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## **Balancing Acts: Harmony & Collaboration in Education**

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# The Role of Social Media Platforms in Enhancing Language Learning Practices: A Case Study

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## Abstract

In this globalized world, language learning is not merely bound to traditional classroom learning. Social media platforms have brought about a substantial change in language learning since it is utilized by individuals worldwide. Since the benefits of social media for enhancing EFL are ignored by learners, the recent paper aims to look into how social media can be effective in learning and improving English as a foreign language (EFL) in terms of language skills, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammatical comprehension. The data were collected through mixed methods. The quantitative data was collected through a 28-item questionnaire and analyzed by SPSS 27. And semi-structured interview was used for collecting qualitative data. Fifty-one participants in Erbil filled out the online questionnaire and four participants were interviewed for the qualitative phase. The findings of the study illustrate that learners have favorable perspectives toward social media platforms in enhancing EFL in terms of language skills, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge. The results of the paper can help teachers, curriculum creators, and course designers to include social media in their teaching to improve students' EFL proficiency. Also, they can increase learners' understanding of how to use social media platforms effectively to enhance EFL.

**Keywords:** English as a Foreign Language, Social Media, English Language Learning

## 1. Introduction

In the era of the digital world, language learning has experienced a substantial shift from learning a language in traditional classrooms to learning a language on social media. Social media is one of the digital tools that most people across the world utilize regularly (Xodabande, 2017; Al Arif, 2019). Some people use it for entertainment and fun, some use it for meeting new people, while some people use social media platforms for learning and developing a foreign language by practicing the language through social media. Researchers have delved into the realm of this line of work and reported findings on the role of social media in language learning. The findings of Hamadeh et al.'s (2020) study revealed that social media participates in learners' daily language practices and enhances language learning. Like any other country,

learning English as a foreign language has received the utmost attention in the Kurdistan region of Iraq due to its multilingual feature. According to Ilyosovna, (2020) people all across the world choose to learn English as a foreign language because they recognize its significance. For a lengthy time, English has served as the language of the entire world. It is virtually hard to identify a nation where learning English has not become the standard (Mahu, 2012).

Since language learning is both theoretical and practical, utilizing social media for language learning can assist in facilitating and enhancing language learning. Therefore, in the present time, technology and social media are used by learners in teaching and learning to increase the stimulation and engagement of learning and teaching (Kitchkaran, 2016). However, the dilemma emerges when the values of social media as a tool for learning and improving a foreign language is neglected by learners and are only used for entertainment purposes. As stated by Al Arif (2019), in over a decade, a variety of social media platforms have emerged, and people, particularly learners, frequently utilize these platforms because they are enjoyable for them. Through social media learners as users can engage in various activities, while also being a great resource for learners to learn the English language. The recent research seeks to explore the effectiveness of utilizing social media as a tool in learning and developing English as a foreign language (EFL) in terms of language skills, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammatical knowledge. As this paper enlightens the benefits of social media platforms in learning and promoting English as a foreign language, it will guide learners to resort to social media for their language practices, and lead educators to implement social media as a tool for language teaching in their classrooms for increasing students' awareness toward the usefulness of social media in language learning. Consequently, to address the aims abovementioned, the recent paper seeks to answer the following research questions:

- What are students' perceptions toward the use of social media platforms in improving the English language?
- What is the role of social media in developing learners' English language in terms of language skills, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammatical knowledge?

## **2. Literature Review**

Learning a second language is said to be more difficult than acquiring one's native tongue (Allan & Finch, 2017). In the meantime, learners all around the world wish to acquire English as a foreign language and use several ways to learn the language. One of the efficient and useful methods used by language learners to practice a foreign language is through social media. Hamadeh et al. (2020) reported that social media use is promoted since it is simple to use in

comparison to other technical advancements, and learners find it to be much more practical for language learning. Similarly, some researchers in their studies indicated that the best tool for encouraging English language learners of all proficiency levels to actively interact with one another in English and improve their language proficiency is social media (e.g., Aziz et al., 2019; Ismail & Shafie, 2019; Derakhshan & Hasanabbasi, 2015; Kitchakarn, 2016). In the same way, research by Sivagnanam and Yunus (2020) revealed that social media usage is an engaging tool that supports implicit learning for EFL students. Furthermore, Al Arif (2019) believed that students utilize social media to practice English language learning which has positively affected students' English language proficiency. Similarly, in a study conducted by Tartari (2015) regarding the use of social media for academic purposes, where students participated in an interview and were asked about their attitude toward using social media for academic purposes. It was found that learners' attitudes are highly favorable toward using social media for academic purposes. Moreover, the results of the interviews revealed that social media is included by students in their educational process. Some students stated that using social media is crucial for learning a foreign language.

There is a growing body of literature on the role of social media. Social media is essential for learning English language skills because it gives adult learners the chance to develop their speaking, listening, reading, writing, and other related skills (Yadav, 2021; Derakhshan & Hasanabbasi, 2015). Social media has a significant impact on English language acquisition as it gives users, especially English language learners the chance to develop and master all the skills of the English language (Khan et al., 2016; Al Arif, 2019). A study conducted by Olaleke et al. (2015) revealed that social media can be utilized to improve students' language skills. Similarly, according to Abbas et al. (2019), social media does influence language learning skills, and learning English as a second language on social media is more practical using social media platforms. All aspects of English language proficiency, including pronunciation, listening comprehension, speaking, writing, grammar, and syntax, can be improved via social media (Yadav, 2021). Vocabulary is the basis of any language in the world, and the absence of vocabulary dramatically prevents language development. Abbas et al. (2019) believed that social media significantly aided ESL students in expanding their vocabulary.

The study conducted by Gonulal (2019) on the use of Instagram as a tool for language learning, revealed that English language learners generally reported favorable opinions about using Instagram to practice their language skills. The study demonstrated that Instagram has the potential to assist language learners in enhancing all language skills in general, vocabulary knowledge, and speaking skills precisely. This mirrors the findings in Lailiyah and

Setiyaningsih (2020) that the participants had positive attitudes towards Instagram in practicing and enhancing English speaking and participants agreed that utilizing Instagram helped them better comprehend vocabulary and sentence structure. On the other side, English language learners expressed slightly unfavorable opinions of utilizing Instagram to correct grammatical mistakes or increase mastery of English grammar. Instagram might not be the best place to practice grammar and other aspects of English language proficiency. This is because slang and other incorrect English use are quite prevalent on Instagram. As a result, several learners expressed unfavorable opinions about using Instagram as a tool to increase their understanding of grammar or correct errors related to grammatical structures

Among English language learners, Facebook is the most widely used medium for online interaction, because there are groups devoted to teaching English, and the members of these groups receive frequent updates on grammar, vocabulary, and other new material. Facebook therefore offers options for social engagement, both synchronous and asynchronous communication (AbuSa'aleek, 2015). The findings of his study demonstrated that the Facebook platform promotes English language learning and skill improvement. This is in line with the outcomes of the research by Olaleke et al. (2015) on the use of social media platforms for developing students' academic performance and activities, illustrating that the Facebook platform is the most widely used social media platform among learners. This application is proven to improve academic achievement and learning performance by enhancing students' reading comprehension, increasing the use of grammar and vocabulary, and encouraging relationships between students and other professionals. Likewise, research conducted by Faryadi (2017) on the effectiveness of Facebook in English language learning revealed that, according to 900 learners who participated in his study, Facebook enhanced learners' critical thinking and understanding and promoted students' English language fluency.

YouTube is a site that provides opportunities to create and deliver videos that promote interaction with others (Habes et al., 2019). In an authentic L2 learning atmosphere, YouTube has been proven to improve language acquisition and has the potential to enhance language skills (Dizon, 2022; Alobaid, 2020). The students in Sun and Fang (2015) claimed that YouTube helped improve their English speaking and assisted them in identifying linguistic weaknesses, primarily in L2 pronunciation. This is aligned with what Aldukhayel (2021) discovered, which is that the students in his research thought that one of the major benefits of watching YouTube vlogs or videos was pronunciation development. Reading blog posts and watching vlogs both contributed to incidental vocabulary development in almost equal amounts. The research by Arndt and Woore (2018), revealed that learners who watched



YouTube videos could significantly improve their incidental vocabulary learning. Moreover, the study by Yaacob et al. (2021) was conducted to figure out the effects of YouTube and Video-Podcast on listening skills and found that YouTube may improve young learners' listening comprehension.

TikTok is a social media application that permits users to record and share a variety of short clips in vertical format, which can be seen by easily scrolling up or down the screen. The research by Pratiwi (2021) aimed to explore how learners can improve their pronunciation through the TikTok application and recognize the efficiency and usefulness of social media in learning English pronunciation and found that the TikTok app can be utilized as a tool for learning English pronunciation. Additionally, a study by Herlisya and Wiratno (2022) found that TikTok includes modern features and everyone relies on it, the best option for enhancing learners' speaking skills is to use TikTok as a learning tool for acquiring new vocabulary. The existing literature emphasizes the important role of various social media platforms in enhancing language learning practices. However, gaps remain in our understanding of the learners' perceptions of the role, promoting mindful experience to maximize the usage outcomes, which this study attempts to explore.

### **3. Methodology**

The recent paper examines the effectiveness of social media in learning and improving English as a foreign language. Therefore, two questions arise: What are students' perceptions toward the use of social media platforms in improving the English language? And what is the role of social media in developing learners' English language in terms of language skills, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammatical knowledge? Furthermore, to answer the research questions and enhance the validity and reliability of the data collected, the researcher employed a mixed-method research design (Dornyei, 2007). As for quantitative data, the researcher designed an online questionnaire that consisted of twenty-eight items, among those twenty-eight items, six of them targeted background information. The questionnaire was distributed with snowball sampling. Therefore, fifty-one participants (forty-one female participants with ten male participants) participated in the questionnaire. The data were collected in two weeks and analyzed with IBM SPSS 27. Moreover, for the reliability of the questionnaire, the researcher performed Cronbach's Alpha reliability test to make sure the questionnaire is reliable. Thereby, after running the test, the questionnaire showed to be reliable as Cronbach's Alpha was 0.725 (see Table 1). This means that the questionnaire is reliable because Cronbach's Alpha is bigger than 0.7.

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.725	.638	22

**Table 1 Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test**

As for qualitative data collection, semi-structured interviews were conducted with four participants. The researcher aimed to use semi-structured interviews as participants are motivated to expound on the problem in an exploratory way during a semi-structured interview (Dornyei, 2007). The participants were asked nine questions as the researcher aimed to gain more knowledge about participants' perceptions toward the effectiveness of social media platforms in learning English as a foreign language. The transcriptions of the interviews were thematically analyzed following the required steps of thematic analysis, where the researcher carefully read the transcriptions multiple times and took notes and post-reading. Then, some codes were generated and categorized into themes.

## **4. Results**

### **4.1 The Quantitative Results**

In the quantitative method, the collected data via questionnaire was analyzed by SPSS version 27. To answer the first research question, the researcher explored participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of social media in learning and developing English as a foreign language by using descriptive statistics, where the items related to participants' perceptions were categorized into a scale. Then, the mean of all the related items as one scale was obtained from the descriptive statistics test (see Table 2).

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
perception	51	3	5	3.54	.475
Valid N (listwise)	51				

**Table 2 The descriptive Statistics of learners' perception on the effectiveness for learning ESL.**

As shown in Table 2, the mean value of the descriptive statistics test is 3.53, which shows that learners, to some extent, have positive perspectives about the usefulness of social media in the context of language learning. This means that learners to some extent think that social media is effective and helpful in learning English as a second language.

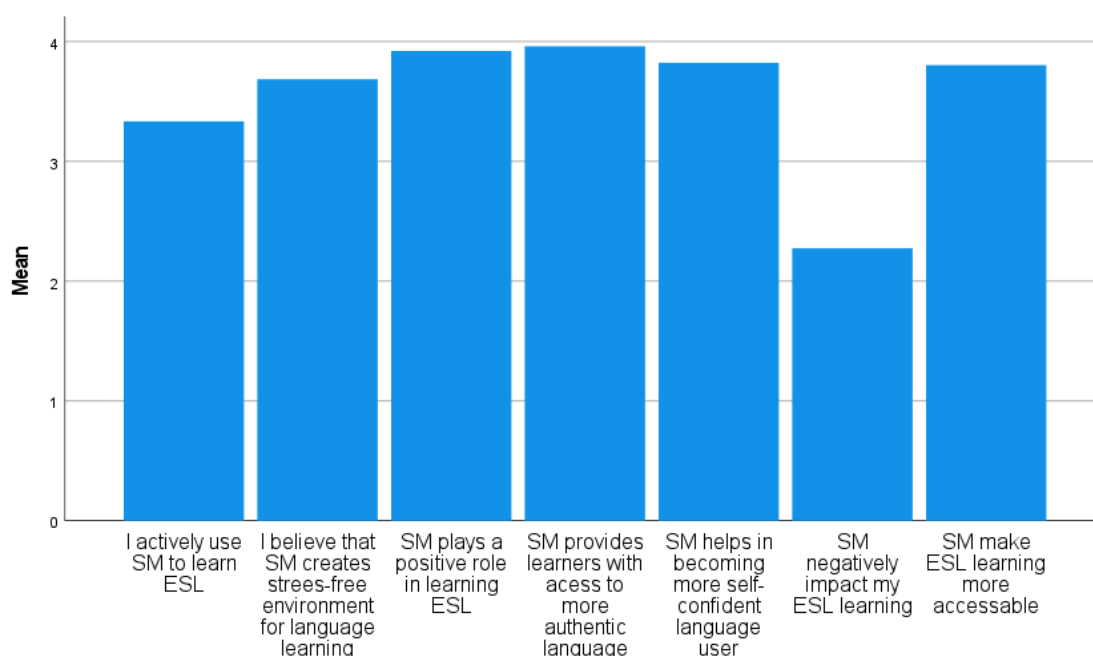
After the significant result of learners' perception toward the effectiveness of social media platforms in learning EFL, the researcher desired to know the most significant reasons that lead learners to think positively about the role of social media platforms in learning English as a foreign language. Therefore, the mean of each item related to learner's perception was separately obtained from the descriptive Statistics test (see Table 3).

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I actively use SM to learn ESL	51	1	5	3.33	1.071
I believe that SM creates stress-free environment for language learning	51	1	5	3.69	1.010
SM plays a positive role in learning ESL	51	2	5	3.92	.821
SM provides learners with access to more authentic language	51	2	5	3.96	.774
SM helps in becoming more self-confident language user	51	1	5	3.82	.932
SM negatively impact my ESL learning	51	1	5	2.27	1.021
SM make ESL learning more accessible	51	2	5	3.80	.693
Valid N (listwise)	51				

**Table 3 The descriptive Statistics of reasons that lead learner to think positively about the effectiveness of social media for learning ESL.**



As illustrated in Table 3, the highest mean value belongs to the statement that indicates that social media platforms provide learners with access to more authentic language (mean = 3.96). This means that almost the majority of learners agree that social media platforms provide learners with more real-world language, a concept backed by a great deal of research proving to be effective to enhance language skills. The second highest mean value with a mean score of 3.92 belongs to the statement which defines that social media has a positive role in learning English as a foreign language. This demonstrates that learners think that social media has a positive role in their language learning. The third reason with the mean value of 3.82 that lead learners to have favorable perceptions toward social media belongs to the statement which points out that social media helps in becoming more self-confident language users. This shows that learners think that social media platforms assist them to be more self-confident and also use English language with higher confidence. The other highest mean value of 3.80 belongs to the statement which shows that learning English as a foreign language is more accessible due to social media platforms. This indicates that learners can have access to the English language wherever and whenever they desire without thinking about time and space.



**Figure 1** The figure below visualizes the results of the Descriptive Statistics.

The figure above illustrates the learners' perceptions of the use of social media platforms for language learning purposes indicating strong agreement that social media has a vital role in learning EFL. Social media platforms provide access to authentic language and make EFL

learning more accessible and stress-free. They also have an important role in boosting self-confidence. All in all, the participants expressed a positive perception of social media platforms in EFL learning.

As for answering the second research question, an Inferential Test was used. Therefore, a normality test was run to determine whether or not the questionnaire is normally distributed. If the questionnaire is normally distributed, a parametric test will be used. While if the questionnaire is not normally distributed a non-parametric test will be used.

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test									
			SM can assist in developing Listening skill	SM can assist in developing Reading skill	SM can assist in developing Speaking skill	SM can assist in developing Writing skill	SM assist in improving grammatical knowledge	SM helps in developing pronunciation	SM helps in vocabulary enrichment
N			51	51	51	51	51	51	51
Normal Parameters <sup>a,b</sup>	Mean		4.39	3.94	4.20	3.55	3.41	3.61	3.82
	Std. Deviation		.695	1.173	.722	1.286	1.080	1.097	.888
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute		.280	.324	.334	.304	.178	.267	.226
	Positive		.243	.183	.293	.200	.178	.164	.186
	Negative		-.280	-.324	-.334	-.304	-.178	-.267	-.226
Test Statistic			.280	.324	.334	.304	.178	.267	.226
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) <sup>c</sup>			<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed) <sup>d</sup>	Sig.		.000	.000	.000	.000	<.001	.000	.000
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
		Upper Bound	.000	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

d. Lilliefors' method based on 10000 Monte Carlo samples with starting seed 2000000.

**Table 4 One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality Test**

As shown in Table 4, One Sample K-S was used to check normality before running the inferential test. After checking normality, the result shows that the P value of sig (2-tailed) is smaller than 0.05. This means that the questionnaire is not normally distributed. Therefore, a K-related type of inferential test is used for analyzing the role of social media platforms in developing learners' English language in terms of language skills, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammatical knowledge (see Table 5).

Test Statistics <sup>a</sup>	
N	51
Chi-Square	50.246
df	6
Asymp. Sig.	<.001

a. Friedman Test

**Table 5 K-related Test (Friedman Test)**

As illustrated in Table 5, a K-related Test (Friedman Test) was run to check the role of social media in improving learners' English language in terms of the four skills of language, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammatical knowledge. As shown in the Test Statistics, the significant p-value is 0.001 which means that social media platforms have a significant role in improving listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammatical knowledge. Therefore, the researcher ran 2 related sample tests to see which of these language skills were different and improved (see Table 6).

Test Statistics<sup>a</sup>

Z	SM can assist in developing Speaking skill - SM can assist in developing Listening skill	SM can assist in developing Reading skill - SM can assist in developing Listening skill	SM can assist in developing Writing skill - SM can assist in developing Listening skill	SM helps in developing vocabulary enrichment - SM can assist in developing Listening skill	SM helps in developing pronunciation - SM can assist in developing Listening skill	SM assist in improving grammatical knowledge - SM can assist in developing Listening skill	SM can assist in developing Reading skill - SM can assist in developing Speaking skill	SM can assist in developing Writing skill - SM can assist in developing Speaking skill	SM helps in developing vocabulary enrichment - SM can assist in developing Speaking skill	SM helps in developing pronunciation - SM can assist in developing Speaking skill	SM assist in improving grammatical knowledge - SM can assist in developing Speaking skill	SM can assist in developing Writing skill - SM can assist in developing Reading skill	SM helps in developing vocabulary enrichment - SM can assist in developing Reading skill	SM helps in developing pronunciation - SM can assist in developing Reading skill	SM assist in improving grammatical knowledge - SM can assist in developing Reading skill	SM helps in developing vocabulary enrichment - SM can assist in developing Writing skill	SM helps in developing pronunciation - SM can assist in developing Writing skill	SM assist in improving grammatical knowledge - SM can assist in developing Writing skill	SM helps in developing pronunciation - SM can assist in developing enrichment	SM assist in improving grammatical knowledge - SM helps in developing enrichment	SM assist in improving grammatical knowledge - SM helps in developing pronunciation
Z	-1.528 <sup>b</sup>	-2.303 <sup>b</sup>	-3.641 <sup>b</sup>	-3.694 <sup>b</sup>	-3.715 <sup>b</sup>	-4.700 <sup>b</sup>	-1.493 <sup>b</sup>	-2.889 <sup>b</sup>	-2.659 <sup>b</sup>	-3.147 <sup>b</sup>	-4.045 <sup>b</sup>	-3.033 <sup>b</sup>	-541 <sup>b</sup>	-1.280 <sup>b</sup>	-2.482 <sup>b</sup>	-1.219 <sup>c</sup>	-432 <sup>b</sup>	-755 <sup>b</sup>	-1.170 <sup>b</sup>	-2.667 <sup>b</sup>	-1.407 <sup>b</sup>
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.126	.021	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	.135	.004	.008	.002	<.001	.002	.588	.201	.013	.223	.666	.451	.242	.008	.159

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test  
b. Based on positive ranks.  
c. Based on negative ranks.

Table 6 Test Statistics of 2 related Test (Wilcoxon)

As shown in the Table above, there are a significant improvement between writing and listening skills, vocabulary and listening skills, pronunciation and listening skills, grammar and listening, writing and speaking, vocabulary and speaking, pronunciation and speaking, grammar and speaking, writing and reading, grammar and reading, and grammar and vocabulary. Therefore, Wilcoxon Test was run to check which one of these skills has a higher rank of improvement (see Table 7).

	Ranks			Sum of Ranks
		N	Mean Rank	
SM can assist in developing Speaking skill - SM can assist in developing Listening skill	Negative Ranks	13 <sup>a</sup>	9.15	119.00
	Positive Ranks	6 <sup>b</sup>	10.40	52.00
	Ties	33 <sup>a</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM can assist in developing Reading skill - SM can assist in developing Listening skill	Negative Ranks	16 <sup>d</sup>	13.28	212.50
	Positive Ranks	7 <sup>a</sup>	9.07	63.50
	Ties	28 <sup>f</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM can assist in developing Writing skill - SM can assist in developing Listening skill	Negative Ranks	24 <sup>g</sup>	15.98	383.50
	Positive Ranks	6 <sup>h</sup>	10.30	51.50
	Ties	22 <sup>j</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM helps in vocabulary enrichment- SM can assist in developing Listening skill	Negative Ranks	21 <sup>j</sup>	13.07	274.50
	Positive Ranks	3 <sup>a</sup>	8.50	25.50
	Ties	27 <sup>i</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM helps in developing pronunciation- SM can assist in developing Listening skill	Negative Ranks	25 <sup>m</sup>	15.44	386.00
	Positive Ranks	4 <sup>n</sup>	12.25	49.00
	Ties	22 <sup>a</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM assist in improving grammatical knowledge - SM can assist in developing Listening skill	Negative Ranks	33 <sup>p</sup>	18.03	595.00
	Positive Ranks	2 <sup>q</sup>	17.50	35.00
	Ties	16 <sup>r</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM can assist in developing Reading skill - SM can assist in developing Speaking skill	Negative Ranks	14 <sup>s</sup>	15.50	217.00
	Positive Ranks	11 <sup>t</sup>	9.82	108.00
	Ties	26 <sup>u</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM can assist in developing Writing skill - SM can assist in developing Speaking skill	Negative Ranks	23 <sup>v</sup>	16.13	371.00
	Positive Ranks	7 <sup>w</sup>	13.43	94.00
	Ties	21 <sup>x</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM helps in vocabulary enrichment- SM can assist in developing Speaking skill	Negative Ranks	19 <sup>y</sup>	12.45	236.50
	Positive Ranks	6 <sup>z</sup>	12.70	63.50
	Ties	27 <sup>aa</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM helps in developing pronunciation- SM can assist in developing Speaking skill	Negative Ranks	22 <sup>ab</sup>	15.30	336.50
	Positive Ranks	6 <sup>ac</sup>	11.58	69.50
	Ties	23 <sup>ad</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM assist in improving grammatical knowledge - SM can assist in developing Speaking skill	Negative Ranks	29 <sup>ae</sup>	18.19	527.50
	Positive Ranks	5 <sup>af</sup>	13.50	67.50
	Ties	17 <sup>ag</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM can assist in developing Writing skill - SM can assist in developing Reading skill	Negative Ranks	15 <sup>ah</sup>	10.20	153.00
	Positive Ranks	3 <sup>ai</sup>	6.00	18.00
	Ties	33 <sup>aj</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM helps in vocabulary enrichment- SM can assist in developing Reading skill	Negative Ranks	21 <sup>ak</sup>	13.10	275.00
	Positive Ranks	10 <sup>al</sup>	22.10	221.00
	Ties	20 <sup>am</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM helps in developing pronunciation- SM can assist in developing Reading skill	Negative Ranks	24 <sup>an</sup>	15.46	371.00
	Positive Ranks	10 <sup>ao</sup>	22.40	224.00
	Ties	17 <sup>ap</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM assist in improving grammatical knowledge - SM can assist in developing Reading skill	Negative Ranks	28 <sup>aq</sup>	17.39	487.00
	Positive Ranks	8 <sup>ar</sup>	22.38	179.00
	Ties	15 <sup>as</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM helps in vocabulary enrichment- SM can assist in developing Writing skill	Negative Ranks	14 <sup>at</sup>	15.29	214.00
	Positive Ranks	19 <sup>au</sup>	18.26	347.00
	Ties	18 <sup>av</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM helps in developing pronunciation- SM can assist in developing Writing skill	Negative Ranks	18 <sup>aw</sup>	17.97	323.50
	Positive Ranks	19 <sup>ax</sup>	19.97	379.50
	Ties	14 <sup>ay</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM assist in improving grammatical knowledge - SM can assist in developing Writing skill	Negative Ranks	23 <sup>az</sup>	23.17	533.00
	Positive Ranks	20 <sup>ba</sup>	20.65	413.00
	Ties	8 <sup>bb</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM helps in developing pronunciation- SM helps in vocabulary enrichment	Negative Ranks	15 <sup>bc</sup>	12.57	188.50
	Positive Ranks	9 <sup>bd</sup>	12.39	111.50
	Ties	27 <sup>ba</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM assist in improving grammatical knowledge - SM helps in vocabulary enrichment	Negative Ranks	23 <sup>bf</sup>	14.34	315.50
	Positive Ranks	6 <sup>ba</sup>	15.08	90.50
	Ties	23 <sup>bb</sup>		
	Total	51		
SM assist in improving grammatical knowledge - SM helps in developing pronunciation	Negative Ranks	16 <sup>bl</sup>	13.34	213.50
	Positive Ranks	9 <sup>bj</sup>	12.39	111.50
	Ties	26 <sup>bk</sup>		
	Total	51		

a. SM can assist in developing Speaking skill < SM can assist in developing Listening skill

## Table 7: Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

As shown in the Table above, reading skills received a mean rank of 13.28 which is higher than the mean rank of listening skills with a mean rank of 9.7. This indicates that social media platforms were more useful in improving learners' reading skills compared to listening skills. In terms of writing and listening skills, learners' writing skills received a higher mean rank of

15.98 than listening skills with a rank of 10.30. This points out that learners' writing skill is developed over their listening skills. When it comes to the difference between writing and reading, writing received a higher rank of 10.20 over reading with a mean rank of 6. This means that social media platforms assist the learner in improving their writing skill more than their reading skill.

Moreover, when it comes to the significant difference between vocabulary and listening, it can be seen that social media platforms are more useful for improving learners' vocabulary as they received a mean rank of 13.07 rather than listening skills with a mean rank of 8.50. Additionally, there is a significant difference between learners' listening skills and pronunciation, the mean rank shows that learners' pronunciation with a mean rank of 15.44 is improved over their listening skills with a mean rank of 12.25. This means that in terms of listening and pronunciation, social media platforms were more effective in improving pronunciation if compared to listening skills.

When it comes to the comparison between grammar knowledge and listening, the test indicates that social media platforms promoted learners' grammatical knowledge with a mean value of 18.3 over listening skills which obtained a mean rank of 17.05. In addition, social media promoted learners' writing skills over speaking skills. Writing skills obtained a mean rank of 16.13 whereas speaking received a mean rank of 13.43. In terms of vocabulary and speaking, the test shows that speaking received a higher rank of 12.70 compared to vocabulary with a rank of 12.45. This means that social media platforms were more useful for promoting speaking skills rather than vocabulary.

When it comes to the difference between pronunciation and speaking skills. It is indicated that social media improved learners' pronunciation with a rank of 15.30 more than their speaking skills which received a mean rank of 11.58. Furthermore, grammar knowledge received a higher mean rank of 18.19 than speaking skills with a mean rank of 13.50. This shows that social media platforms were effective in improving grammatical knowledge rather than speaking skills. In terms of the comparison between grammar and reading, reading skills obtained a higher rank of 22.38 over grammar with a mean rank of 17.39. This means that students' reading skills have improved over their grammar knowledge, but when grammar and vocabulary are compared, grammar received a higher rank of 14.34 over vocabulary with a mean rank of 12.39. This means that learners' grammar knowledge has improved more than their vocabulary.

## **4.2 The Qualitative Results**

To elaborate more on the results of the quantitative analysis, the researcher used qualitative analysis to gain more knowledge about learners' perception of the effectiveness of social media in EFL learning in general and in terms of the four skills of language, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge. Therefore, several themes were generated from the transcribed interviews, which include:

- Appreciating social media platforms for learning English.
- Stimulating English language learning skills.
- Encouraging the development of vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge.

#### **4.2.1 Appreciating Social Media Platforms for Learning English**

In the recent world social media has a significant role in language learning and development. Therefore, learners value social media platforms in language learning and share positive beliefs. One theme found in the qualitative data presented learners' appreciation of social media for learning English. The theme describes the role of using social media platforms as a tool for learning and enhancing the English language by the learners.

The interviewees of the study were questioned about their thoughts on using social media platforms for learning EFL. In this manner, all the interviewees expressed their positive thoughts about the effectiveness of social media in learning EFL and found it as a useful and motivational tool for language learning and improvement. This response can be supported by the interviewees' speech; As stated by the first interviewee *"Social media gave me motivation to learn the English language and helped me to learn the language"*. The second and third interviewee supports the first interviewee and thinks that social media platforms are really useful for improving EFL as it contain authentic language and visual aids. Then, the fourth interviewee agreed that social media platforms are beneficial for learning and improving EFL, and expressed her positive thoughts toward social media platforms in improving EFL as she stated *"Social media is effective for learning and improving the English language, but not sure to what extent"*. Overall, all interviewees had the same positive thoughts about the effectiveness of social media in improving EFL and this finding is in line with the results of (Al Arif, 2019; Tartari, 2015).

#### **4.2.2 Stimulating English Language Learning Skills**

The significant role of social media in learning and promoting language learning is a subject undergoing intense study in the field of language acquisition. Stimulating English language



learning skills was another theme that was found in the study. The theme describes the positive role of social media platforms in stimulating listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills of language.

In terms of improving listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills of language, the analysis shows that social media platforms are useful to a great amount as contain authentic language. In addition, the interviewees claimed that learners should cautiously choose reliable content. This can be supported by the interviewee who stated that *“Social media is beneficial for improving all language skills as it contains authentic language and content”* and another interviewee claimed that *“In the digital era social media promotes all language skills in different ways, personally social media promoted my speaking and listening skills in the first place and writing and reading skills in the second place”*. This finding is in line with the results of (Yadave, 2021; Olaleke et al., 2015). As stated by another participant *“For me social media especially YouTube helped me to improve all the four skills, reading and speaking skills in the first place, and listening and writing in the second place”*. This finding mirrors the results of (Dizon, 2022; Alobaid, 2020). All in all, interviewees agree that social media helps in improving language skills and provides their personal experience to support their thoughts.

#### **4.2.3 Encouraging the Development of Vocabulary, Pronunciation, and Grammar Knowledge**

Along the four skills of the English language, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge can be gained through social media practices. Encouraging the development of vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge was another theme that was found in the study. The theme explains the positive role of social media platforms in developing vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge. This is evident as the participants stated that *“The main aspect of social media is that it promotes vocabulary learning”*. This is aligned with the results of (Aldukhayel, 2021; Abas et al., 2019). Another interviewee stated *“We learn to pronounce different words from social media”* This mirrors the results of (Aldukhayel, 2021; Yaacob et al., 2021). Moreover, participants claimed that social media practices are beneficial for learning the correct grammatical structures. Overall, the interviewees illustrated that social media platforms could be really helpful for enhancing vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge.

## **5. Discussion**

### **Appreciating Social Media Platforms for Learning English**

The results of the study revealed that social media platforms have a significant role in language learning and enhancement. Learners appreciate social media platforms for language learning and utilize them to enhance the English language. Therefore, the results revealed learners' positive thoughts about the effectiveness of social media in learning EFL. This finding is further supported by the results of the descriptive statistics, which showed that learners, to some extent, have positive perspectives about the usefulness of social media in the context of language learning. The finding is consistent with the results of Al Arif's (2019) study, which explored the use of social media platforms in language learning and found that students have positive attitudes towards the use of social media platforms in English language learning. Likewise, Tartari's (2015) study, which investigated learners' attitudes toward the use of social media platforms in learning English revealed that social media platforms are effective in language learning and learners are positively thinking about the effectiveness of social media platforms in language learning. In brief, the potential of social media platforms to enhance English language learning is revealed by plenty of research in the field of language learning.

### **Stimulating English Language Learning Skills**

The findings of the study revealed the positive role of social media platforms in stimulating listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills of language. Learners utilize social media platforms in language learning. Thus, the results showed that social media platforms are useful to a great extent in developing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills of language. Additionally, this finding is further supported by the results of the descriptive statistics, which showed that social media platforms have a significant role in improving listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills of language. The finding is consistent with the results of Al Arif's (2019) study, which explored the use of social media platforms in language learning and found that social media plays a significant role in improving English language skills. Similarly, Yadave's (2021) study examined the role of social media platforms in language learning and found that learners can master English language skills through social media platforms. In short, the potential of social media platforms to enhance English language skills is shown by several studies in the field of language acquisition.

## **Encouraging the Development of Vocabulary, Pronunciation, and Grammar Knowledge**

Along with the four skills of the English language, the results revealed the positive role of social media practices in developing vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge. Since learners use social media platforms in language learning. The results of the study demonstrated that social media platforms have a significant role in enhancing vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge. Moreover, this finding is further supported by the descriptive statistics results, which showed that social media practices help enhance vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge. The result is consistent with the findings of Abbas et al.'s (2019) study, which examined the effectiveness of social media platforms in developing vocabulary and discovered that social media platforms improve learners' vocabulary acquisition. Likewise, Yaacob et al.'s (2021) study, investigated the impact of social media platforms in enhancing listening comprehension and revealed that social media platforms are significantly helpful in improving pronunciation comprehension and learners' pronunciation is increased due to social media practices. In precise terms, various studies in the field of language acquisition demonstrated the potential of social media platforms to enhance vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge.

### **5.1 Limitation**

Even though the study provided valuable information on the possible advantages of social media platforms for acquiring and enhancing language learning, it is essential to acknowledge the study's limitations. This involves that the study lacks teachers' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of social media in enhancing EFL. And interviewing teachers could help develop the study. Additionally, the study involved a small sample of participants, a larger sample of participants could help achieve more accurate and generalizable results.

## **6. Conclusion**

In the recent globalized world, social media platforms have become a widely used tool for learners for various academic purposes. The purpose of this study was to explore learners' perceptions of the effectiveness of social media in learning ESL in terms of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills and vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge. Therefore, two research questions were addressed. The paper's literature review pointed to relevant studies on the role of social media in learning EFL and discussed the usefulness of various social media applications for enhancing EFL. The results demonstrated that social media platforms are useful for enhancing all four language skills, but in different amounts as reported by the participants as they hold positive perceptions of the role of social media platforms for language

learning purposes. More importantly, social media platforms also improve vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge to a great extent.

The results of the present study can raise learners' awareness of the potential benefits of using social media platforms in promoting language learning. Further, the findings can guide educators to incorporate social media into their teaching practices to maximize its benefits in language learning. Moreover, curriculum designers can integrate social media platforms into EFL curricula to facilitate language learning. In addition to highlighting the implications of the study, it is noteworthy to address that the study recommends further empirical studies to investigate the use of social media platforms in promoting English language teaching and learning. Further studies are required to explore the effectiveness of social media in enhancing English for specific purposes. Additionally, more studies are needed to investigate the role of social media in stimulating English for business purposes.

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