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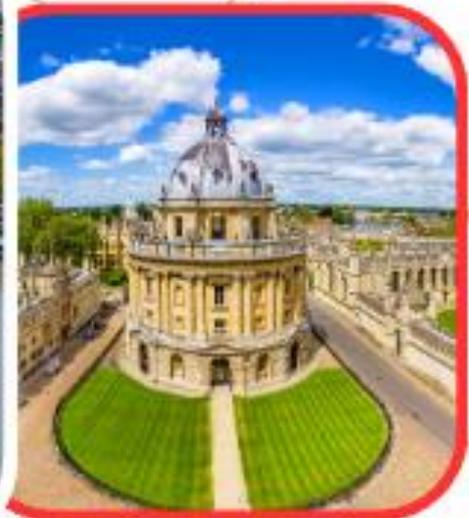
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THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING AMONG NON – NATIVE SPEAKERS

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Abstract

This study explores the influence of social media platforms on English language learning among non-native speakers. With the increasing use of social media tools such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook, language learners are exposed to diverse linguistic content in real-time and informal settings. This research aims to determine how these platforms contribute to vocabulary development, listening skills, pronunciation, and learner motivation. Data was collected through surveys and interviews with 100 non-native English learners across various age groups. Findings indicate that social media has a positive impact on language acquisition, especially in terms of vocabulary and listening comprehension, though challenges such as distraction and informal language use remain.

Keywords: Social media, English language learning, non-native speakers, informal learning, digital education

Introduction

The rise of digital technology has significantly reshaped how languages are learned and practiced. Social media, once a platform for entertainment and communication, is now a powerful tool for educational purposes. Among non-native English speakers, these platforms provide an immersive environment for language exposure, helping learners to access authentic content, interact with native speakers, and improve their skills informally. This study investigates the extent to which social media contributes to English learning and highlights both the benefits and challenges associated with it.

Literature Review

Numerous studies have emphasized the importance of authentic input in language acquisition (Krashen, 1985). Social media offers abundant exposure to real-world English through videos, chats, memes, and podcasts. Research by Manca & Ranieri (2016) revealed that students use platforms like YouTube and Instagram to practice listening and speaking. Another study by Aydin (2012) found that Facebook groups helped learners develop writing and reading skills through group interaction. However, issues like slang usage, reduced grammar accuracy, and distraction have also been reported (Vurdien, 2019).

Methodology

This research employed a mixed-methods approach. A survey was distributed to 100 non-native English learners aged 16–35 from various countries. Questions measured time spent on social media, types of platforms used, and perceived language improvements. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with 10 participants to gather deeper insights into their experiences. Data was analyzed using statistical software for quantitative results and thematic analysis for qualitative responses.

Results

The survey showed that:

80% of participants used YouTube and TikTok for learning pronunciation and vocabulary.

65% reported improvement in listening skills.

52% joined English-learning groups on Facebook or Telegram.

60% mentioned increased motivation due to entertaining and interactive content.

From the interviews, participants noted that following English-speaking influencers and content creators helped them imitate accents and expand vocabulary. However, many reported challenges such as informal language, slang, and reduced grammar practice.

Discussion

The results suggest that social media is a valuable supplementary tool for English learners. Platforms like YouTube provide visual and auditory input, which supports pronunciation and listening comprehension. Learners also benefit from motivation, peer interaction, and exposure to real-life usage. However, the informal nature of language on social media may lead to grammar inaccuracy and overuse of slang. Thus, while social media is helpful, it should be used alongside formal learning.

Conclusion

Social media has a significant impact on English language learning among non-native speakers, particularly in vocabulary, listening, and motivation. While it cannot fully replace formal education, its role as a complementary tool is clear.Educators and learners should consider integrating social media into their learning strategies for a more engaging and effective language experience.

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