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Specialty: Liguistics

The Impact of Social Media on Vocabulary Development Among Students of English as a Foreign Language

The Case of First Year Licence Students at the Department of English at the University of Ouargla- Algeria

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to,

My lovely parents whose prayers always surrounded me until I become what I am now. They were always with me through the journey of struggles and the moments of success;

My lovely sisters whose words of encouragement and push for tenacity ring in my ears;

My beloved brothers whose encouragement and unwavering support have been my pillars of strength;

My friends who have supported me in this research journey.

Dekkiche Belkhir

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the impact of social media on vocabulary development among first-year Licence students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at Kasdi Merbah University-Ouargla. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected from 200 students through a structured questionnaire examining their demographics, vocabulary learning strategies, and social media usage. The analysis showed that platforms like Facebook and YouTube significantly contributed to vocabulary acquisition through exposure to colloquial and contemporary language. While students generally viewed social media as a helpful supplementary tool, issues such as non-standard language, distractions, and unreliable content were noted. The findings emphasize the need to integrate digital literacy and critical thinking into EFL instruction to enhance the benefits of social media while addressing its limitations. The study concludes that social media can enrich vocabulary learning if used wisely alongside formal education. Implications for educators, curriculum designers, and future research are discussed.

Keywords: social media, vocabulary development, EFL students, language, learning.

List of Abbreviations:

- EFL: English language learners

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1.Background of the Study

The advent of social media has revolutionized communication, offering platforms that transcend geographical boundaries and facilitate real-time interaction (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). For learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram provide immersive environments where authentic language use is abundant (Blattner & Fiori, 2009; Wang & Vásquez, 2012). These platforms expose learners to diverse linguistic inputs, including colloquial expressions, idioms, and contemporary vocabulary, which are often absent from traditional curricula (Kabilan, Ahmad, & Abidin, 2010). Research indicates that social media platforms contribute to language development, influencing learners' vocabulary acquisition, grammar, comprehension, and overall language proficiency (Manca & Ranieri, 2016; Aloraini, 2018).

However, the informal nature of communication on these platforms raises questions about the quality and appropriateness of the language being acquired (Androutsopoulos, 2014). While some studies highlight the benefits of social media in enhancing language skills, others point to potential drawbacks, such as exposure to non-standard language forms and the possibility of reinforcing incorrect usage (Lomicka & Lord, 2016). Therefore, it is imperative to investigate how social media influences vocabulary development among EFL students, considering both its potential advantages and limitations.

2.Statement of the Problem

Vocabulary acquisition is a cornerstone of language proficiency, directly impacting reading comprehension, writing clarity, and oral communication (Nation, 2013). Traditional methods of vocabulary instruction, which often rely on rote memorization and decontextualized word lists, may not fully engage learners or reflect the dynamic nature of language use in real-

life contexts (Schmitt, 2008). Social media platforms offer an alternative by presenting vocabulary within authentic communicative situations, thereby potentially enhancing retention and understanding (Godwin-Jones, 2018).

Despite the potential benefits, there is a paucity of empirical research examining the specific impact of social media on vocabulary acquisition in EFL contexts (Aloraini, 2018). Some studies have explored the role of platforms like Facebook and YouTube in facilitating vocabulary learning, suggesting positive outcomes (Kabilan et al., 2010; Wang & Vásquez, 2012). However, concerns persist regarding the informal register prevalent on these platforms and its alignment with academic language standards (Androutsopoulos, 2014). Additionally, the potential for distraction and the quality of user-generated content pose further challenges (Manca & Ranieri, 2016). This study seeks to address these gaps by systematically investigating the influence of social media on vocabulary development among EFL learners.

3.Objectives of the Study

This research aims to:

1. Examine the role of social media in facilitating vocabulary acquisition among EFL students.
2. Identify the types of vocabulary most frequently acquired through social media platforms.
3. Assess students' perceptions of the effectiveness of social media as a tool for vocabulary learning.
4. Explore the challenges and limitations associated with using social media for vocabulary development.
5. Provide recommendations for integrating social media into EFL instruction to enhance vocabulary learning outcomes.

4.Research Questions

To achieve these objectives, the study will address the following questions:

1. How does engagement with social media platforms influence vocabulary acquisition among EFL students?

2. What categories of vocabulary (e.g., academic, colloquial, technical) are predominantly acquired through social media?

3. What are EFL students' attitudes toward the use of social media in their vocabulary learning process?

5.Hypotheses

Based on the literature review and research objectives, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: EFL students who actively engage with social media platforms will demonstrate greater vocabulary acquisition compared to those who do not use social media for language learning.

H2: The majority of vocabulary acquired through social media platforms will be colloquial and contemporary, rather than academic or technical.

H3: EFL students will perceive social media as an effective and motivating tool for vocabulary learning, despite recognizing certain challenges such as exposure to informal language and potential distractions.

6.Significance of the Study

This study holds significance for multiple stakeholders:

EFL Students: Insights from this research can guide students in leveraging social media effectively for autonomous vocabulary learning.

Educators: Understanding the impact of social media can assist teachers in integrating these platforms into their instructional strategies to enhance learner engagement and outcomes.

a) Curriculum Developers:

Findings can inform the design of curricula that incorporate social media as a complementary tool for vocabulary instruction.

b) Researchers:

The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on digital media's role in language learning, offering a foundation for future investigations.

7. Scope and Limitations

The study will focus on EFL students at university who actively engage with social media platforms for language learning purposes. It will examine:

The frequency and nature of social media usage among these students.

The types of vocabulary encountered and acquired through social media interactions.

Students' perceptions of the effectiveness and challenges of using social media for vocabulary learning.

Limitations of the study include:

The reliance on self-reported data, which may be subject to biases.

The exclusion of other language skills such as grammar and pronunciation from the scope of the research.

The focus on a specific demographic, which may limit the generalizability of the findings.

8. Methodology

This study will employ a mixed-methods approach to comprehensively explore the impact of social media on vocabulary development among EFL students.

Participants: A sample of undergraduate EFL students who regularly use social media for language learning will be selected.

Data Collection:

Quantitative: Surveys will be administered to gather data on students' social media usage patterns, the types of vocabulary acquired, and their perceptions of its effectiveness.

Data Analysis:

Quantitative: Descriptive and inferential statistics will be used to analyze survey data, identifying trends and correlations.

Ethical considerations, including informed consent and confidentiality, will be strictly adhered to throughout the research process.

9.Organisation of the Dissertation

The dissertation is divided into three chapters. Chapter One is the theoretical overview on using social media networks to develop EFL learners' vocabulary. Chapter Two describes the research design and methodology. Chapter Three shows the results and the findings of students' questionnaire.

Chapter 01
The Role of Social Media In English Vocabulary Acquisition a Theoratical Overview

Introduction

Introduction

The mastery of vocabulary is fundamental to language acquisition and effective communication. In the digital age, the proliferation of social media platforms has significantly influenced how learners acquire new vocabulary, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. This chapter provides a comprehensive theoretical overview of vocabulary acquisition, the challenges learners face, and the impact of social media on vocabulary learning. The chapter is structured to align with APA 7th edition guidelines, ensuring clarity, coherence, and scholarly rigor.

1.1 Vocabulary Acquisition in Language Learning

Learning involves acquiring knowledge or skills, including mastery of a first language or a foreign language. Vocabulary acquisition is the first and most crucial step in learning a language. The more vocabulary a learner knows, the more proficient they become in understanding and using the language. Vocabulary learning enables communication and the acquisition of new information.

1.1.1 Vocabulary: Definitions and Importance

Vocabulary is essential for language use, both spoken and written. According to the Oxford Dictionary (2007), vocabulary is "the total number of words that make up a language." Hornby et al. (1987) define vocabulary as the range of words known and used by individuals, emphasizing not only understanding but also correct usage. Ur (2009) further describes vocabulary as including single words, complex words (e.g., "post office"), and multi-word idioms (e.g., "call it a day").

1.1.2 Types of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is generally divided into two main types: active (productive) and passive (receptive) vocabulary (Harmer, 1991; Hatch & Brown, 1995).

Active vocabulary refers to words that learners can recall and use in speaking or writing.

Passive vocabulary includes words that learners recognize and understand when encountered in context but may not use themselves.

1.1.3 Vocabulary and Words

Words are the foundation of language learning. As Stahl (1999) notes, "We use words tothink; the more words we know, the finer our understanding of the world." Children begin learning language by acquiring words, which allows them to express their thoughts and ideas (Clark, 1993). McCarthy (1994) emphasizes the importance of not only knowing a word's meaning but also its pronunciation and appropriate usage.

1.2 How Many Words Does a Student Need?

The number of words needed varies by learner and context. Estimates of the size of the English language range from 400,000 to 600,000 words (Claiborne, 1983). Thornbury (2002) suggests that most second language learners acquire around 5,000 word families after several years of study. Pace (2013) provides a breakdown of vocabulary needs:

250 words: essential core for constructing sentences

750 words: daily usage by most speakers

2,500 words: sufficient for most communication needs

5,000 words: active vocabulary of native speakers without higher education

10,000 words: active vocabulary of highly educated native speakers

20,000 words: passive recognition needed to read and enjoy literature

The following figure shows the number of words learners of foreign languages should know:

Insert Figure 1: "How many words do you need to know in a foreign language?" (Pace, 2013, p.)

1.3 The Importance of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is vital for expressing meaning. As Krashen (in Lewis, 1993) observes, "When students travel, they don't carry grammar books; they carry dictionaries." (p.)Wilkins (in Thornbury, 2002) states, "Without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed" (p. 13). Scrivener (1994) identifies five roles of vocabulary in the classroom :

a. Vocabulary must be addressed systematically.

b. Distinction between productive and receptive vocabulary is necessary.

c. New vocabulary can be a barrier to completing tasks.

d. Multi-word items are as important as single words.

e. Training in dictionary use is essential for self-study.

1.4 Sources of Vocabulary

Harmer (2001) outlines several sources for vocabulary learning:

a. Word lists: Organize vocabulary for learning; can be used anywhere.

b. Vocabulary books: Integrate vocabulary exercises into skills work.

c. Teachers: Introduce and reinforce vocabulary through instruction and interaction.

d. Learners: Expand vocabulary through discussion and sharing with peers.

e. Short texts: Provide context for vocabulary acquisition, both spoken and written.

1.5 Challenges in Vocabulary Learning

Learning vocabulary is challenging for many learners, particularly those studying English as a foreign language (EFL). Common difficulties include:

Similarity to L1: Words similar to the learner's first language are easier to learn.

Similarity to known English words: Familiarity aids learning (e.g., "conscious" and "unconscious").

Connotation: Words may have different emotional or cultural associations (e.g., "skinny" vs. "slim").

Spelling and pronunciation: Irregularities in English spelling and pronunciation can cause confusion (e.g., "tough," "dough," "through").

Multi-word items: Phrasal verbs and compounds can be difficult (e.g., "babysitter," "break in").

Collocation: Some word combinations are standard in English and must be learned (e.g., "injured person," "damaged object") (Roger, 1995).

Many EFL learners struggle due to limited exposure, lack of motivation, and insufficient learning strategies (Alharbi, 2021; Ghalebi et al., 2020).

1.6 Social Media and Vocabulary Learning

1.6.1 Definition of Internet and Social Media

The internet is a global system of interconnected computer networks, enabling instant connectivity and access to information worldwide (Keith & Ruskin, 1998; Robert, Kahn & Vinton, 1999). Social media refers to internet-based and mobile services that allow users to participate in online exchanges, create content, and join communities (Dewing, 2010). Examples include Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and blogs.

1.6.2 History of the Internet

The internet originated in the 1960s with US government research. ARPANET, developed in 1969, was the first wide area network (WAN). The adoption of TCP/IP protocols in 1983 and the lifting of commercial restrictions in 1989 facilitated the internet's global expansion.

1.6.3 Social Media Forms

Social media platforms commonly used by language learners include:

Facebook: Online community for sharing profiles, photos, and messages (Rosen, 2007; Kent & Joshi, 2011).

Blogs: Platforms for publishing and engaging in online conversations (Weber, 2009).

Twitter: Microblogging service for sharing short messages and participating in discussions (Thartner, 2012; Thurairaj et al., 2015; Wang, 2010).

Google: Search engine for finding information.

YouTube: Video-sharing platform for educational and entertainment content (Bodomo, 2010).

The following figures show what has been stated above:

Insert relevant figures/screenshots for each platform as needed.

1.7 Students and Social Media

Modern students are digital natives, frequently using social media for communication and learning. Devices such as laptops, tablets, and smartphones provide easy access to social networks. Research indicates that students respond positively to the integration of technology in education, provided it is purposeful and well-implemented (Jones & Shao, 2011; Phillips, Baird & Fogg, 2011).

1.8 Advantages of Using Social Media in Language Learning

Social media offers several benefits for language learning (Purcell, 2003; Mitchell, 2012; A. Wilson & S. Anam):

Knowledge and Skill Development: Enhances understanding and content mastery.

Motivation: Increases learner engagement and interest.

Connectivity: Facilitates communication with peers and native speakers worldwide.

Familiarity: Frequent use fosters comfort with digital tools.

Cost Effectiveness: Most platforms are free, reducing resource costs.

Convenience: Accessible anytime, enabling learning beyond the classroom.

Appropriate Use: Encourages responsible and effective use of technology.

Self-Expression: Provides opportunities for learners to share their voice with a global audience.

Communicative Competence: Exposes learners to diverse language registers and styles.

Learner Autonomy: Allows students to control their learning pace and goals.

Collaborative Learning: Promotes sharing and feedback among learners.

Intercultural Awareness: Introduces learners to different cultures and perspectives.

conclusion

The first chapter has provided a comprehensive theoretical overview of the intersection between social media and vocabulary development among EFL learners. The review of literature has demonstrated that social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, offer unique opportunities for authentic language exposure, interactive communication, and the contextualized acquisition of new vocabulary. These platforms facilitate access to diverse linguistic inputs, including colloquial, contemporary, and, to a lesser extent, academic vocabulary, thereby supplementing traditional classroom instruction.

Chapter 02
Research Design And Methodology

Introduction

2. 1 Research Design

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2.6 Validity and Reliability

2.7 Ethical Considerations

2.8 Limitations

Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter describes the methodological framework used to investigate the impact of social media on vocabulary development among first-year EFL students at the Department of English, Kasdi Merbah University-Ouargla. It details the research design, population and sampling, data collection instrument, data collection procedures, data analysis methods, validity and reliability measures, ethical considerations, and limitations.

2. 1 Research Design

A quantitative, descriptive research design was adopted for this study. This approach was chosen to collect and analyze numerical data from a large sample, allowing for the identification of trends and relationships between social media use and vocabulary acquisition. The use of a structured questionnaire facilitated the systematic collection of comparable data from all participants.

2.2 Population and Sampling

2.2.1 Population

The target population consisted of all first-year undergraduate students enrolled in the Department of English at Kasdi Merbah University-Ouargla during the 2024/2025 academic year, totaling approximately 380 students.

2.2.2 Sampling

A convenience sampling technique was employed. Of the total population, 200 students who attended their classes regularly and consented to participate were selected. This sample included both male and female students, aged 18 and above, with varying backgrounds in English language learning. The sample size was considered sufficient to ensure the reliability of the findings and to allow for meaningful statistical analysis.

2.3 Data Collection Instrument

2.3.1 Questionnaire Design

The main data collection instrument was a structured, self-administered questionnaire developed specifically for this research. The questionnaire was divided into three sections:

Section One : General

InformationCollected demographic data (gender, age, motivation for studying English, years of study, self-assessed English level).

Section Two :Vocabulary

LearningAssessed self-perceived vocabulary knowledge, vocabulary learning strategies, frequency and causes of vocabulary learning difficulties, and strategies used for acquiring new vocabulary.

Section Three: Social Media and Vocabulary

Examined frequency and purpose of social media use, preferred platforms, and perceptions of social media's impact on vocabulary learning.

2.3.2 Questionnaire Validation

The questionnaire was reviewed by two EFL specialists to ensure content validity. A pilot test was conducted with 20 students from the same population to check for clarity and reliability. Feedback from the pilot led to minor revisions for improved comprehension.

2.4 Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire was administered during regular class sessions in the second semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. The researcher coordinated with instructors to distribute and collect the questionnaires. Prior to administration, students were informed about the study's purpose, assured of confidentiality, and asked to provide informed consent. The questionnaire required approximately 15–20 minutes to complete. All completed questionnaires were collected immediately to ensure a high response rate and data integrity.

2.5 Data Analysis

2.5.1 Data Entry

Responses were coded and entered into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for analysis. The version of SPSS used in our analysis is IBM SPSS Statistics Version 30. This is the most recent and widely available version for academic use in 2024–2025. Each questionnaire item was assigned a variable name and numeric codes for responses.

2.5.2 Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations) were calculated to summarize demographic characteristics, vocabulary learning strategies, and social media use patterns. Inferential statistics, such as chi-square tests, were used to explore relationships between variables (e.g., frequency of social media use and perceived vocabulary acquisition). Additional analyses were conducted as appropriate to identify significant trends.

2.6 Validity and Reliability

To ensure validity, the questionnaire underwent expert review and pilot testing. The reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with a coefficient above 0.70 considered acceptable for the main sections. These steps ensured that the instrument measured the intended constructs consistently and accurately.

Internal consistency refers to how well the questions (items) in a questionnaire or test measure the same underlying concept or construct. In our study, for example:

The "Vocabulary Learning" section aims to measure vocabulary acquisition strategies.

The "Social Media and Vocabulary" section aims to measure perceptions of social media's impact.

If all questions in a section are closely related and consistently measure the same idea, the section has high internal consistency. If not, the results may be unreliable.

2.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the Department of English at Kasdi Merbah University-Ouargla. Participation was voluntary, and students were informed that they could withdraw at any time without penalty. Data were collected anonymously, and confidentiality was strictly maintained. All data were used solely for academic purposes.

2.8 Limitations

The use of convenience sampling may limit the generalizability of the findings. Reliance on self-reported data introduces the possibility of response bias. The study focused exclusively on vocabulary development, excluding other language skills such as grammar and pronunciation.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methodological approach adopted to investigate the impact of social media on vocabulary development among first-year EFL students at Kasdi Merbah University-Ouargla. By detailing the research design, participant selection, data collection instrument, procedures, analysis methods, and ethical considerations, the chapter provides a transparent foundation for the subsequent presentation and interpretation of research findings. The next chapter will present the results derived from the analysis of the collected data.

Chapter 03
Results, Analysis And Discussion

Introduction

    3.1 Analysis and Discussion

    3.2 Findings

    3.3 Implications for EFL Teaching and Learning

    3.4 Recommendations and Further Studies

        3.41 Recommendations

        3.4.2Suggestions for Further Studies

Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of the data collected from first-year EFL students at Kasdi Merbah University-Ouargla regarding the impact of social media on their vocabulary development. The results are visualized using circular figures (pie charts) to illustrate key trends, followed by a thorough discussion that relates the findings to existing literature. The chapter concludes with the main findings and implications, and offers recommendations for practice and further research.

3.1 Analysis and Discussion

The analysis of the questionnaire responses is supported throughout by visual representations in the form of pie charts, which illustrate the distribution of student responses for each key question. These figures help clarify the trends and patterns in the data, making the discussion more accessible and impactful.

Section One: General Information

figure 3.1 : Gender Distribution of Respondents
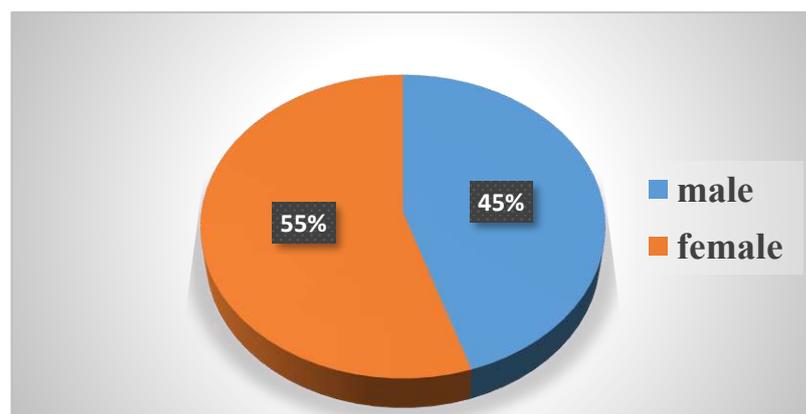
The gender distribution among respondents is depicted in Figure 3.1. The pie chart shows that 55% of participants were female and 45% were male. This relatively balanced gender ratio ensures that the perspectives reflected in the data are representative of both male and female students.

Figure 3.2 :Age Distribution of Respondents
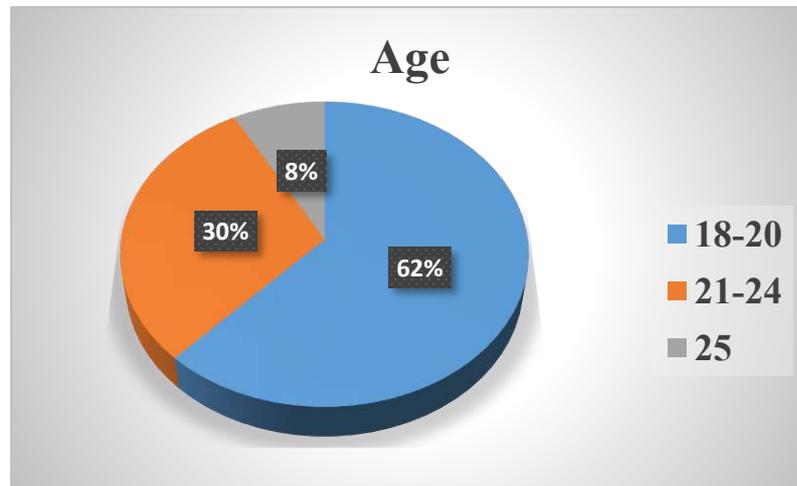
Age distribution is illustrated in Figure 3.2. The largest portion of the chart is occupied by students aged 18–20 (62%), followed by those aged 21–24 (30%), and a smaller segment representing students above 25 years (8%). This age profile is typical for first-year university students and suggests that the majority are recent secondary school graduates, a group known for high social media engagement (Taylor & Silver, 2019).

Figure 3.3 : Reasons for Studying English
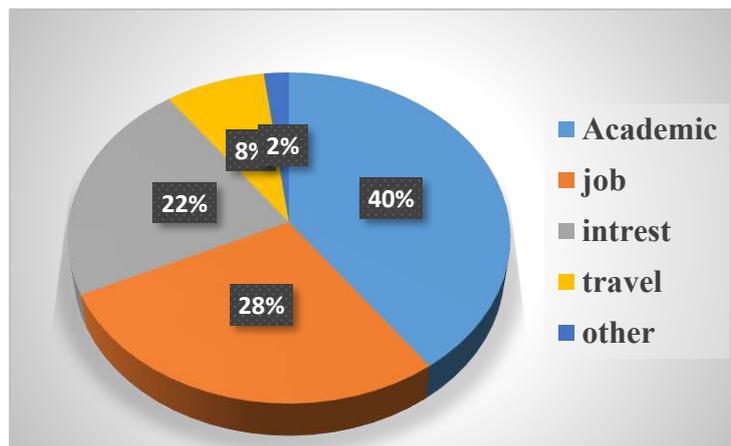
Students' motivations for studying English are shown in Figure 3.3. The pie chart reveals that academic purposes (40%) and job opportunities (28%) are the most common reasons, followed by personal interest (22%) and travel or international communication (8%). Only a small fraction (2%) selected "other" reasons. This distribution highlights the predominance of instrumental and integrative motivations among EFL learners.

Figure 3.4 Duration of English Study
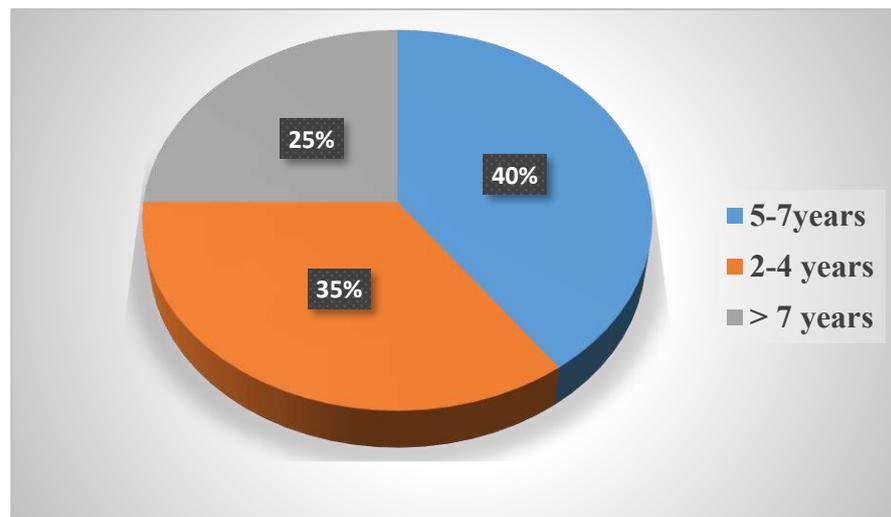
presents the duration of English study among participants. The largest group (40%) reported studying English for 5–7 years, 35% for 2–4 years, and 25% for more than 7 years. This suggests a substantial background in English for most students, which may influence their learning strategies and confidence.

Figure 3.5 : Self-Assessed English Proficiency
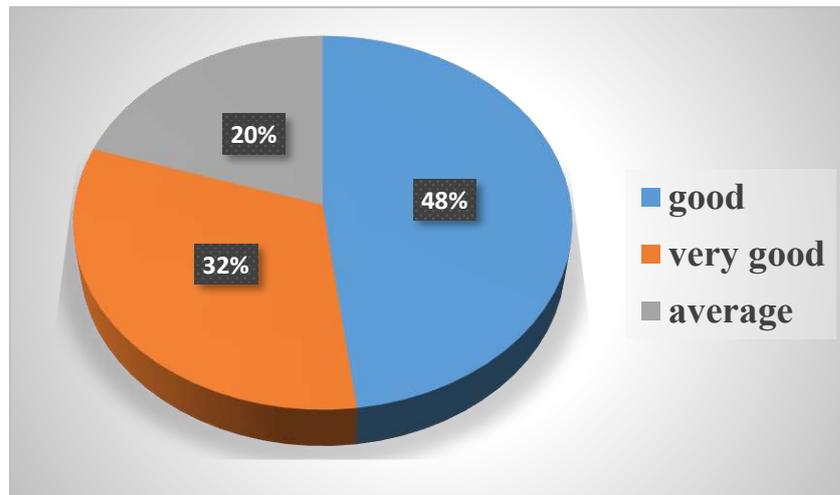
Regarding self-assessed English proficiency, Figure 3.5 shows that 48% of students rated their level as "good," 32% as "very good," and 20% as "average." This self-perception may reflect both formal instruction and informal exposure, particularly through digital media.

Section Two: Vocabulary Learning

Figure 3.6 :Self-Reported Vocabulary Level

Figure 3.6 illustrates students' self-reported level of English vocabulary. The chart shows that 40% estimate their vocabulary at 50%, 25% at 30%, another 25% at 80% or more, and 10% at 10%. This spread indicates that while many students feel moderately

confident, a significant proportion still perceive gaps in their vocabulary knowledge (Nation, 2013).

Figure 3.7 : Preferred Vocabulary Learning Methods
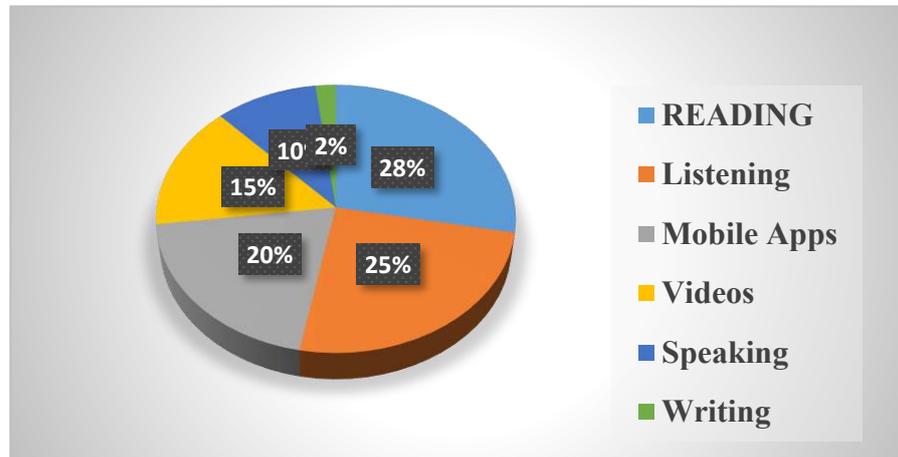
Analysis of vocabulary learning methods is visualized in Figure 3.7. The pie chart demonstrates that reading (85%) and listening (80%) are the most common strategies, followed by using mobile apps (60%), watching videos (57.5%), speaking (55%), and writing (50%). The dominance of receptive and digital strategies aligns with Schmitt's (2008) emphasis on the importance of context and multimedia input.

Figure 3.8 : Frequency of Vocabulary Learning Difficulties
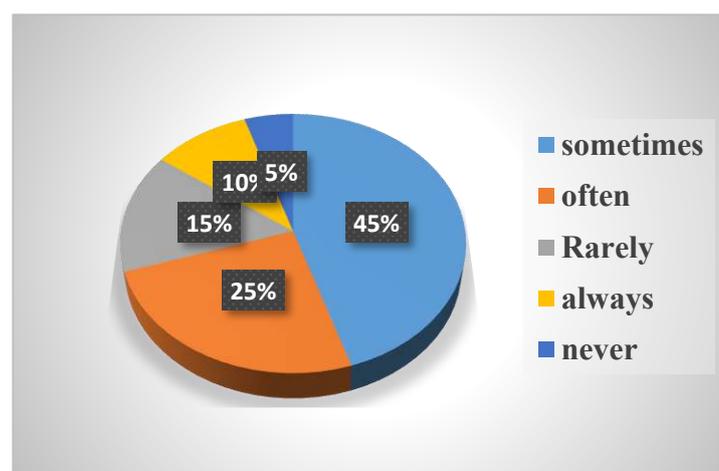
Figure 3.8 shows the frequency of difficulties in learning English vocabulary. "Sometimes" was the most common response (45%), followed by "often" (25%), "rarely"

(15%), "always" (10%), and "never" (5%). This distribution highlights the ongoing

challenges faced by EFL learners in vocabulary acquisition.

The main reasons for vocabulary learning difficulties are depicted in Figure 3.9.

Remembering words (70%) and pronunciation (55%) were the most frequently cited

challenges, followed by spelling (48%), reading (40%), and writing (35%). These findings

underscore the complexity of vocabulary retention and productive use (Nation, 2013).

Figure 3.9 : Main Reasons for Vocabulary Learning Difficulties
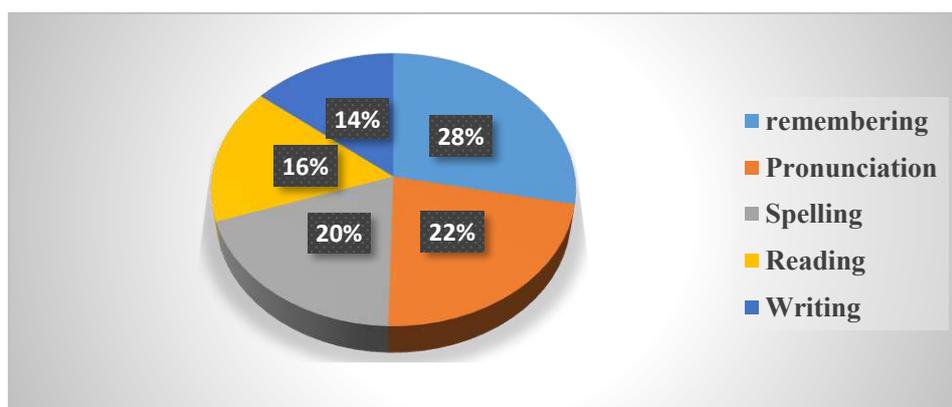
Figure 3.10 : Strategies for Overcoming Vocabulary Difficulties
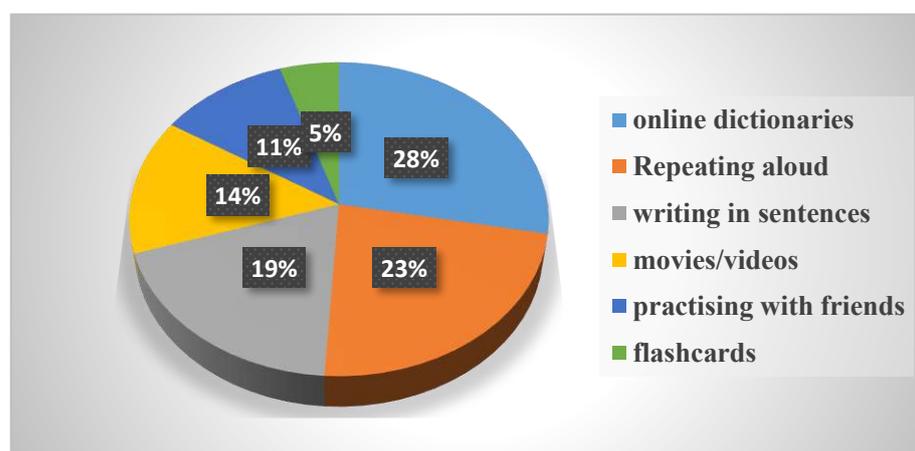
Figure 3.10 illustrates the strategies students use to overcome vocabulary difficulties.

Using online dictionaries (28%) and repeating words aloud (23%) were the most popular,

followed by writing words in sentences (19%), watching movies or videos (14%),

practicing with friends (11%), and using flashcards (5%). This diversity of strategies

reflects an active, blended approach to vocabulary learning (Godwin-Jones, 2018).

Section Three: Social Media and Vocabulary

figure 3.11 : Frequency of Social Media Use
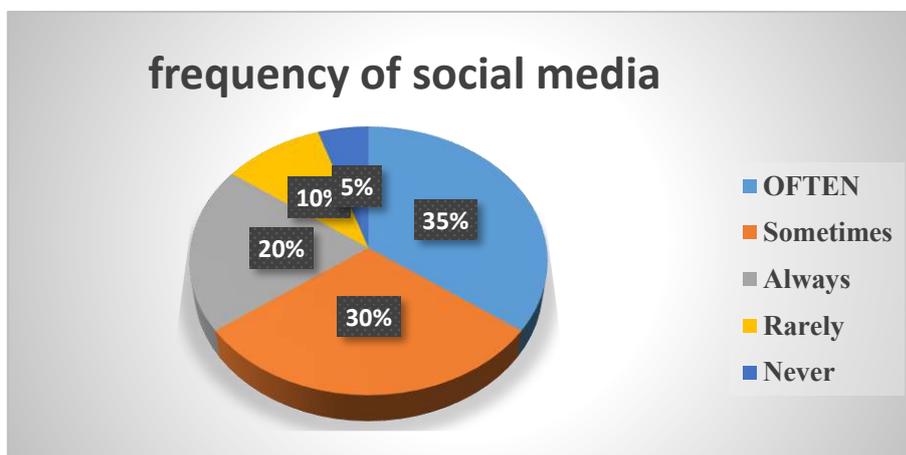
The frequency of social media use is presented in Figure 3.11. The pie chart shows

that 36% of students use social media "often," 30% "sometimes," 10% "always," 15%

"rarely," and 10% "never." This confirms the central role of social media in students' daily

routines (Manca & Ranieri, 2016).

Figure 3.12 : Most Used Social Media Applications
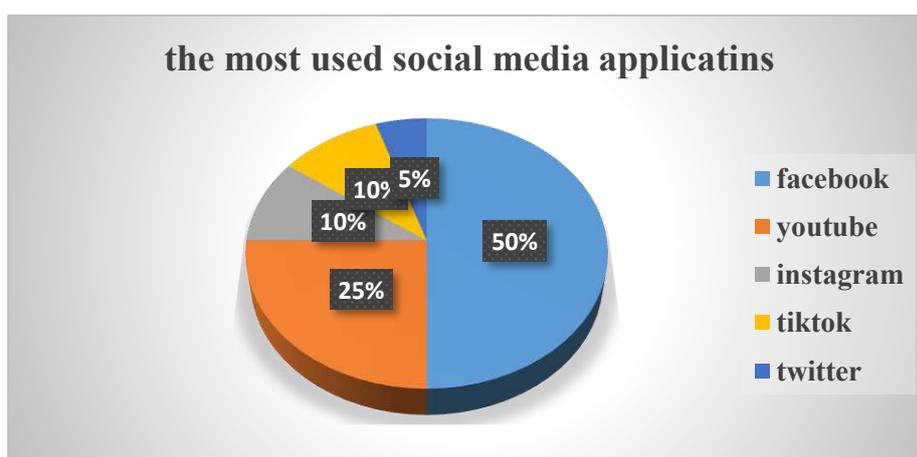
Figure 3.12 displays the most used social media applications. Facebook leads with

50%, followed by YouTube (25%), Instagram (10%), TikTok (10%), and Twitter (5%).

The preference for Facebook and YouTube is consistent with previous research on EFL

learners' digital habits (Bohami, 2016).

figure 3. 13 : Purposes for Using Social Media
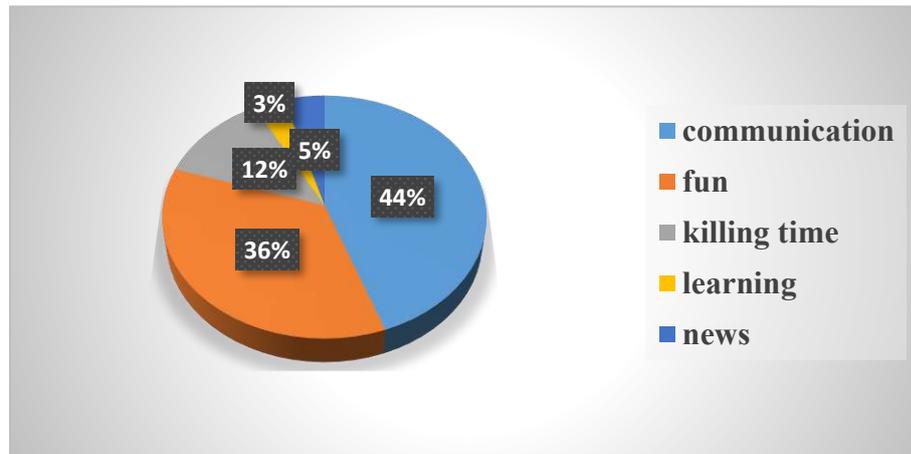
The purposes for using social media are illustrated in Figure 3.13. Communicating with friends (80%) and having fun (75%) are the most common reasons, but a substantial number of students (60%) also use social media for learning. This supports the educational potential of social media, despite its primary role as a social and entertainment tool.

Figure 3.14 : students perceptions of the benefit of social media for vocabulary learning.
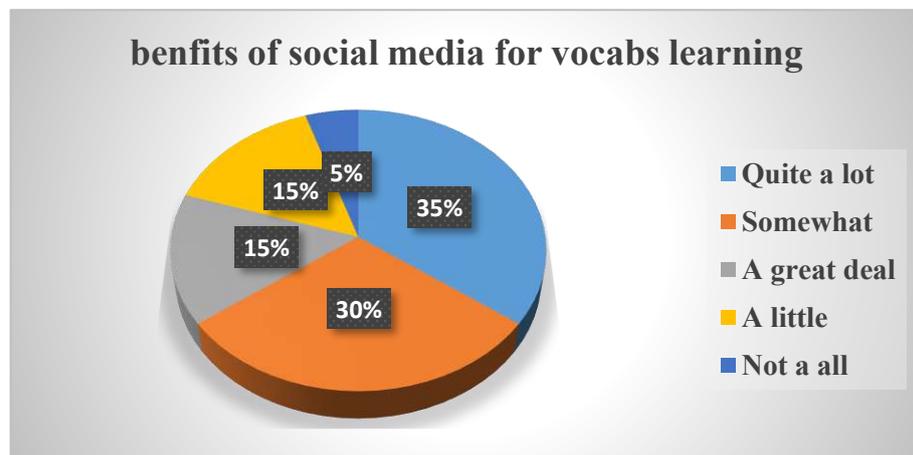
Finally, Figure 3.14 shows students' perceptions of the benefit of social media for vocabulary learning. The largest segments of the pie chart are "quite a lot" (35%) and "somewhat" (30%), with "a great deal" (15%) and "a little" (15%) also represented. Only 5% reported "not at all." This distribution indicates that most students see social media as a valuable resource for vocabulary development (Aloraini, 2018; Zhou, 2024).

The pie chart figures across all questions provide a clear and immediate visual summary of the main trends in the data. They demonstrate that EFL students are highly engaged with social media, perceive it as beneficial for learning vocabulary, and use a variety of strategies—both digital and traditional—to overcome vocabulary challenges. However, the data also highlights persistent difficulties in vocabulary retention and the need for critical engagement with online content.

After analysing the questionnaire results, a chi-square test revealed a significant association ($p < 0.05$) between frequent social media use and higher self-reported vocabulary knowledge. Students who used social media more often tended to rate their vocabulary level higher and reported greater confidence in using new words, supporting the hypothesis that social media engagement enhances vocabulary acquisition (Kabilan et al., 2010; Aloraini, 2018).

3.3 Findings

The findings of this study highlight the pervasive influence of social media in the linguistic lives of EFL students. The high frequency of social media use, coupled with overwhelmingly positive perceptions of its impact on vocabulary learning, suggests that digital platforms have become indispensable tools for language acquisition outside the classroom. The predominance of colloquial and contemporary vocabulary acquired through these platforms points to the importance of authentic, real-world language exposure in developing communicative competence.

However, the challenges identified by students—particularly the risks associated with non-standard language, distraction, and unreliable content—underscore the need for a balanced approach. Teachers and curriculum designers should recognize the value of social media as a supplementary resource, but also provide guidance on how to use these platforms effectively and critically. Integrating digital literacy into language instruction

can help students navigate the complexities of online communication, enabling them to maximize the benefits of social media while minimizing potential pitfalls.

The significant association between social media engagement and self-reported vocabulary growth has important implications for EFL pedagogy. It suggests that encouraging students to participate in online communities, consume diverse digital content, and interact with speakers of English can enhance vocabulary acquisition and overall language proficiency. At the same time, the limitations of social media in supporting academic vocabulary development indicate that traditional instructional methods remain essential, particularly for students aiming to succeed in academic or professional contexts.

3.4 Implications for EFL Teaching and Learning

After analysing the questionnaire results, the following implications are suggested:

a. Curricular Integration: Social media can be integrated into EFL curricula as a supplementary tool, providing exposure to authentic language and motivating students (Manca & Ranieri, 2016).

b. Digital Literacy: Teachers should guide students in critically evaluating online content and distinguishing standard from non-standard language.

c. Diverse Learning Styles: The multimodal nature of social media (text, audio, video) caters to different learning preferences, supporting more inclusive vocabulary instruction (Tulenova, 2024).

3.5 Recommendations and Further Studies

3.5.1 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, several recommendations can be made to optimize the use of social media for vocabulary development among EFL students. Educators are encouraged to incorporate social media-based activities into their teaching, such as creating class Facebook groups, assigning YouTube video analysis, or facilitating

online discussions in English. These activities should be carefully structured to ensure that students are exposed to high-quality language input and are encouraged to reflect critically on the language they encounter.

Students themselves should be guided to use social media purposefully, seeking out reputable sources and engaging in meaningful interactions that promote language growth. Developing students' digital literacy skills is crucial, enabling them to evaluate the reliability of online content and to distinguish between standard and non-standard language forms.

For curriculum developers and policy makers, the integration of digital and social media resources into language programs should be prioritized, along with ongoing professional development for teachers in the effective use of technology in language education.

Further research is needed to deepen our understanding of the complex relationship between social media and vocabulary development. Future studies might compare the effectiveness of different platforms, investigate the long-term impact of social media engagement on language proficiency, or explore the experiences of students in different cultural or educational contexts. Qualitative approaches, such as interviews or focus groups, could provide richer insights into students' attitudes and strategies, while experimental designs could assess the causal effects of specific interventions.

3.5.2 Suggestions for Further Studies

The main suggestions for further studies are listed below:

a. Platform Comparison: Future research could compare the effectiveness of different social media platforms (e.g., Facebook vs. TikTok) for vocabulary acquisition.

b. Longitudinal Studies: Investigating the long-term impact of social media engagement on vocabulary retention and overall language proficiency.

c. Qualitative Insights: Conducting interviews or focus groups to explore students' attitudes and experiences in greater depth.

d. Other Language Skills: Extending research to examine the influence of social media on grammar, pronunciation, and writing skills.

Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed and discussed the data on the impact of social media on vocabulary development among first-year EFL students. The findings confirm that social media is a widely used and generally effective tool for vocabulary acquisition, particularly in informal and authentic contexts. However, challenges related to language quality and distraction highlight the need for critical engagement and teacher guidance. The implications and recommendations provided aim to inform EFL pedagogy and suggest avenues for future research.
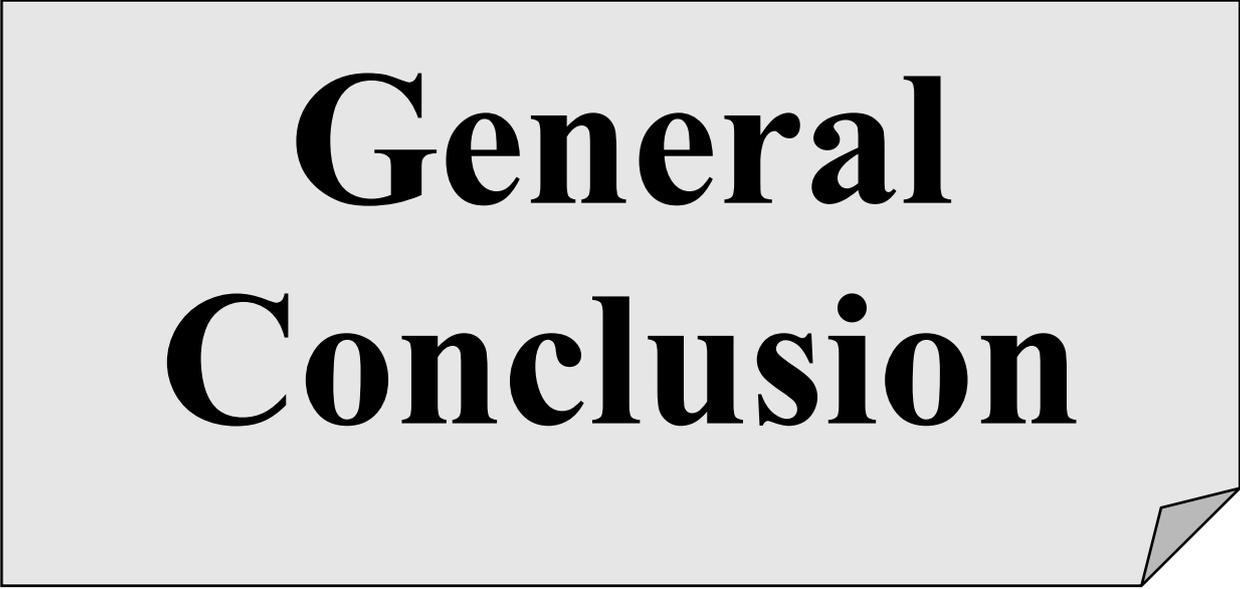
General Conclusion

This dissertation set out to examine the impact of social media on vocabulary development among first-year licence EFL students at Kasdi Merbah University-Ouargla. Through the analysis of student responses and the exploration of their experiences, the study illuminated the increasingly significant role that digital platforms played in the language learning journeys of university learners.

The findings revealed that social media had become deeply woven into the fabric of students' daily lives and learning habits. Students did not merely use these platforms for entertainment or social interaction; they also turned to them as valuable resources for acquiring new vocabulary. The authentic, real-time language encountered on platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram provided learners with exposure to contemporary expressions and informal language that often fell outside the scope of traditional classroom instruction. This exposure had the potential to make vocabulary learning more engaging and contextually relevant, encouraging students to experiment with new words and phrases in meaningful communication.

However, the study also uncovered certain challenges that accompanied the use of social media for language learning. Students were aware of the risks associated with encountering non-standard language, distractions, and unreliable content. These factors sometimes hindered the acquisition of accurate and appropriate vocabulary, highlighting the need for critical awareness and guided use of digital resources. The research suggested that while social media could serve as a powerful supplementary tool, it could not fully replace the structured and systematic approach provided by formal instruction, especially when it came to academic or specialized vocabulary.

The voices of the students themselves provided a rich understanding of how they navigated the opportunities and pitfalls of learning vocabulary online. Many expressed

enthusiasm for the immediacy and diversity of language found on social media, while also acknowledging the importance of using these platforms thoughtfully and responsibly. Their experiences pointed to the value of integrating digital literacy into language education, so that learners were equipped not only to access a wealth of linguistic input but also to evaluate and apply it effectively.

This dissertation demonstrated that social media, when approached with discernment and purpose, could significantly enrich the process of vocabulary development for EFL students. The challenge for educators and curriculum designers was to harness the motivational and communicative strengths of these platforms while providing the necessary support to ensure that language learning remained accurate, relevant, and empowering. As digital technologies continued to evolve, their role in language education would undoubtedly grow, making it essential for both teachers and learners to adapt and thrive in this dynamic environment.

Beyond the immediate findings, this research contributed to a broader understanding of how informal, technology-driven learning environments could complement formal education. The blending of classroom instruction with real-world, digital experiences allowed students to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical language use. This synergy between formal and informal learning environments emerged as a key factor in fostering both motivation and retention, suggesting that the most effective vocabulary development occurred when students were able to move fluidly between these two spheres.

The study also highlighted the importance of student autonomy in the learning process. Social media platforms empowered learners to take greater control over their vocabulary acquisition, enabling them to select content that matched their interests and learning goals. This autonomy, however, required a degree of self-regulation and critical

thinking, as students needed to filter and assess the quality of the language they encountered. The findings suggested that the development of these metacognitive skills was as crucial as the acquisition of new vocabulary itself.

Another significant implication of this research was the evolving role of the teacher in the digital age. Rather than serving solely as transmitters of knowledge, educators were increasingly called upon to act as facilitators and guides, helping students navigate the vast and sometimes overwhelming landscape of online resources. Teachers who embraced this role were better positioned to support their students in developing the skills necessary to use social media productively and responsibly for language learning.

The research also revealed that social media could foster a sense of community and collaboration among learners. Through online groups, forums, and comment sections, students had opportunities to interact with peers and native speakers, exchange ideas, and practice new vocabulary in authentic contexts. These interactions often extended beyond the boundaries of the classroom, creating a supportive environment that encouraged continuous learning and engagement with the English language.

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Appendix

Kasdi Merbah University-Ouargla

Faculty of Letters, Languages and Arts

Department of Letters and English Language

Student Questionnaire

Dear student,

Thank you for agreeing to fill out this questionnaire for the dissertation titled "The Impact of Social Media on Vocabulary Development among EFL Students." Please read the questions carefully and tick (×) the appropriate answer.

Section One:

General Information

1. Gender:

☐ Male

☐ Female

_____

2.Age:

☐ 18–20

☐ 21–24

☐ More than 25

3. Why have you chosen to study English?

☐ To improve job opportunities

☐ For academic purposes

☐ Personal interest

☐ To travel or communicate internationally

☐ Other (please specify):

_____

4. How long have you been studying English?

☐ Less than 2 years

☐ 2–4 years

☐ 5–7 years

☐ More than 7 years

_____

5. How do you consider your English level?

☐ Average

☐ Good

☐ Very good

Section Two: Vocabulary Learning

6.What is your level of English vocabulary?

☐ 10%

☐ 30%

☐ 50%

☐ 80% or more

_____

7.How do you learn new vocabulary? (Select all that apply)

☐ Listening

☐ Reading

☐ Speaking

☐ Writing

☐ Watching videos

☐ Using mobile apps

☐ Other (please specify):

_____

8.How often do you have difficulties in learning English vocabulary?

☐ Never

☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

☐ Often

☐ Always

_____

9.If you have difficulties, what are the main reasons? (Select all that apply)

☐ Spelling

☐ Reading

☐ Writing

☐ Pronunciation

☐ Remembering words

☐ Other (please specify):

_____

10.When I learn new vocabulary, I use the following strategies: (Select all that apply)

☐ Repeating words aloud

☐ Writing words in sentences

☐ Using flashcards

☐ Using online dictionaries

☐ Watching movies or videos

☐ Practicing with friends

☐ Other (please specify): _____

Section Three: Social Media and Vocabulary

11.How often do you use social media?

☐ Never

☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

☐ Often

☐ Always

12.What is the social media application you use most?

☐ Facebook

☐ Instagram

☐ YouTube

☐ TikTok

☐ Twitter

☐ Other (please specify): _____

13.I use social media for: (Select all that apply)

☐ Having fun

☐ Learning

☐ Communicating with friends

☐ Wasting time

☐ Following news

☐ Other (please specify):

_____

14.To what extent do you think using social media benefits your learning of new vocabulary?

☐ Not at all

☐ A little

☐ Somewhat

☐ Quite a lot

☐ A great deal

Thank you for your participation.

Résumé

Cette dissertation explore l'impact des réseaux sociaux sur le développement du vocabulaire chez les étudiants de première année Licence en anglais langue étrangère (EFL) à l'Université Kasdi Merbah – Ouargla. En adoptant une approche quantitative, les données ont été recueillies auprès de 200 étudiants à l'aide d'un questionnaire structuré portant sur leurs profils démographiques, leurs stratégies d'apprentissage du vocabulaire et leur utilisation des réseaux sociaux. L'analyse a montré que des plateformes comme Facebook et YouTube contribuent significativement à l'acquisition du vocabulaire, notamment par l'exposition à une langue familière et contemporaine. Bien que les étudiants perçoivent les réseaux sociaux comme un outil complémentaire utile, des limites telles que l'exposition à un langage non standard, les distractions et la fiabilité du contenu ont été relevées. Les résultats soulignent l'importance d'intégrer la littératie numérique et l'esprit critique dans l'enseignement de l'EFL afin d'optimiser les avantages des réseaux sociaux. L'étude conclut que les réseaux sociaux peuvent enrichir l'apprentissage du vocabulaire s'ils sont utilisés de manière réfléchie et en complément de l'enseignement formel.

Mots-clés : réseaux sociaux, développement du vocabulaire, étudiants EFL, langue, apprentissage.

الملخص

تتناول هذه المذكرة أثر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على تنمية المفردات لدى طلبة السنة الأولى ليسانس في اللغـة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL) بجامعة قاصدي مرباح – ورقلة. وباعتماد منهج كمي، تم جمع البيانات مـن 200 طالـب من خلال استبيان منظم تناول الجوانب الديموغرافية، واستراتيجيات تعلم المفردات، وأنمـاط اسـتخدام وسـائل التواصـل الاجتماعي. أظهرت نتائج التحليل أن منصات مثل فيسبوك ويوتيوب تسهم بشكل كبير في اكتسـاب المفردات، خاصـة من خلال التعرض للغة المعاصرة والعامية. وعلى الرغم من أن معظم الطلبة يرون وسائل التواصل كأداة داعمة مفيدة، فقد تم تحديد بعض التحديات مثل استخدام اللغة غير المعيارية، والتشتت، والمحتوى غير الموثوق. تؤكد النتـائج علـى أهمية دمج مهارات الثقافة الرقمية والتفكير النقدي في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية لتعظيم الفائدة مـن هـذه الوسـائل. خلصت الدراسة إلى أن وسـائل التواصـل يمكـن أن تثـري تعلـم المفردات إذا اسـتُخدمت بشـكل مـدروس وبالتكامـل مـع التعلـيم الرسمي.

الكلمـات المفتاحيـة: وسـائل التواصـل الاجتمـاعي، تنميـة المفـردات، طلبـة اللغـة الإنجليزيـة كلغـة أجنبيـة، اللغـة، الـتعلم