehending" or understanding text is defined as making connections between statements made or indicated in a text and knowledge that has previously been kept in the comprehender's general "knowledge of the world." Accordingly, the TLC's primary goal is to correctly tie the text to the right bits of stored general knowledge of the world.

Collins and Quillian (1969), stress that "Comprehending" or understanding text is defined as making connections between statements made or indicated in a text and knowledge that has previously been kept in the comprehender's general "knowledge of the world." Accordingly, the TLC's primary goal is to correctly tie the text to the right bits of stored general knowledge of the world. In addition to this, according to Krashen (2003), learning and acquisition are two primary ways language knowledge and skill increase. While learning a language is mainly conscious, acquisition is a subconscious, hidden within the mind, intuitive process. While an individual explicitly learns a language in an institutional environment, where they process it through grammatical rules, they may be unaware they are acquiring a language.

**2.1.1.5 Meaningful interaction.** In the work of Brown (2015), he highlights that acquisition needs a meaningful interaction in the target language, where the accent is on the meaning of the interaction rather than from.

Therefore, children learn a letter, then a word, then phrases, then small sentences, and can later read whole texts, which can be applied to their subconscious language learning through online interaction with native English speakers. They start identifying each foreign word with the words in their mother language or associating specific English words with particular descriptions. (ex. "happy" could be tied to "something positive.) and later from their complex chunks of texts. The meaningful interaction is also in full



force here, as the interactive activities with peers in class have two drawbacks: they do not possess the knowledge about the L2, and interaction may feel manufactured instead of natural.

**2.1.1.6 Information and communication technology.** Al Arif (2019) states that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is now used more than ever in learning and teaching second language acquisition. For example, through interactive communication between humans or humans and machines, the setting establishes the context for information production, presentation, transfer, and distribution. He cites Annamalai (2017) as saying that ICT can give English language learners opportunities to communicate with native speakers in the context of EFL through ICT technologies like email and social media (Twitter, Instagram, Discord). Al Arif further stresses the technological advancements of the modern age and how, moreover, ICT applications can empower and excite English language learners and help them develop their critical thinking abilities by changing the teaching approach to one that is more dynamic, flexible, efficient, and student-centered (Asmara et.al, 2019).

Al Arif further gives the following reasons for why the social media-based approach to learning may be practical: they are very entertaining to use; it is easily accessible and is not restricted to time or territorial borders, unlike the traditional classroom approach, the learning may take place at any given moment, the contact they establish with other users can be from any city or country; all social media shares such qualities as being collaborating, platform quality, knowledge sharing mechanism; availability of constant updates on language, familiarity with new jargons, lingo (vocabulary/terminology), and other various neologisms that are sometimes necessary to know to communicate (for example, the new phrases that lockdown of 2020 during Covid

epidemic brought in our everyday life). As Al Arif (2019) noticed, English is an international language and is essentially the most common language of the World Wide Web. Currently, around 5 billion people use the Internet daily, so it is impossible for them not to see English words sooner or later (Dixon, 2022).

## **2.2 Social media and Language Learning**

Social media and language learning refer to the process of learning and acquiring a language through social networks and other online tools based on Web 2.0 technology. Ochs and Schieffelin (1986) proposed the theory of language socialization that considers the crux of all language acquisition to be cultural interaction between different members of a particular national or ethnic group and is mediated by communicative linguistic activity. Through a variety of readily available platforms that are frequently divided into formal and traditional use in classrooms and informal for personal use, the Internet offers students an environment that allows them to interlace their objective of language acquisition with culturally appropriate interactions. Educators can incorporate social media tools into their current teaching. Online learning environments popular among educators include wiki sites, blogging accounts, virtual systems, and more.

Social media apps with dedicated platforms for classroom use, learning environments created especially for schools, classroom blogs to discuss culturally significant topics in the target language, and much more are just a few examples of how social media can be used pedagogically in a language classroom. Upon observation of the effectiveness of social media platforms and how they are utilized to teach and study foreign languages, certain empirical research papers revealed that there is a positive connection between educational instructors, students, and their classmates. According to

research by Abraham et al. (2019), using social media to teach and learn foreign languages encourages and increases students' confidence level in their speaking of the second language they have been learning.

Several reasons are given why language teachers try to increase students' linguistic knowledge levels through social media. Upon observation of the effectiveness of social media platforms and how they are utilized to teach and study foreign languages, specific empirical research papers revealed that there is a positive connection between educational instructors, students, and their classmates. According to research by Abraham et al. (2019), using social media to teach and learn foreign languages encourages and increases students' confidence level in speaking the second language they have been learning. Several reasons are given why language teachers try to increase students' linguistic knowledge levels through social media. One of them could be social platforms' multilinguistic nature of communication consisting of users from different cultural and national backgrounds, the quality of information being easily shared, and opportunities for feedback from international students and teachers. Alaaz (2023) quotes that several research studies (Inayati, 2015; Alnujaidi, 2017; Namaziandost, & Nasri, 2019) hold the opinion that excessive use of the internet would lead students to become solitary and self-isolated as the result of an addiction to the online information and could make them being unable to preserve their social relationships with fellow students and community and society in general.

The studies mentioned above also claimed that according to their empirical data, students' mental health could be severely negatively impacted because young adults use social media compulsively, which leads to increasing anxiety, stress, problems with sleep, and depressive episodes as well as decreasing sense of self-worth and self-doubt.

However, in terms of academic performance, it may benefit them due to its flexibility, reduced work-related stress, and convenience. Social media causes several other negative impacts on the foreign language learning process, such as the high prevalence of plagiarism without giving proper credit to the authors of certain documents, which will make evaluating students' mastery of subject material very problematic. Social media has improved teaching and learning on a delivery level by giving students access to mentorship, tutoring, support services, and feedback. To develop teaching and learning through social media platforms to its fullest potential, some methods that could prevent negative consequences through excessive use of Web 2.0-based tools must occur.

According to Yanti et al. (2018), using entertaining and creative media could inspire students to be more excited about the language acquisition process. As mentioned by Malik and Asnur (2019), ICT tactics in the classroom are anticipated to be a solution that helps both students and instructors learn and build critical thinking abilities, generalist competencies, proper decision-making, the ability to handle complex situations and scenarios, and effective communication. There is also the fact that social media provides additional resources for incredibly diligent students. A case study conducted by Malik and Asnur (2019) revealed that social media also impacts word comprehension among students. Some students actively follow social media information related to language learning. Study groups, vocabulary resources from organizations that teach foreign languages, links to foreign language online news sources, and everyday foreign language vocabulary on accounts dedicated to learning non-target languages can all be described as good online resources.

## **2.3 Social Media's Role in Education**

Social media in education is a way of using the new technology of the Internet to raise students' academic performance. Outside of education, social media use in education can also improve overall knowledge of computer skills. With Web 2.0-based applications, completing various assignments and projects becomes more accessible. Over the past decades, there have been multiple attempts to integrate social media resources with the educational system, hoping that social media platforms would bring positive results to the learning process. Social media may offer various instructional strategies that could boost students' academic performance.

Falloon (2015) states that the contemporary integration of social media networks into education now offers students a variety of possibilities to obtain and gain access to needed information faster while allowing them to establish a communicative link with students from different educational systems. In addition to assisting students in connecting, communicating, and gaining access to necessary information, integrating social media into the educational system has allowed students to access timely, appropriate information, improve communication, and engage in online socializing (Allam & Elyas, 2016). Internet and online platforms allow students to contact professionals from various industries who help students answer their questions regarding particular subject material and help them understand relevant topics.

Aydın (2014) concludes that social media integration in the classroom has also aided teachers in sharing information regarding homework with students, reminding them of upcoming events, and allowing them to organize study groups to help students in the advancement of their skills and communicate with faculty members and students' parents

about what is currently unfolding in the classroom. With the integration of online resources into educational programs, it became possible for parents to be more actively involved in their child's education and to track their development and performance more directly. As students use social media platforms to study foreign languages, knowledge can be developed based on the vast opportunities for interaction and information exchange from social media (Alnujaidi, 2017).

Students can use social media to make connections to aid them in their future professional endeavors. Educational establishments should be engaged on numerous social media platforms since this encourages improved student engagement methods and more inclusive, interactive learning. Jain (2020) states that educational instructors can organize online live calls, aid students with additional help, and increase the scope of their learning outside of the traditional classroom by using Twitter, Facebook, or even messaging platforms like WhatsApp. They might organize conversations by chatting about their assignments or studies on social media platforms. They can coordinate discussions about their studies or homework tasks on social media networks.

Thus, social media facilitates communication between educators and students. Al-Sharqi et al. (2017) state that one group of students found lots of opportunities for increasing foreign language skills through homework and additional independent learning outside of the classroom; however, the same study states that another group of participants found social media quite a time-wasting and distracting activity. The study also found that the teachers will be better able to provide individualized tutoring that meets the needs of the students. Among other positive qualities of social media, there is also an advantage in learning through significant distance. For instance; social media developments were used to the fullest during the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to Jain (2020), professors can host online live classes, offer additional support to students, and expand the field of study beyond the classroom through their social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook or even messaging apps like WhatsApp. On social media platforms, professors and students can engage in discussions about their studies or homework assignments. Therefore, social media helps to connect educators and students. Al-Sharqi et al. (2017) state that one group of students found lots of opportunities for increasing foreign language skills through homework and additional independent learning outside of the classroom; however, the same study states that another group of participants found social media quite a time-wasting and distracting activity. The study also found that the teachers will be better able to provide individualized tutoring that meets the needs of the students. Among other positive qualities of social media, there is also an advantage in learning through significant distance. The advancements of social media were used to the fullest during the pandemic. Students enter employment because technology is becoming more prevalent in society today, and with that, additional knowledge about social media resources and computer devices would significantly increase their workforce.

There is also the fact that the Internet allows students to gain access to new textbooks and additional informational resources one may need help finding in local libraries. A study conducted by Gikas et al. (2013) determined that when they examined students' in-depth opinions on using smartphones and social media as a learning tool in higher education has been found to create opportunities for collaboration and maintain a continuous connection. Other advantages were having quick and easy access to knowledge, having many different learning options, and situational learning. Students' complaints about mobile learning included how these devices were distracting, the anti-

technological attitude of some teachers, and technical issues with these aggregates. According to Blaschke (2014), using social media tools can foster the growth of the student-student, student-instructor, and student-content relationships and it can promote the development of:

- cognitive and metacognitive learning skills, such as reflection;
- critical thinking;
- construction of knowledge and understanding.

These technological advancements result in new learning cultures built on group engagement and exploration (Selwyn, 2012). Ansari and Khan (2020) conducted a study where it was revealed that contact between peers is anticipated to increase by 2.1% for every 10% increase in student participation. Their academic performance and knowledge level improved when they engaged in the educational process through online collaborative learning. For every 10 percent increase in student enrollment, there is a 9.72 percent increase in academic performance, according to the study. The study concludes that implementing online social media would enable students to become more dynamic and creative. Based upon the empirical data of the study, it was concluded that student participation with social media communication tools aids them in retrieving necessary information and spreading learning material content during real-time interactions with others.

The world progresses in the technical department in a rapid, unrelenting progression, and therefore, educational institutions must attune to this development by implementing more technological resources into their traditional classroom environment, mainly when various case studies and according to research papers, social media usage has a positive impact on their academic performance.



### **2.3.1 Problems with Social Media**

It's important to think about why social media isn't widely used in education, despite its perceived disadvantages for educators and its numerous benefits. Social media platforms may be very unpleasant and emotionally taxing. Students today are more prone to browse social media than study, which might lead to disorganization. It is a pointless waste of time to do this. Students usually want assistance to complete their work by the deadline since they are too consumed with using social media sites.

Social media may decrease study and research skills. These days, students are more prone to use social media resources to find information rather than using books, notes, or other printed materials. As it is simpler to acquire information online, students' reading habits are deteriorating. This negatively impacts their capacity for research and learning. When someone gets too reliant on something, they are unable to function without it. For any student who relies mostly on social media for learning, this might be quite detrimental. Some students find it difficult to concentrate in a classroom because they know that they can always turn to social media for information. Since they cannot operate without it, this becomes unhealthy. This addiction can also have a negative impact on the student's confidence and self-esteem because they may start to substitute a social networking application for in-person contact with their lecturers and peers. This may keep them from gaining the self-confidence needed to socialize with other people.

Students who have access to social media in the classroom have the risk of abusing this advantage and using it for non-academic rather than academic purposes. If students are not being actively monitored, it will be difficult to assess if they are using social media during class times in an appropriate manner. Social media use by students for non-

educational purposes often distracts them from their studies and negatively impacts their academic performance. (Hettiarachchi, 2014; Bekalu et al., 2019).

These electronic communication tools may not grant excellent grammar or verbal communication knowledge. It is the environment where people do not check their vocabulary, syntax, or language rules. Some students may start using social media terminology in their academic writing. It is possible that even words like "the" and "you" may be abbreviated to "d" and "u," respectively. They have a harder time learning how to speak in real life with proper grammar and spelling because of this. Their capacity to communicate may be harmed if they start combining texting and internet chat into everyday conversations.

There are no physical cues on social networking sites, other than nonverbal cues like tone and intonation. They cannot, therefore, be viewed as a sufficient replacement for any in-person communication. Furthermore, students who use these social networking sites extensively require assistance with successful face-to-face communication.

## **2.4 Social Media and Second Language Learning**

The educational sphere of various teaching institutions seems to be embracing these current technological advancements to increase the quality of conventional in-class teaching methods and teaching processes in general. Social media resources and other computer-related devices have also been employed to reduce the challenges associated with teaching and learning, particularly when it comes to learning English as a second language, and to close the previous gap. Yunus and Suliman (2014) state that English language learners now have access to tools that have improved their mastery of the language and allowed them to speak it more fluently thanks to the Internet. Modern

technology has been shown to enhance language learners' learning abilities, it has also allowed teachers to modify classroom activities to improve language acquisition (Yarbro et al., 2016). In addition, social media platforms seem to motivate and increase students' ambition and inner drive to learn a new language, they also help to monitor students' educational progress, and their classroom performance. As technology has evolved over the years, social media has become a real tool to deliver education, enhance learning, and capture students' attention. Haque (2023) states that this is a result of the various opportunities that let students hone their listening and speaking abilities with native speakers, have access to global resources, and work in real-time online collaboration with other students. Additionally, it was demonstrated that by giving students access to peer feedback, these platforms could help students develop greater self-regulation and independence.

Pikhart and Botezat (2021) concluded that one of the most valuable aspects of social media for language learners is the opportunity for real-time cultural and linguistic exchange. As mentioned before, the study also states that some students confessed that the pictures and videos help students memorize vocabulary better. However, the study by Pikhart and Botezat also states that there is a risk of students' non-academic use of social media and its reduction to casual conversations on topics unrelated to their field of study during the learning process. According to Rwodzi et al. (2020), social media learning creates opportunities for the student-centered approach to learning as well as opportunities for educators and teachers to receive real-time feedback from students and to determine the effectiveness of such learning instruction. According to Kajee (2018), traditional face-to-face classroom instruction has several limitations, such as time and physical space. However, with teaching through social media, it is possible to break through timely and

physical restraints, as it is possible to hold lectures or classes whenever it is the most convenient for all parties of the teaching and learning process through electronic devices. Teachers can hold classes on any day of the week, even on weekends. There is also the possibility of elimination of anxiety and stress that comes with traditional face-to-face learning for students. When it comes to electronically-based foreign language instruction and learning, in the case of social media in English, Al-Sharqi et al. (2016) have found three benefits of social media, such as: a) social media enhances mixed learning, which can assist students in creating a satisfying learning environment, as in, by blending traditional teaching and social media based instruction, students can create more effective learning experience; b) by using Web 2.0 based tools, students could engage in collaborative, interactive projects, thus enhancing their social and speaking skills; c) learning English through social media encourages students to actively ask questions and participate in discussions on the material being taught in order to develop their language proficiency, thus, making them more active participants of the learning process.

Nikolopoulou (2019) states that in this digital age, where information could become outdated relatively fast, modern technology allows students to get in touch with new information regarding various news quite quickly and efficiently. Social media platforms significantly changed the delivery pattern of knowledge, creating space for personalized learning, allowing users to create their own language-related content, and for increased interactive collaboration. However, according to Yarbrow et al. (2016), teachers are reluctant to incorporate new technological advancements in their educational process due to the ever-changing environment of the social and cultural sphere of society and how stress-inducing they might be. They prefer the conventional method of teaching due to the inability to understand how to use these tools for educational purposes. According to Khan

et al. (2016), learners can quickly expand their vocabulary in English these days because they have access to internet resources. The study mentioned before states that ESL/EFL students learn their oral and social skills, as we expand their vocabulary through social media, rather than learn them in the classroom. According to Kern (2006), constructivist teaching methods strongly endorse the usage of online blogs and social media since they emphasize student involvement. Additionally, Ferdig (2007) notes that social media provides a massive amount of social interaction that is essential and beneficial for language learners. By allowing students to interact with various multilingual individuals they develop communication skills, in the sense, that intercultural interactions are used as an instrument of intercultural transmission of information about another country and language that is spoken there. It could pique the interest of students and serve as inner motivation (Malik & Asnur, 2019). Khan et al. (2016) concluded that social media helps to facilitate the growth of English vocabulary since it allows English language learners to acquire new words and phrases, especially through such platforms like YouTube or specific English learning blogs and accounts on Instagram.

In the case of social media influencing the main four English language skills, Social media can help language learners by providing collaborative writing environments where they can generate, organize, and edit ideas (Zhou, 2021). According to Vikneswaran & Krish's (2016) research, social media sites like Facebook have a grammar checker that automatically fixes mistakes made by users when they write. Students are, therefore, more at ease when writing because they are less concerned with grammar and language. Muktar et al. (2019) state that since, for example, Twitter has a minimal amount of words allowed to type, so students begin to brainstorm how to deliver their thoughts in the most precise and clear way without adding unnecessary information. Data gathered by

Zhou et al. (2021) indicates that social media has demonstrated its usefulness as a practice tool. According to the data gathered, the majority of students believe that engaging in natural verbal or written conversation on social media with native speakers motivates them to practice and successfully increase their speaking ability, especially considering how English is a small part of their everyday lives. Still, they could subconsciously learn English through social media, since they may visit online platforms daily, not just during specific times.

## **2.5 Previous Studies Findings Comparison**

Some relevant studies on CMC and language learning through social media will be discussed. Several empirical studies were assessed and could support this research's claims. The above-mentioned studies show that social media platforms play an important role in the development of English language skills. While the focus of the current thesis is on participants' English language learning in Northern Cyprus, the following studies explore the use of social media platforms and technological advances in the development of language skills in a similar manner. Some studies investigate the implementation of specific social media platforms to learn the English language.

Fewell (2014) explored educational language learning through Twitter. Through the questionnaire and participation of 37 students, the research study concluded that most students responded positively to the use of Twitter microblogging as an English language acquisition tool and tool for the promotion of social cohesion. Communicating with others in English, this microblogging platform created a community with a strong bond. The results showed that educators should encourage students to adopt microblogging as a

practical tool with the potential to increase possibilities for communicating in the target language with native speakers.

The investigation of the effective use of YouTube videos for teaching the English language was concluded by Almurashi (2016). Fifty-three learners studying the English language at Taibah University in Aluls participated in this study. The findings indicate that YouTube could be a valuable resource for incorporating English lessons and aiding in lesson comprehension. The findings showed that YouTube can help to address pupils' difficulties and struggles with English comprehension. It is believed to be more successful and effective in fostering English learning than textbook-based English classes. The study explored the idea of using YouTube as a supplementary material for students which aids them in understanding certain English language subjects. It has a feature as a modal text that can further their understanding of English.

The impact of WhatsApp on the English language learning of university students was examined in a study conducted by Ta'amneh in 2017. 40 first-year college students made up the study's participants. Two groups were created out of them. The experimental group included 19 students who were taught using a combination of WhatsApp and traditional learning whereas the control group had 21 students who were taught traditionally. The results showed that the experimental group, which combined the traditional method with WhatsApp, performed better than the control group, which just utilized the traditional method (face-to-face). In addition to this, using modern tools like WhatsApp messaging to learn English is more efficient than conventional teaching techniques.

One of Faryadi's (2017) research papers focused on the impact of Facebook on English language learning. The inquiry used a triangulation approach (descriptive,

quantitative, and qualitative). 900 undergraduate students took part in total. Findings revealed that the control group (88.8% passed) that was exposed to Facebook outperformed students who were not exposed to Facebook (60% passed). Findings further showed that the use of Facebook improved the proficiency of English in students and helped them enrich their vocabulary with new words. Results indicated that Facebook had a positive influence on Malaysian students' attitudes, confidence, satisfaction, motivation, and perceptions of English language acquisition.

The study conducted by Al Arif (2019) examined university students studying English in an Education program. The researcher was motivated to conduct this study since it is well known that English majors are required to use the language for everything from class discussions to explanations, presentations, assignments, activities, and exams. The initial research found that university students enrolled in the English Education Study Program are not motivated to read books to improve their English language skills, communicate with their friends or acquaintances in English, or even access the language through television or educational videos. Nevertheless, it was stated that most students use popular social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube to discover new English words and sentences, so they can find specific content in search bars. The research continued affirming that the social media settings are usually in the English language, so they learn new words in a much more accessible format than going to libraries and reading topical books.

The study was conducted by Gonulal (2019) and involved 128 participants. The study design was mixed and although Instagram was not specifically designed for educational purposes, it was found that most English language learners used Instagram for communication and English learning. Most responders found Instagram interesting



and a good learning tool. Based on qualitative and quantitative data, there was overwhelming agreement among English language students that Instagram is a simple and practical way to enhance general communication skills. This is because Instagram fosters a sense of community where ELLs can interact and socialize with other ELLs and gives ELLs a chance to quickly reach and communicate with native speakers or advanced speakers of English in real-time.

Halik and Rafeena (2020) investigated how social media helps Shri Lankan students learn English. The study explored the idea that social media may aid students in developing their vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and language abilities. Forty students from various classes were randomly chosen to participate in this study. Data for this survey research study were gathered using a quantitative approach. A closed-ended questionnaire was employed as the research instrument to gather respondents' perspectives on social media and its significance in English language acquisition. The results of the data analysis indicate that most respondents enjoy using a variety of social media platforms, and they spend a significant amount of time on these platforms, significantly improving their English language knowledge level. The study concluded that the formal classroom setting and conventional teaching strategies bore ESL students. Because of that, adult learners consequently lack of motivation to study English in a higher education setting.

Pitaloka et al. (2020) aimed to investigate whether pre-service EFL teachers perceive that social media has an impact on their English language learning and which English themes they perceive as having the most significant impact. The study discovered that pre-service EFL teachers felt social media use significantly impacted their ability to learn English. The results demonstrated that up to 73.07% of the sample believed social

media usage significantly impacted their ability to learn English. Put differently, they thought that social media would help them learn English. In contrast, just 26.1% and 0.22% of students, respectively, felt that utilizing social media to study English had a moderate or low influence.

Hu and Du (2022) intended to further our understanding of English language learning through TikTok by Chinese students' perceptions. A sample consisting of 23 students was used. The findings revealed mixed views on using TikTok as an educational strategy for the English language, with one side expressing that TikTok could facilitate the development of English language proficiency, and oral performance skills. In contrast, the other side considers TikTok to have minimal effect on their English learning. Quantitative findings suggest that although utilizing TikTok can have positive effects, it needs to be improved in contrast to traditional in-class English language teaching.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODS**

This chapter of the current study will provide information on the research design, the specifics of data collection, detailed information about the participants of the study, the data analysis, and which instruments were utilized. After that, the data analysis is described.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The methodology used the mixed method. According to Johnson et al. (2007), mixed method research is the type research analysis that combines both qualitative and quantitative data collection approaches. Researchers can obtain a better knowledge of study findings by collecting more data than they could from a single method (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Both qualitative and quantitative data-gathering methods were applied simultaneously during one part of the study. In contrast with other strategies, this method allows researchers to define, analyze, and interpret the gathered data and complete research in a shorter period. Furthermore, employing the mixed method is helpful because relying solely on one approach might not yield sufficient information about the subject at hand, but utilizing various resources allows one to compare the multiple outcomes and provide a more transparent and precise answer. Based on this method, questionnaires and interviews were used as data collection methods.

In essence, this inquiry was descriptive. Its goal was to evaluate and quantify how the students at Final International University were using online resources to learn English. The qualitative data were gathered through student interviews to better understand their perceptions and views on using social media platforms in English language learning, and a questionnaire was employed to gather quantitative data.

### **3.2 Population and Sampling**

The quantitative part of this study involved 106 Final International University students from the English Language Teaching faculty who were studying English as a second language because their mother tongue was Turkish, Arabic, French, or Urdu. 61 (65.1%) of the participants of this study are women, and 37 (34.9%) are men. Their English proficiency ranges from beginning (A1) to upper-intermediate levels (B2).

All participants of the study are university students from North Cyprus. Their ages range from 17 to 29. Upon analysis of the participant distribution by age, it was found that 46 (43.4%) of the participants are between the ages of 17 and 21, 58 (54.7%) of the participants are between the ages of 21 and 25, and 2 (1.2%) of the participants are between ages of 25 and 29. When the study investigated access to computers and smartphones, it was concluded that 91.6% of participants reported using computers, while 100% responded that they all owned mobile phones. The study concluded that almost all of them have access to the Internet.

In contrast, the qualitative part of the study involved ten students studying at Final International University with English as a second language. All ten of them were interviewed with ten in-depth questions to gather qualitative data. Their ages vary between 23 and 28. Six participants who were interviewed were women, while the remaining four were men. Most qualitative study participants (6 of them) are English language teachers, so their knowledge of the English language is at least at the upper-intermediate level, bordering on advanced. Eight of them are from the English Language Teaching faculty, one is studying software engineering, and the last participant is from the business faculty.

### **3.3 Instruments and Procedures of Data Collection**

For this investigation, the students answered one survey taken with permission from the study called “Social Media and Learning of English Language: A Study on the Undergraduate Students of Assam, India” by Karim et al. (2022). A total of 109 students studying at Final International University participated. A structured questionnaire was utilized as the research tool to collect respondents' opinions regarding the accessibility of technology, their proficiency with social media, their usage of social media, and the applicability of English. Specifically, Google Doc Forms were utilized. The questionnaire had 34 items, of which 16 were of the "yes" or "no" variety, and 7 relating to competency were rated on a Likert scale of "Very good," "Good," "Moderate," "Weak," and "Not applicable" (with a range of 1 to 5). A five-point Likert Scale ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree" is used to score 11 issues related to the use of internet media. The first two questions of the survey asked for permission to take part in answering questions, while the following questions asked about participants' characteristics and

having access to various technological devices. The third set of questions focused on participants' skills and general understanding of social media. The fourth category asked about students' reasons for using social media sites and the category asked about participants' success in the development of their English language skills. Also, when the scale is also measured according to Cronbach's Alpha, the overall reliability coefficient is 0.69 indicating that the scale is robust and acceptable (Karim, Mondal, Hussain, Alam & Nazarieh, 2022).

Interviews were conducted using open-ended questions to look at more in-depth views on the role of social media in English language development. The researcher was able to participate in interviews too, by giving additional explanations to questions so participants would understand them better. The researcher interviewed ten students, with each interview lasting around 5-7 minutes. Audio recordings and transcriptions were used for all interviews.

### **3.4 Data Analysis Procedures**

To begin with, permission from the Final International University Ethics Committee was obtained formally. Google Forms were used to aid with this investigation through this survey. Google Forms links were distributed to numerous Final International University students. The Google Form link was shared with Final International University students on a random basis. They were asked to fill out the online papers via e-mail. While a questionnaire was utilized to gather quantitative data from study participants, the raw score was categorized and coded into the programming software used for analysis. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences was used to report the data for this inquiry

(SPSS). Out of two main types of data analysis (descriptive statistics and inferential statistics), the research paper mostly employed descriptive statistics, where it will be describing samples in tables and the conclusions drawn from them. The version of SPSS that was used for analysis of empirical data were PSS 26, released in 2018.

The researcher also interviewed ten willing students. The information obtained from the interviews with students was transcribed and organized into the data required for analysis. Key elements and common topics for each interview question were labeled as keywords and highlighted on the left and right margins of the paper. Major topics in each interview question were classified into categories, and keywords relevant to each topic were classified into related categories.

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA ANALYSIS RESULTS

This chapter focuses on results uptrained from Qualitative and Quantitative research and focuses on their data analysis.

#### 4.1 Quantitative Analysis of Gathered Data

##### 4.1.1 Analysis of the Access to ICT Tools.

**Table 1**

*Frequency and average use of ICT tools*

	Frequency yes	Frequency no	Percent yes	Percent no	Average
Do you have access to a computer?	97	9	91,5	8,5	9,15
Do you have a smartphone?	106	0	100	0	10
Do you have an iPad?	12	94	11,3	88,7	1,13
Do you have access to the Internet?	104	2	98,1	1,9	9,81
Do you use social media?	106	0	100	0	10

As demonstrated in Table 1 above, most students (100%) have access to smartphones as indicated by the average score of (10). All students (100%) are active on social media, with an average score of (10). This indicated that almost all students are connected with their instructors and other classmates through various online media



platforms, and with an average score of (9.81). Regarding computers, 91.5% of students have this ICT equipment at home. Moreover, 91.5% of students have this tool at home, while merely 11.3% have access to an iPad, an expensive device and 88.7% do not have ICT equipment. As a result, the number of students using iPads was the lowest, with an average score of (1.13).

#### 4.1.2 Analysis of the Students' Abilities Regarding Social Media Use

**Table 2**

*Frequency, and average of the respondents' ability to use social media*

	<b>Not applicable (1)</b>	<b>Weak (2)</b>	<b>Moderate (3)</b>	<b>Good (4)</b>	<b>Very good (5)</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Std. deviation</b>
I am competent to use Facebook.	49	23	9	17	8	2,17	1,36
I am competent to use WhatsApp.	1	1	5	30	69	4,56	0,72
I am competent to use Twitter.	28	20	13	20	25	2,94	1,55
I am competent to use YouTube.	0	2	12	36	56	4,38	0,76
I am competent to use Instagram.	1	1	10	26	68	4,50	0,78
I am competent to use Messenger.	46	26	10	17	7	2,18	1,32
I am competent to use TikTok.	41	16	11	16	22	2,64	1,60

Regarding respondents' skills, it was found that the students were able to use Instagram, with an average score of (4.50) and a percentage of 98.1% (moderate, good, and, very good). Students have the second-highest ability to use WhatsApp (average score 4.56), which means that 93.4% of students were able to use this social media application.

YouTube usage ranks as the third most proficient social media handling skill among students (average score of 4.38). This means that 98.1% of students are proficient users of this social media platform. The results shown in Table 2 also showed that Twitter has an average score of (2.94). Thus, the percentage is 54.7%. Currently, 46.2% of students using popular social media platforms such as TikTok have the skills to use it (average score 2.64). This table shows that Messenger (average score of 2.18) and Facebook (average score of 2.17) are the two interconnected social media tools for students have medium skills. The percentages are 32.1% and 32.1%, respectively. Therefore, it can be said that Instagram is the most well-known social media platform among the university students at Final International University.

#### 4.1.3 Analysis of the Students' Motives for Using Social Media

**Table 3**

*Frequency, and average of the elements influencing the usage of social media*

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree (2)</b>	<b>Neutral (3)</b>	<b>Agree (4)</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Std. deviation</b>
I utilize social media to speak with my companions.	0	5	31	44	26	3,86	0,84
I utilize online media to speak with my family.	0	4	16	45	41	4,16	0,82
I utilize online media to learn new things.	1	1	15	54	35	4,14	0,76

**Table 3 (continued)***Frequency, and average of the elements influencing the usage of social media*

I use social media to follow my favorite artist.	1	9	29	33	34	3,85	1,00
I utilize online media to learn English.	0	3	18	51	34	4,09	0,77
I utilize web-based media to pass my free time.	2	3	26	47	28	3,91	0,89
I use social media to gain knowledge.	0	3	26	50	27	3,95	0,79
I use social media to follow the latest trends.	1	9	33	39	24	3,72	0,94
I use social media because my friends use it.	14	31	27	24	10	3,86	1,19
I use social media because it is useful for me.	1	4	25	52	24	3,89	0,83
I burn through my time when I utilize online media.	1	14	41	33	17	3,48	0,95

According to Table 3 above, 96.2% of students neutral, agreed, and strongly agreed with item number 2, i.e., “I utilize online media to speak with my family,” with an average score of 4.16. Since it is a university with a high international student profile, students communicate with their family members and friends in their hometowns through social media tools, as it does not cost their budgets. The second highest factor influencing social media usage is item number 3 (average score 4.14), “I utilize online media to learn

new things.” 98.1% of students ‘agreed’ and ‘strongly agreed’ with this factor. 97.2% of the respondents agreed that they use online media when learning English (average score 4.09). Another factor that reached 97.2% in terms of “agree” and “strongly agree” is item number 7, “I use social media to gain knowledge” (average score 3.95). The fifth element that influences social media usage is item number 6 (average score 3.91), “I utilize web-based media pass my free time.” 95.3% of students concurred and emphatically consented to this item. Table 3 also showed that 95.3% of students were neutral, agreed, and strongly agreed with item number 10, i.e., “I use social media because it is useful for me,” the average score is (3.89).

Another factor that reached 95.3% in terms of “neutral”, “agree” and “strongly agree” is item number 1, “I utilize social media to speak with my companies” (average score 3.86). In addition, item 9 “I use social media because my friends use it” (average score 3.86), had a total of 57.5% of respondents who answered “neutral”, “agree” and “strongly agree”. Item number 8 average score (3.72), “I use social media to follow the latest trend”, is the factor that affects social media usage. On item 4 (I use social media to follow my favorite artist.), 90.6% of students “strongly agree” and “agree” gave their consent (average score 3.85). Item number 11 (I burn through my time when I utilize online media) is the final factor that nearly reached 85.5% in terms of “neutral”, “agree” and “strongly agree” (average score of 3.48).

#### 4.1.4 Analysis of the Students' Perspective on the Use of Social Media

**Table 4**

*Frequency, and average of the respondents' perceptions of the usage of the English language while utilizing social media*

	<b>Frequency yes</b>	<b>Frequency no</b>	<b>Percent yes</b>	<b>Percent no</b>	<b>Average</b>
When I use social media, I like to use English.	92	14	86,8	13,2	8,68
I feel good writing in English via online media.	91	15	85,8	14,2	8,58
I feel excited to use English on social media.	87	19	82,1	17,9	8,21
I improve my English writing skills by writing posts on social media.	77	29	72,6	27,4	7,26
I improve my speaking fluency using social media.	74	32	69,8	30,2	6,98
Social media helps me to improve my English.	98	8	92,5	7,5	9,25
I refer to the dictionary before posting anything on social media.	71	35	67,0	33,0	6,70
Using social media develops my interaction with classmates and lecturers; it is also helping in my academic performance.	78	28	73,6	26,4	7,36
I believe that social media is another best platform to develop English.	85	21	80,2	19,8	8,02
I am confident in correcting my friends' English grammar mistakes on social media.	71	35	67,0	33,0	6,70
Social media helps me with copying words, phrases, or sentences.	91	15	85,8	14,2	8,58

Table 4 above showed that 92.5% of students replied positively (yes) to item number 6, i.e., “Social media helps me to improve my English,” the average score of which is 9.25. Item number 1 (average score 8.68), “When I use social media, I like to use English” is the second highest factor influencing social media usage. 86.8% of students “neutral” “agreed”, and “strongly agreed” with this factor. 85.8% of respondents positively, and “strongly agreed” that they were comfortable writing in English through online media (average score 8.58). The other element that influences social media usage is item number 11 (average score 8.58), “Social media helps me with copying words, phrases, or sentences.” 85.8% of students concurred and emphatically consented to this item. Table 4 also reveals that 82.1% of the students responded positively to item 3, i.e., “I feel excited to use English on social media,” with an average score of 8.21. Another factor that reached almost 80.2% “yes” is item number 9, “I believe that social media is another best platform to develop English” (average score 8.02).

Moreover, another factor that led to almost 73.6% “yes” is item number 8, “using social media develops my interaction with classmates and lecturers; it is also helping in my academic performance” (average score 7.36). The eighth element that influences social media usage is item number 4 (average score 7.26), “I improve my English writing skill by writing posts on social media.” 72.6% of students concurred and emphatically consented to this item. The other factor that almost reached up to 69.8% in terms of “yes”, is item number 5, “I improve my speaking fluency using media” (average score 6.98). In addition, 67.0% of students replied positively to item number 7, i.e., “I refer to the dictionary before posting anything on social media,” the average score of which is 6.7. The last factor that 67% in terms of “yes” is item number 10, “I am confident to correct my friends’ English grammar mistakes on social media.” (average score 6.7).

## 4.2 Qualitative Analysis and Discussion of Conducted Interviews

This section presents the findings of semi-structured interviews with students of Final International University, six of whom were English language teachers. The interview questions that were utilized during interviews were taken from earlier empirical studies. Based on the information gathered from the semi-structured interviews with the students of FIU, the following categories were identified:

- I. Social media platforms
- II. Students' point of view on social media platforms' efficacy
- III. Conditions and time-frequency of students when they are learning English through social media
- IV. Disadvantages of using social media for learning English

These four categories also yielded a few topics, which are summarized in the tables below, as well as FIU students' views on using social media to improve their English language skills.

### 4.2.1 Social media platforms

Upon analyzing the data, six themes presented in the table below were identified:

**Table 5**

*Social media platforms*

Theme	Frequency
T1: Instagram	3 ESL instructors, 2 students
T2: YouTube	2 ESL instructors, 1 student
T3: WhatsApp	4 ESL instructors, 2 students
T4: Twitter	1 ESL instructor, 0 students
T5: Facebook	1 ESL instructor, 1 student

The following section highlights which social media platforms ELT students and English language teachers who were former ELT students show a preference for and which activities they perform there. While the two questions in this category are similar, it is essential to make a distinction: one asks the student which social media site they prefer, while the other asks the student which social media platforms they have on their mobile devices in general.

Instagram is the second most preferred social media platform among English language instructors, while an equal number of regular students use Instagram and WhatsApp. The most used social media platform by ESL instructors and students is WhatsApp. The four ESL teachers and two regular students expressed affinity to WhatsApp, while three ESL instructors and two students admitted to mainly using Instagram. The third most used social media platform among participants is YouTube. Two English language instructors and only one student prefer the platform. The fourth most favorable social media site among participants is Facebook, which one ESL instructor and one student liked. And finally, the least used social media platform among interviewees was Twitter, which one ESL instructor favors. On the topic of how many social media platforms are owned by interviewed participants in general, all admitted to owning almost all of the most popular social media platforms, with all of them confessing to owning instant messaging services like Telegram and WhatsApp.

After reading answers to the question related to the activities participants perform on social media services, one can conclude that they can be grouped into three main categories: 1) social media used for education and information, as reported by Student 1, *“I watch news or stuff related to my education”*; 2) for communication, as stated by



Instructor 6, “*Just discussing stuff with my family, friends, teachers; 3) for entertainment, as said by Student 4, “I just do scrolling to see funny pictures. For entertainment”.*

The majority, as quoted below, admit that they use social media for communication and entertainment, which indicates that do not consciously use online resources for English language learning:

On Instagram, I watch a lot of comedy videos. Fashion videos. Self-enhancement or motivation videos. On YouTube, I watch a lot of podcasts and educational videos. Because I am a visual learner, when I do not understand certain concepts by reading books, I go to YouTube to search for this stuff and watch videos from different educators. I realize when I watch a lot of videos on YouTube, it makes me understand it in a better way. I also subscribe to some channels that promote development and all these sorts of stuff. (Instructor 1)

I talk with my family, I look up some funny stuff on social media and I communicate with my colleagues, and with my classmates. As I said, the most important reason is for communication purposes. I use it to communicate. Then I use it to distract myself, maybe when I do not want to read a book and I just scroll and watch interesting things, just to remove my mind and to relax. (Instructor 3)

On social media, I just look at the information, the news, or watch some videos. These days, if you are not connected, if you are not on social media it is like you are getting no information. My motivation is just to get new information about various countries and the world. (Student 2)

#### 4.2.2 Students’ Point of View on Social Media Platforms’ Efficacy

Four themes emerged when the data was analyzed, as they are shown in the table below:

**Table 6**

*Students’ Point of view on Social media platforms’ efficacy*

Theme	Frequency
It helped me a lot	3 ESL instructors, 3 students
It helped me to an extent	1 ESL instructor, 0 students
It did not help me	1 ESL instructor, 1 student
It is helpful for others but not for me	1 ESL instructor, 0 students

The following part highlights students' opinions on whether social media resources could increase their English language skills.

The main consensus among most participants is that using social media platforms for English language learning is helpful and practical. Three English language teachers and three students admitted that their English language level significantly increased. Three students specifically pointed out that surfing the Internet for grammar rules or looking up YouTube videos for learning increased their English grammar and listening skills:

Yeah, most definitely, especially grammar. There are some grammar topics I used to find very difficult to comprehend, but YouTube helped me a lot. I realized it is very practical. It used real material to help me understand the subject better, so it did help me. I think it is effective. For me, because of my learning style, it is very effective. I learn better when I see or hear than when I read. (Instructor 1)

Yes, it did. For example, videos. First of all, it improved my listening skills. The videos I watched on YouTube improved my listening skills. Before I started, I could not hear everything but now I am used to it. So, it improved my listening skills and now I am using videos to improve my grammar, like I said. I have gotten better at a lot of stuff. (Instructor 2)

There are a variety of things you can see on these platforms, so there are a lot of language learning profiles. Like grammar rules, and vocabulary rules. (Instructor 4)

Only one ESL teacher admitted that social media helped them only partially and to a lesser extent. The quote from the participant explains that she learned English from social media mostly incidentally:

To an extent, I say it helped me a little bit. For example, on Instagram where people post about educational stuff and things like that, my mind opens and I collect some things from there. It helps me with educational things because it opens my mind to new things. (Instructor 3)

One English language educator and one regular student reported that online media resources did not help them advance their English language knowledge. The ESL teacher explained that social media only helps a little because English is their first language. The student stated that learning anything from social media directly correlates to how entertaining it is for them.

I just watch what interests me and I do not think it helped me with the English language. English is my first language. (Instructor 5)

No, I do not think it is effective, I just use it for entertainment. When I see entertaining content, I can learn from that, but if it cannot make me laugh, I just close it. (Student 4)

And lastly, to quote one ESL instructor who reported that social media may not have helped them with learning English, they admit it can be helpful for others:

Not really, I could say before studying my English used to be much better than right now. It is not necessarily that social media decreased my English, I do not think it changed anything. But I have friends who studied through communicating with people who speak English. For me, I already knew English, so it did not help me but I have friends who increased the quality of their language through interaction with native speakers online. (Instructor 6)

#### **4.2.3 Conditions and Time-Frequency of Students When They Are Learning English through Social Media**

After the data was evaluated, four themes surfaced, which are displayed in the table below:

**Table 7**

*Conditions and time-frequency of students when they are learning English through social media*

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
No scheduled/specific time	2 ESL instructors, 1 student
Whenever they have free time	0 ESL instructors, 2 students
Do not use it for English learning	3 ESL instructors, 0 students
Rarely or sometimes	1 ESL instructor, 1 student

The following section describes the conditions students employ when learning English through social media platforms, precisely when and how frequently they do it.

Two English language instructors and one regular ELT student stated that they employ English learning through social media services without any stipulated time or schedule, as given in the quotes below:

I do not have a stipulated time. I tend to use YouTube when I am reading something and I do not understand something. (Instructor 1)

There is no specific time. For example, as I am sitting here if something comes into my mind, I just go and search for it. So, I do not have a specific time. (Instructor 2)

When I am about to sleep, or when I feel bored and I want to watch a video containing certain information. So, I don't have a specific time, it depends. (Student 2)

Similar to them, two students stated that they use social media for English learning only when they have free time, as given in the quotes below:

Whenever I have free time. (Student 1)

At any given time when I am available. (Student 3)

Three English as a second language instructors admit they do not use online services to learn English. One of the ESL instructors explained that English is their native language, so they do not see the use of social media to learn English as put in quotes below:

English is my mother tongue; I do not use social media for that. (Instructor 5)

One English language teacher and one student expressed that they use social media platforms to increase the quality of their English very rarely as shown in the excerpts below:

Three percent out of 100 maybe. I only google search new words. (Instructor 6)

#### 4.2.4 Disadvantages of Using Social Media for Learning English

After the data was evaluated and analyzed, five themes surfaced, which are displayed in the table below:

**Table 8**

*Disadvantages of using social media for learning English*

Theme	Frequency
No disadvantages	1 ESL instructor, 0 students
No teacher guidance	1 ESL instructor, 1 student
Does not improve speaking skills	0 ESL instructors, 2 students
Contradictory/wrong information	2 ESL instructors, 1 student
Distraction	2 ESL instructors, 0 students

The following section focuses on displaying students' opinions on the negative aspects of using social media websites to increase the quality of their English language skills.

One ESL instructor did not find any disadvantages as she did not encounter them while surfing social media services for extra material on the English language. On the other hand, one ESL instructor and one student highlight the lack of teaching guidance from educators as one of the most glaring problems as quoted below:

The fact that sometimes you still need someone to explain stuff to you. You know. When in a classroom you can ask a teacher. When you go online there is no one to explain stuff to you. (Instructor 2)

Two students underline that the lack of possibility to interact with native speakers in real life within an authentic context through social media results in undeveloped speaking skills:

The disadvantage is that you cannot speak with native speakers in real life, it does not improve your speaking skills. (Participant 3)

It is an application; you can learn something but you still cannot meet people in real life to talk with through that. (Participant 7)

Most of the participants (two ESL educators and one student) stated that the possibility of learning wrong information about a subject topic through social media applications and utilizing it is a significant disadvantage. They express that one could understand the wrong meaning of the word, for example, and it could lead to unfortunate results, as stated below:

For example, you have something you have been taught in the classroom and then you see something on social media that is contradictory to what you have been taught. And it leaves you unstable, and you don't know the correct answer, correct spelling, correct word. (Instructor 3)

When a student goes on any social platform to learn English, they might learn the wrong meaning and pronunciation of the word. (Instructor 6)

You go for one thing and accidentally learn something new. Also, when you want to take it seriously and want to learn new words, the new information doesn't apply to any of your classes. (Student 4)

Finally, two English-language instructors stated they think distraction caused by other forms of information presented on social media applications (for example, unrelated to English language videos of a comedic nature) leaves a negative effect on English language learning:

You have a lot of distractions; you can look at something else and lose focus. (Instructor 4)

The Internet opens you so many things, you explore things you never knew because there are a thousand things on social media, and it opens you so many ways to learn English. But lack of commitment and distraction are disadvantages. For example, you think “I have to watch this video from the content creator page, there is an update I am supposed to follow”. Maybe you wanted to learn vocabulary but got distracted and forgot your original purpose. (Instructor 5)

To conclude the qualitative analysis, the study shows a positive correlation between using online applications and learning English as a second language among participants. However, the study also shows that learning is primarily incidental, and social media platforms are mostly used for entertainment rather than learning English.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

There are three main parts to this chapter: discussion, implications, and recommendations. The first part will discuss the results of the study along with the related literature. The second part will discuss the implications of the findings. Finally, the third part will provide recommendations for future studies.

#### **5.1 Conclusions and Discussions**

This study examined the possible link between exposure to social media platforms' content and whether it could increase English language skills among students of Final International University. The conclusions drawn from the analysis indicate that in the modern education age, social media has become essential for sharing knowledge, information, and communication (Ozdamli & Ozdalfe, 2015). Because of ICT, students have access to web communication tools without time and space constraints. Social media can also affect several other factors, such as motivation, comprehensible input, meaningful interaction, and communication. Social media may increase motivation by combining entertainment with studying (Sharma, 2019). Social media offers lots of opportunities for communication between English language speakers and students who wish to learn the English language, and it can also lower the anxiety of giving a wrong impression in the process, which is very prevalent in traditional face-to-face interaction (O'Day & Heimberg, 2021).

Overall, the study aimed to understand the impact of social media on the acquisition of English. The traditional classroom setting and conventional teaching methods cause



ESL students to succumb to boredom. Consequently, this causes a lack of motivation and disinterest in students in higher educational settings. They help students learn English as their second language because there are many useful English learning websites on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube that help them develop their language skills and expand their vocabulary. They also have the opportunity to speak English to people from different cultures and languages all over the world.

As it was discussed before, there are some drawbacks to using social media as an English language learning tool. One of the main problems is that it may lead to distraction. The only solution here may be the cultivation of strong focus among students and monitoring of their online activity in class time so they could have a chance to begin learning independently and apply what they have learned outside of classroom time. In addition, students should receive training and guidance on how to utilize social media for learning purposes. In the process, social media could provide students with access to a wide range of great learning tools. For instance, students don't have to rely solely on handbooks to acquire their daily dose of knowledge. Facebook may have an informal style but it is useful for improving interaction skills in an authentic context. Google+ may be utilized for academic reasons and can significantly improve learning. YouTube allows students to better understand subject matter through watching the videos and may increase listening skills. Brick (2011) highlights that real-time feedback is one of the key positive factors in the use of social media. As in, when the person communicates online with others, they may receive immediate feedback or reaction on their L2 language abilities.

Pitaloka (2021) argues that there are several factors that contribute to English language acquisition within the framework of web-based communication: (1) connecting with new international friends; (2) conversing in English on social media; (3) watching videos in

English; (4) holding video conversations with new international friends; (5) holding video calls with international friends; (6) sharing posts in English.

The type of information a user wants from social networks depends on which data they pique interest in. Each social networking site gives different resources and serves different purposes in learning English language proficiency. For example, Telegram, WhatsApp, Discord, and other internationally centralized instant messaging platforms allow discussion and sending of text-based information. Twitter and Instagram are useful as tools of communication exchange.

The research study methodology was mixed, using both qualitative and quantitative approaches to analyze semi-open interview and questionnaire data. The survey was distributed online through mail among diverse ethnic groups of FIU, primarily Turkish, Africans, and Arabs, and mainly studied English as the second language. The qualitative data-gathering process consisted of asking semi-open questions to six English language instructors who were former master students and four regular students.

The study aimed to answer five primary research questions. The findings below will focus on and provide answers to each one of them.

The first question sought to understand the average usage of social media services by FIU students. The results suggest that the majority of students spend several hours on social media every day, and mostly use them to communicate with friends and family, or for fun and leisure.

The second question aimed to find out what amount of English language knowledge gained from social media sites is helpful for FIU students, and according to data gathered from the questionnaire, roughly 70-80% of all students admitted that social media increased their writing ability by writing posts, improved their speaking fluency and by

using social media it developed their interaction with classmates and lecturers. At the same time, it also helped them in their academic performance.

The third question brings up essential topics: Could there be any incidental learning due to such exposure? The findings indicate that students copy new words they discover in their vocabulary and daily online activities. The results of interview questions shed a more detailed light on the mechanics of this learning: Since students got exposed to the new wave of information that is mainly carried out in the English language, students triggered their curiosity by wanting to learn more since such information brought them entertainment or contained some interesting information.

The fourth question aimed to establish a link between using social media applications and language learning. The study's findings concluded that an overwhelming majority (more than 90%) of students agree that social media helped them hone their English language skills. Most participants admitted that they use the English language while surfing the web, while roughly 50% of students admitted using social media to learn and discover new information. The students gave multiple other answers for utilizing social media platforms, such as communicating with people from other nations or following their favorite foreign artists. The consensus that could be drawn from these findings indicates that students get entertained upon using ICT and surfing the Internet in general. They get conditioned to use certain English language words through entertainment and leisure processes. There could also be a fact of them getting accommodated to the constant new information flow, which piques their interest, and they learn new vocabulary.

The fifth and final question aimed to determine how the international aspect and context of Final International University affect students' exposure to English. As it is mentioned in the university's name, it is an international higher education institute.

Various ethnic groups and languages are gathered within one building, varying from complex Arabic to more widespread European languages. The interview findings indicate that since many students come from countries where French and English are the official languages, their English language acquisition is much more straightforward. They are forced to interact with students from Turkey or Morocco who have low knowledge of English grammar or system; this, in turn, helps foreign non-European language speakers develop their English-speaking skills.

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that students of Final International University often use social media to study English as a second language. Most are interested in using ICT to improve their English language proficiency. These findings indicate that using social media applications and adopting technological advancements and tools have greatly influenced English learners' academic performance.

## **5.2 Implications and Recommendations**

In summary, the purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of social media and ICT on English language learning and the potential correlation between social media use and English language proficiency by analyzing a variety of variables. Recommendations for further study include the use of collaborative interaction and information sharing which will increase the syntactic and lexical complexity of instruction and make it more student-centered. ELT teachers leverage social media to promote their lesson plans and share content through online discussions and group activities that are fun and creative. One important educational message is that masterclasses and workshops will enable learners and educators to use social media more effectively as a learning tool in the

English language. Additional recommendations ask for further investigation to establish a link between the utilization of social networking sites and the psychological well-being of students who go through depression, anxiety, and other social and economic problems associated with information and communication technologies. Since the study as a whole was mostly pre-occupied with students' views on the use of modern technology, Internet and social media sites to develop English language capabilities, the need to investigate and elaborate in bigger detail on the connection between massive social media exposure, incidental learning and having entertainment as a main driving force of seeking information. Another recommendation is that we need to examine middle aged and older teachers' reasonings for their lack of technological literacy amongst majority and how this could affect the students' academic performance.

One of the study's limitations is that it was conducted only within the framework of the Final International University. As such, it is debatable if it could apply to students from other educational institutions, who all have different experiences and perspectives on using social networks in English language learning.

The implications that could be drawn here are that there is a need for more academic research and papers on the topic. This research could help expand the perception of using students' online presence as a tool for learning and increasing English language knowledge, not necessarily as something negative.

The paper also focused on the negative and positive aspects of using social media applications for learning English so they could serve as instructional guides on how to implement ICT into language learning. Finally, the research discovered the primary

sources of motivation for using social media, so these reasons for inner drive could help in English as a second language learning.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX A. SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

#### **Final International University Informed Consent Form**

Dear Participant,

This research project is being conducted by Dariya Tulenova of Final International University. This research project aims to investigate how social media affects language learning. This survey is intended for people 18 years or older.

The proposed study is entitled "An Investigation of Final International University students" use of social media and English language learning. You will be a participant in the project if you read and approve this informed consent form. The survey link will be active between 10 March and 30 April 2023. You are expected to participate in this survey study only once. The survey will be online. This survey is anonymous. Other than being anonymous, no information is required to identify you and you cannot be identified by the answers you supply. Information to be obtained within the scope of this study will only be shared in scientific publications, presentations, and online environments for educational purposes by the researcher. The data collected is anonymous and will be kept safely in an encrypted file on a computer.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your participation in this project can contribute to your awareness of the use of social media in learning English and can inform you how social media affects language learning. None of the steps in the survey can cause personal discomfort. However, if you feel uncomfortable for any reason, you are free to quit the

survey and leave the research without explaining the reason. In such a case, the researcher will only use the information you provide with your consent.

Thank you in advance for participating in this study. If you need any further information about the study or if you have any questions you would like to ask you can contact me at email: [dariya.tulenova@final.edu.tr](mailto:dariya.tulenova@final.edu.tr), phone: +7777999724.

Thank you.

If you have questions about your participation in the research and the protection of your rights, or if you believe that you are at risk or will be exposed to stress in any way, you can contact Final International University Ethics Committee (0392-6506666) by phone or via email [iaek@fiu.edu.tr](mailto:iaek@fiu.edu.tr)

## **Section A: Demographic data**

- 1. I accept to participate in this research.**
  - Yes
  - No
  
- 2. I would like to participate in an interview later in my convenience.**
  - Yes
  - No
  
- 3. What is your gender?**
  - Male
  - Female
  
- 4. What is your age?**
  - 17-21
  - 21-25
  - 25-29
  - 29 and above

## **Section B: Frequency and average use of ICT tools**

- 5. Do you have access to a computer?**
  - Yes
  - No
  
- 6. Do you have a smartphone?**
  - Yes
  - No
  
- 7. Do you have an IPAD?**
  - Yes
  - No
  
- 8. Do you have access to the internet?**
  - Yes
  - No
  
- 9. Do you use social media?**
  - Yes
  - No



## **Section C: The respondents' ability to use social media**

### **10. I am competent to use Facebook.**

- Not applicable
- Weak
- Moderate
- Good
- Very good

### **11. I am competent to use WhatsApp.**

- Not applicable
- Weak
- Moderate
- Good
- Very good

### **12. I am competent to use Twitter.**

- Not applicable
- Weak
- Moderate
- Good
- Very good

### **13. I am competent to use YouTube.**

- Not applicable
- Weak
- Moderate
- Good
- Very good

### **14. I am competent to use Instagram.**

- Not applicable
- Weak
- Moderate
- Good
- Very good

**15. I am competent to use Messenger.**

- Not applicable
- Weak
- Moderate
- Good
- Very good

**16. I am competent to use TikTok.**

- Not applicable
- Weak
- Moderate
- Good
- Very good

**Section D: The elements influencing the usage of social media**

**17. I utilize social media to speak with my companions.**

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

**18. I utilize online media to speak with my family.**

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

**19. I utilize online media to learn new things.**

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

**20. I use social media to follow my favorite artist.**

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

**21. I utilize online media to learn English.**

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- 

**22. I utilize web-based media to pass my free time.**

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

**23. I use social media to gain knowledge.**

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

**24. I use social media to follow the latest trend.**

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

**25. I use social media because my friends use it.**

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

**26. I use social media because it is useful for me.**

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

**27. I burn through my time when I utilize online media.**

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

**Section E: The respondents' perceptions of the usage of the English language while utilizing social media**

**28. When I use social media, I like to use English.**

- Yes
- No

**29. I feel good writing in English via online media.**

- Yes
- No

**30. I feel excited to use English on social media.**

- Yes
- No

**31. I improve my English writing skill by writing posts on social media.**

- Yes
- No

**32. I improve my speaking fluency using social media.**

- Yes
- No

**33. Social media helps me to improve my English.**

- Yes
- No

**34. I refer to the dictionary before posting anything on social media.**

- Yes
- No

**35. Using social media develops my interaction with classmates and lecturers; it is also helping in my academic performance.**

- Yes
- No

**36. I believe that social media is another best platform to develop English.**

- Yes
- No

**37. I am confident to correct my friends' English grammar mistakes on social media.**

- Yes
- No

**38. Social media helps me with copying words, phrases, or sentences.**

- Yes
- No

## **APPENDIX B. QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW.**

### **Interview Questions for Students**

1. What kind of Social Media you prefer?
2. What kind of activities you usually perform there?
3. What's your main motivation in using social media?
4. Did it improve your English language skills?
5. Do you think it's effective?
6. What kind of social media do you have?
7. What kinds of social media do you use mostly in learning English?
8. When do you usually use your social media in learning English?
9. How frequently do you usually use your social media in learning English?
10. What are the disadvantages of using social media to learn English?

## APPENDIX C. ETHICS APPROVAL FORM



### İÇ YAZIŞMA / INTER OFFICE MEMORANDUM

**Gönderilen/To:** Yrd.Doç.Dr. Abbas Hadizadeh

**Tarih/Date:** 06/03/2023

**Gönderen/From:** Prof. Dr. Hüseyin YARATAN  
Rektör

**Ref/Sayı:**100/050/REK.001

**Konu/Subject:** Etik Kurulu onayı hk.

3 Mart 2023 tarihli Etik Kurulu toplantısında alınan karar doğrultusunda çalışmalarınızın uygun olduğuna karar verilmiştir. Bilgi ve gereğini rica ederim.

**Dağıtım:** Etik Kurulu Başkanlığı

#### **Etik Kurulu Kararı:**

**Karar Sayısı 2023/006/01:**  
Dariya Tulenova'nın Yard. Prof. Dr. Abbas Hadizadeh'in rehberliğinde yürütülmek üzere Etik Kurulu'na sunduğu, "An Investigation of Final International University Students' Use of Social media" başlıklı başvuru (Proje No, FIUP-2023/005) görüşülmüş, önerilen araştırma, başvuruda belirtilen gerekçe, amaç, yaklaşım ve yöntemleri ile, etik ve bilimsel açıdan uygun bulunmuştur.

SK/HY

## APPENDIX D: TURNITIN SIMILARITY REPORT

### Social media

#### ORIGINALITY REPORT

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