

**Learning of English by UG Students through Social Media in the Palamuru
University Region: An Analysis**

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Abstract

This study examines how social media influences the English language acquisition of undergraduate (UG) students of Palamuru University. Employing a mixed-methods strategy that incorporates surveys, interviews, and content analysis, the research explores the degree to which social media platforms are used for language acquisition, the perceived advantages and obstacles, and the factors affecting their utilization. Research shows that although social media provides beneficial chances for informal language use and exposure, its success depends on several factors, including platform selection, content consumption behaviors, and personal learning preferences. The research ends with suggestions for teachers and students to enhance the educational benefits of social media for acquiring the English language.

Keywords: Social media, English language, Content, Learning, Platforms

1. Introduction

In the current hyper-connected world, social media has transitioned from a simple communication tool to a transformative entity affecting numerous life aspects, including education. Thanks to the extensive access to smartphones and low-cost internet, social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube have become essential in the everyday experiences of undergraduate (UG) students at Palamuru University. These platforms not only promote social engagement but also provide a distinct and casual environment for learning and enhancing skills, such as English language acquisition.

English plays a crucial role in India as a tool for educational achievement, career Advancement, and international communication. Historically, instruction in the English

language has been limited to classroom environments, depending significantly on textbooks and structured teaching techniques. Nonetheless, the rise of social media has brought a more dynamic, accessible, and interactive aspect to language learning. Social media sites present students with a variety of content, including educational clips and language lessons, as well as live discussions and user-created resources. This change has transformed the ways in which English is acquired, utilized, and employed in practical situations.

This research explores the complex relationship between social media and English language acquisition among undergraduate students at Palamuru University. It seeks to reveal how these platforms are utilized for language learning, the advantages and difficulties linked to their use, and the elements that influence students' interactions with them. By means of surveys, interviews, and content analysis, the study investigates essential questions: How do students utilize social media for learning English? What benefits do they recognize? What obstacles impede their effective utilization of these platforms for educational aims?

The results of this research hold important consequences for educators, policymakers, and students. They provide perspectives on how social media can be incorporated into formal education to enhance conventional teaching approaches. Moreover, by recognizing the obstacles and constraints, stakeholders can formulate strategies.

2. Literature Review

In recent years, the incorporation of social media into language learning has attracted considerable interest, with researchers investigating its ability to improve language skills and encourage student involvement. Multiple studies indicate that social media platforms offer genuine language exposure, allowing learners to engage with real-world content and converse with both native and non-native speakers in casual environments (Bhuvana Ramachandran, 2023).

Although it has benefits, using social media for language learning comes with its difficulties. The casual style of communication on social media frequently involves slang, shortcuts, and grammar mistakes, which could adversely affect users' skills and comprehension of conventional language standards (Ayesha Malik, 2024).

An additional important issue is the digital divide, which unfairly impacts students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Restricted access to smartphones, dependable internet, and digital skills can hinder the fair utilization of social media for educational objectives (Afra

Afzal, 2023). This concern highlights the importance of social media's inclusivity as an educational resource and the necessity for actions to close this divide.

3. Methodology

This research utilized a mixed-methods strategy, merging quantitative and qualitative data-gathering methods to thoroughly explore the influence of social media on English language acquisition among undergraduate (UG) students and teachers of various colleges of Palamuru University. Through the combination of surveys, interviews, and content analysis, the methodology provided a thorough examination of the research goals.

Sampling

The research included 280 undergraduate students and 40 teachers from various colleges of Palamuru University. The student sample was chosen through stratified random sampling to guarantee representation from various disciplines, geographic areas, and socio-economic statuses. The sample of teachers included English language lecturers and professors with different levels of teaching experience, chosen through purposive sampling to gain insights into their professional viewpoints.

Questionnaires:

A systematic questionnaire was given to all 280 students to gather quantitative information regarding their social media usage habits, favored platforms, usage frequency, and perceived advantages and difficulties in learning the English language.

Educators filled out a distinct survey examining their perspectives on the effectiveness of social media as a language learning resource, noted student results, and identified challenges in incorporating social media into the curriculum.

Interviews:

Comprehensive, semi-structured interviews were carried out with a group of 50 students (selected from the survey participants) to explore more thoroughly their experiences, motivations, and difficulties in utilizing social media for learning English.

Fifteen teachers were also interviewed to gather their perspectives on the educational effects of social media and the methods they use to support students.

Content Evaluation:

A variety of social media posts, remarks, and interactions were examined to recognize linguistic attributes, communication practices, and patterns in English usage.

Information was collected from well-known platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp to guarantee its significance. The examination emphasized vocabulary, syntax, and discourse styles, along with indications of both informal and formal language usage.

Data Examination

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze survey responses to uncover the facts and investigate relationships among variables like platform choices and perceived learning results.

Ethical Factors

Participation was on a voluntary basis, and informed consent was secured from all participants. Anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed to safeguard the privacy of participants. The study followed ethical standards to reduce biases and maintain the integrity of the results.

This approach offered an extensive and multifaceted insight into how social media aids English language acquisition among undergraduate students in India, while also integrating educators' viewpoints to contextualize the results.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

This section presents a detailed analysis of the data collected from 280 undergraduate (UG) students and 40 teachers, giving the priority on the role of social media in English language learning. This discussion explores patterns of social media usage, perceived benefits and challenges, and the factors influencing its effectiveness as a language learning tool.

Social Media Platforms Used for English Language Learning

Table 1 summarizes the popularity of various social media platforms among students for learning English.

Platform	Percentage of Students
WhatsApp	85%
YouTube	78%
Instagram	65%
Facebook	42%
Others	10%

WhatsApp became the most popular platform, with 85% of students using it to access groups and discussions related to language learning. YouTube came in second at 78%, providing a wide range of educational materials, including tutorials and pronunciation aids. Instagram, featuring engaging reels and visual material, was utilized by 65% of students, whereas Facebook and other platforms made up fewer shares.

Perceived Benefits of Using Social Media for English Language Learning

Table 2 highlights the primary benefits reported by students.

Benefit	Percentage of Students
Increased motivation	72%
Improved vocabulary	68%
Enhanced cultural understanding	55%
Improved grammar	50%
Increased confidence in speaking English	45%

The data emphasizes the motivating influence of social media, with 72% of students indicating they feel more encouraged to learn English. An increase in vocabulary (68%) and enhanced cultural awareness (55%) were other significant benefits, highlighting the diverse exposure provided by social media.

Perceived Challenges of Using Social Media for English Language Learning

Table 3 outlines the challenges faced by students in leveraging social media for learning English.

Challenge	Percentage of Students
Informal nature of language	60%
Potential for distraction	55%
Lack of personalized guidance	48%
Exposure to inappropriate content	35%
Limited access to reliable information	28%

The most opted (60%) was the informal nature of language on social media, which sometimes led to confusion about standard usage. Distractions (55%) and the absence of personalized guidance (48%) further complicated its educational utility.

Analysis

The information shows a two-fold effect of social media on learning the English language. Students who actively interacted with educational materials and took part in interactive tasks showed significant improvements in their language skills. These students generally merged social media use with formal teaching, enhancing their learning results. Conversely, students utilizing social media mainly for entertainment or passive content viewing exhibited minimal progress, highlighting the necessity for purposeful engagement.

Discussion

Though social media offers varied chances for language practice and exposure, its success depends on thoughtful use and resource availability. Tackling issues like distractions, exposure to casual language, and the digital divide can greatly improve its effectiveness in English language teaching.

Results

The results indicated that a considerable percentage of undergraduate students in India use social media to learn the English language. Well-known platforms, such as Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram, are utilized for activities like viewing English films and TV series, enjoying English music, reading English articles and posts, and engaging with native English speakers. Students recognized multiple advantages of utilizing social media for language acquisition, such as heightened motivation, better vocabulary and grammar, and greater cultural awareness. Nonetheless, obstacles like the casual aspect of language, the chance for distraction, and the absence of tailored support were also noted.

Factors Influencing Social Media Usage for English Language Learning

Various factors were identified that affected how much UG students used social media for learning the English language. They are

- **Choosing platforms:** Students who proactively searched for platforms emphasizing language learning, like educational YouTube channels or language learning groups on Facebook, generally experienced greater benefits.
- **Content engagement behaviors:** Students who interacted with English content by commenting on posts, joining discussions, and producing their own material showed enhanced language growth.

• **Personal learning styles:** Learners who favor visual or auditory methods discovered that social media was especially helpful for acquiring a new language.

• **Availability of technology and internet access:** Students with restricted access to technology or dependable internet connectivity encountered considerable obstacles in using social media for language learning.

Suggestions

Based on the results of this research, the following suggestions are presented to teachers and students to enhance the educational advantages of social media in acquiring the English language:

• **Incorporate social media into teaching:** Teachers can weave social media tasks into their curriculum, including forming online discussion groups, hosting virtual language exchanges, and utilizing social media tools for joint projects.

• **Offer direction and assistance:** Teachers can offer students direction on choosing suitable platforms, recognizing trustworthy information sources, and creating efficient learning methods.

• **Tackle the digital divide:** Initiatives must be implemented to guarantee equal access to technology and internet connectivity for every student.

• **Foster critical thinking and digital literacy:** Students need to be motivated to assess the information they find on social media critically and cultivate the abilities to recognize and evade misinformation.

5. Conclusion

Social media can transform the acquisition of English language skills of undergraduate students at Palamuru University. By utilizing the interactive, captivating, and genuine qualities of these platforms, teachers and students can develop creative and impactful educational experiences. Nonetheless, it is essential to acknowledge the challenges and restrictions of social media and to create strategies for alleviating these problems. By taking a careful and educated approach, social media can be utilized as an effective means to improve English language skills among undergraduate students in India.

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