

# Interpreting Social Media on English Language Acquisition: A Study at the Level of Swot Analysis in the Indian Context

**R. ROBERT**

School of Social Sciences and Languages  
Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore

**S. MEENAKSHI**

School of Social Sciences and Languages  
Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore

## Abstract

*This case study-based qualitative study intended to investigate the influence of social media on English language acquisition in South India. The purposeful selection of ten participants for this evaluation includes secondary school students, language educators, teachers from private and non-public schools and colleges, ESL instructors, and a practitioner of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. Results are dependent on the information gathered from participants via written interviews utilising a SWOT matrix (Strengths-Weaknesses- Opportunities- Threats).*

*This research has revealed that social media offer various advantages or chances for English language learning in general. However, its few traps and risks have likely become the most significant influence and impeded language acquisition. According to the findings of this study, these internet-based social media sites may be useful platforms for providing current information, a substantial amount of language input, communication with native speakers, and on-the-job training. Eventually, these social platforms might expose language students to fraud, unscholarly and ungrammatical material, profanity, and generic partnerships. Similarly, this study recalled some beneficial benefits of social media in English language acquisition. The researcher also gave recommendations for future study possibilities on this issue.*

**Keywords:** social media, education, english language learning, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, SWOT analysis, english.

## Introduction

Social media have constantly altered the way humans live in several ways, including communication, information exchange, commerce, and education (Bhatti, 2018; Bhatti, Bano, & Rehman, 2019). With the increasing ubiquity of various web-based social networking sites and other similar platforms, academics and scholars from numerous domains are examining their implications (Bhatti, Shaheen, Akram, & Rehman, 2020). To continue viewing them as a focus topic that requires additional investigation. Particularly, language specialists and teachers have seen the impact of social media on second language acquisition and learning. In recent research, it was observed that a group who received education, motivation, and inspiration through a social networking website performed better on

an English proficiency exam than a group that received instruction face to face (Wamba, 2016).

Despite the pervasive influence of social media in people's lives and the fact that modern students are resistant to traditional teaching and learning strategies (Bosch, 2009), there are few research that examine their impacts on education, particularly in English language learning (ELL). Based on many theories, such as the Input Hypothesis, Social-Interactionist, Constructivism, Cooperative Acquisition, Web-based Learning, and PC-created Instructions, this study attempts to add to the continuing conversation regarding the influence of social media on second language learning (Bhatti & Rehman, 2019). In specifically, the analyst use a SWOT analysis model to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, possibilities, and dangers of social media in language learning by

including the perspectives of those actively working in the sector.

### Literature Review

The different second language acquisition (SLA) theories and other learning models are the focus of this study. These SLA theories are deemed capable of discussing the many subjects and themes of this investigation. This study is based on SLA hypotheses or similar studies, such as Social-interactionist, Constructivist, Cooperative Learning, Web-based learning, and Computer-generated directions. Social media is an enormously broad concept that cannot be defined in a single sentence. Individuals have generally defined online life as A web-based consumer-generated collaboration of knowledge (Xiang, 2012); A "gathering of Internet-built applications that work regarding the ideological and innovative institutions of Web, and that permit the creation and trade of User Generated Content." In addition, (Kaplan and Haenl, 2010) "material, words, photographs, videos, etc. created with the intention of sharing." (Evans, 2012).

Despite the displayed definitions, "sharing" will never be inadequate to describe this phrase. Commonly, the environment of social media work is perceived as being close to correspondence, trading, sharing, shared relationships, and the like (Bhatti, Saad, & Gbadebo, 2019).

Despite the fact that the online networking instruments or platforms are ambiguous, adaptable, and diverse, a few researchers choose to carefully classify these long-distance informal communication destinations according to their typical capacities (Bhatti, Saad, & Salimon, 2019). These online networking applications, instruments, and websites were categorised into broader categories relating to correspondence, cooperation, education, and amusement, specifically for Social systems administration, Publish, Photo sharing, Audio, Video, Microblogging, Livecasting, Virtual universes, Gaming, Productivity applications, Aggregators, Rich webpage outline, Search, Mobile, and Relational (Safko and Brake, 2009). Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, MySpace, Blogger, Wikipedia, Flickr, Picasa, iTunes, YouTube, Twitter, Second Life, World of Warcraft, Google Docs, Digg, RSS 2.0, Yahoo! Search, Google Search, Jott, and Skype are well-

known online networking tools that fall under these categories. Indias have demonstrated a "overwhelmingly robust" social media presence in comparison to other Middle Eastern countries through accessing the aforementioned websites and applications (Steckman and Andrews, 2017).

According to Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis, individuals acquire familiar with a language by their exposure to information and comprehension of written material. A person who has access to a substantial amount of intelligible material will likely acquire and convey the language effectively. In light of the fact that this assessment is genuine, Indias must be inundated with a substantial amount of contributions by reading social media, where English is typically used (Bhatti, Rehman, Akram, & Shaheen, 2020). With the 330 exceptional Web-based initiatives created by the end of 2012, language students are likely to comprehend the communication method and get off the language in web journals and microblogging locales, social systems, proficient systems, video sharing systems, and content driven networks (Walaski, 2013).

Non-native language speakers who join online groups and networks and participate in conversations are presumably exposed to the native language through interaction with native language speakers and are engaged in a large number of substantial debates. Socialization enables linguistic "juveniles" to learn from those who are "seasoned" in most discourse networks (Duff, 2002).

The movement encourages not only textual composition abilities, but also social skills. Computer-generated simulations and exercises are creating opportunities for pupils to improve their use of the proper language (Ranalli, 2008)

The outcomes of a study demonstrate the usefulness of combining video-based blogs with ESL instruction are as follows:

- 1) Video-based online blogs were effective for learning open communication.
- 2) Blogging enhanced students' articulation, external appearance, posture, and signalling.

- 3) Through association, students also learnt blogging and the use of sight and sound programming.
- 4) Students have the chance to correct their occasional errors by again viewing the video.
- 5) The students learned to operate alone and within a group through self-assessment and peer feedback and audits, respectively (Shih, 2010).

Social media's huge, print-rich sophisticated environment makes language learning and security really accessible to everyone.

This study seeks to analyse the background of how social media influence English language acquisition using the ideas that have been brought together. Consider these hypotheses authentic and significant, however relatively few tests have been conducted on them. This study sheds some insight on this relevant issue that impacts English language acquisition in this country. This knowledge might aid in providing information on the influence of social media on English language acquisition.

### Research Questions

This study intends to examine the advantages, disadvantages, possibilities, and risks of social media in English language acquisition or learning in South India. This project intends to answer the following particular research questions:

1. What are the benefits of social media for English Language Learners?
2. What are the shortcomings of social media that negatively impact ELL?
3. What chances do social media present for English Language Learners?
4. What hazards do social media bring to English Language Learners?
5. What strategies may be learned from the analysis to optimise the use of social media in ELL?

### Scope and Limitations

This study is confined to examining the advantages, disadvantages, possibilities, and risks of Social Media in India's English language learning.

English language learners and social media users, teachers, instructors, professors, and an India-based

specialist in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages participated in this study.

### Methodology

#### Design for the Study

Due to the study's many implications, a number of considerations were taken into account while selecting a design. The interpretative technique of research was chosen. A thematic approach was used to synthesis the ideas and perspectives of the participants in order to discuss each component of this research.

The objective of this case study was to give an in-depth investigation of the "how" and "why" of social media's influence on English language acquisition in the real world. A SWOT matrix was utilised to enable the researcher to analyse the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in order to create emphasis. This study uses SWOT analysis, a widespread technique applied by commercial organisations and systems, due to its utility and effectiveness (Pickton & Wright, 1998)

### Sampling

This study's sample consisted of ten individuals: a TESOL India professional organisation expert, a university professor, an ESL school instructor, a Senior High School English teacher, a Junior High School English teacher, an Elementary School teacher, and four Senior High School English language students, each of whom represented a different group of individuals involved in the teaching and learning of English in India. Diverse participation aided in the collection of pertinent data and added breadth and depth to the study topic.

### Data Collection Method

This study's information was gathered through written interviews with the participants. The researcher spoke with the subjects using a Facebook message programme. Participants were instructed to complete the written interview guide by email or the same messaging application. All of the participants' responses to the interview questions were sent to the researcher within a week or two. Thus, the participants had adequate time to formulate their ideas and appropriately address the themes.

All of the material gathered for this study was handled with consideration for the nature of qualitative research.

## Results and Discussions

### Strengths

Strengths that are taken into account in this research were introduced by the information gathered. These advantages have been identified by the participants as crucial components of how social media significantly affects English language learning. The majority of the participants' knowledge was based on the assumption that English is considered to be a "global language" (Crystal, 2012) and is widely used by the majority of people around the world, much like it is in most social media platforms.

Rich source of information, linguistic texts, and vocabularies. The participants showed that social media are remarkable sources of significant, up-to-date information, including news, wikis, online journals, and a lot more that are written in English. Additionally, social media provides all the more compelling non-direct communications that appeal to all of their youthful clientele (Howe and Strauss, 2009). Even while it takes good judgement on each person's part to distinguish between real news and fake news, social media nevertheless provides a tonne of material that is ready for general consumption. They also emphasise the importance of social media in developing one's vocabulary and language skills. Some of them claimed that social media is a completely open and data-free hotspot for language acquisition. They are as follows:

No compelling rationale exists to hire an English guide or attend pricey English institutions. People should learn the English language because it is the main language or medium used on the web. The English language has advanced with the use of millennial terms. Students routinely browse the web or check their accounts, thus present in objective language.

There are several articulations, slang terms, and acronyms that we are unable to learn by reading, assisting us in speaking the language more naturally and effectively. The introduction that social media provides with English language learners occurs at a time when these customers are enjoying, studying, and using the language more frequently.

Presentation to association, collaboration, and correspondence. More information provided by the members provides additional support for the notion that social media, and particularly social networking sites, might improve human association. Due to the fact that these websites, programmes, or initiatives connect people, they also provide spaces for correspondence, allowing users to practise using the objective language of English.

The participants identified "Avenue for correspondence" as one of the social media platforms' benefits.

They can converse with a variety of people to hone their English.

Students of English as a second language develop their interpersonal skills by involvement in social media networks on a broad scale.

Students routinely browse the web or check their accounts, thus present in objective language. More significant effects from using the language, which increases interest in learning.

Since many of these members were exposed to this type of technology from an early age, proficiency with it seemed to come naturally to them. They get the chance to practise using the English language and impart knowledge to others whether they are sending messages, making posts on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, or playing online games.

Technology that was introduced to the world they grew up in is social media. Participants who identified as "digital natives" described the current generation as those who were raised in an era of advanced technology and computers. All things considered, they argue that these particular people are more tech-savvy and adapt more quickly than their former companions. Additionally, these people are exposed to a lot of English language works at a young age, which promotes better language learning and acquisition. They contend that since social media have been incorporated into this modern society, language learners will almost surely have easier access to a print-rich environment where learning English is unquestionably strengthened. One participant said:

In fact, even very young children can easily access social media sites and engage in language development through conversation with others.

"When it comes to studying English, the proper presentation to young people's online networking can be amazing. Children can easily have access to technology, innovation, and social media because they are all present.

"Interaction on social media is a part of contemporary culture. The use of Facebook, YouTube videos, and games by children today is for educational and social objectives. Language acquisition and learning are always possible with this kind of innovation.

"Social media has evolved into the current reality. Because they appeal to young people, they are suitable in language acquisition. Currently, almost everyone has a Facebook account. They learn their language and vocabulary there by reading the posts of others.

### **Weaknesses**

Social media offers platforms for language learning, but one of the more pressing questions is what kind of language people are acquiring online. Indecent conversations, repulsive content, and exclamations are only a few of the internet networking's negatives that are currently having an effect on their audiences. Language learners will generally incorporate these into their speaking and writing.

Among the participants, one said:

"Most of us need access to the Internet, and many people use it constantly to express their opinions as they are qualified for and tonnes don't use the language effectively, endangering it by spreading unnecessary and occasionally indecent phrases that shouldn't be said in all circumstances. This will cause viewers of their content to become more careless because social media is typically the group's go-to source for information, so it will spark a guilelessness among them."

As a result of the influence of social media, grammatical errors in terms, words, or articulations are also becoming increasingly acceptable today. The ideal way for collaboration is being negatively impacted by web languages, condensing, abbreviated writings, and other factors. This is also leading to communication breakdown.

absence of actual verbal exchange. Social media cooperation processes require face-to-face, one-on-one communication. In some social media platforms, the non-verbal communication, gestures, facial articulations, feelings, and other non-verbal cues are weak, if not completely absent.

Decline in writing ability. Along with the rise of the online world came the use of contractual labour, content informing, pictures, and web languages. The participants expressed that the learners' academic composition is significantly impacted by these cutting-edge writing arrangements. The majority of these writing conventions and abbreviations are used in formal writing.

### **Opportunity**

More access to English-speaking natives. Others perceived social media as a platform where opportunities were provided for non-native English speakers to gain more comprehensive access for association and correspondence. It was observed that these developments connect them to English native speakers or linguists around the globe. Social media was also permitted to be a method for online training or classes. Language learners will also likely mimic or learn how the people they "follow" speak and write through video online diaries, tweets, Facebook posts, Instagram captions, digital recordings, music sounds and recordings, and much more. Social media, in their view, offers opportunities for language learners to collaborate with experts across all disciplines of interest and obtain the precise knowledge they seek. Several people present said:

When properly set up, live online classes can be made to resemble in-person instruction. Meeting someone with whom the student can practise their L2 (second language), enabling the student to use and converse with L2.

It helps me understand how English-speaking vloggers speak. I'm told to use their lingo when speaking in class and to talk like them.

"ELLs have a lot of opportunities to develop relationships with English-speaking or English-practicing people all around the world for social connections or associations."

## Threat

According to information, there are three risks associated with using social media to learn English. To start, social media wastes time and interferes with learning. The second factor that hinders correspondence is language contrasts. The rise of web slangs and linguistic subversion, to sum up.

Cause of time wasting and learning distraction. Participants learned that a substantial portion of them are occupied due to this age's involvement in innovation, particularly with social media. Given that technically skilled people frequently execute many activities and work on numerous projects at once in the media, they usually waste time on unimportant things. It has been observed that people spend too much time on websites for long-distance informal conversation, online games, video blogs, and other online networks, interrupting students who ought to be spending quality time thinking. Social media disruptions pose serious risks to their clients' ability to study, focus, and maintain their health. Social media users, however, may be misunderstood for the enormous amount of information they manage at once or mix up their presentation of inappropriate items due to distraction. A subset of the participant set includes:

Information may be covered up, and learning may be distracted or startled.

When ELLs manage their time and choose the exercises they need to do, their motivation to study English is lower. Language development is slowed down by unguided learning.

"Information overload or chaos if a student considers learning sources arbitrarily or without an arrangement."

Contrasts in the languages that make correspondence difficult. The research also revealed another risk, which was the possible correspondence breakage brought on by linguistic differences among their users. Miscommunication occasionally cannot be avoided because the web and social media are areas where different types of communities, foundations, and linguistic tendencies intersect. Other languages can interfere with language acquisition and learning. A fraction of the audience pointed out:

"The Internet is used by people of many racial and national backgrounds, so the privileged terms for one country aren't appropriate for another (for instance, "bae" in Danish means "poop" while it is seen as a word of intimacy in the PH.

Not all of what is posted uses L1 instead of objective language. The rise of online slang and linguistic appropriation. The information lists the constant oversaturation of slang and language subversion on social media as the last among the threats. Although some people may have thought this was something wonderful or exciting, the majority of participants saw it as a threat to English language acquisition.

Some of the English words today might not imply what they did just a few years ago. With all the languages, millennial phrasings, and grammatical lexis becoming more common, internet users, especially language beginners, will generally understand this arrangement of language and accept it despite its errors. Additionally, the youth's naiveté contributes to the popularity of this social media dictionary. A select few participants spoke:

"Young people will generally respect or accept what they discover on social media, regardless of their authenticity, veracity, and value."

"On the off chance that it is widely known, it proves to be true."

"Continuous exposure to the online community's language effects their learning approach," "Web users may be more likely to utilise acronyms or abbreviations than actual words while speaking."

## Conclusion and Recommendations Summary Strengths -social media & ELL

This study has shown that social media provide a few advantages that either distinctly enhance or occasionally support users' efforts to learn the English language. These skills are valued since people today receive a lot of presentational or understandable language input through articles, writings, and vocabulary on social media platforms (Krashen, 1985). (Bhatti, Shaheen, Kamal, & Ali, 2020). People also have the chance to use the language in any social media collaboration, correspondence, associations, and information sharing. The fact that online life and any

related advancements are deeply ingrained in the cutting-edge environment and culture is another strong link between social media and language learning.

### **Weaknesses - Social Media & ELL**

Information revealed social media's downsides despite its benefits for learning the English language. Even though some claim that social media makes a vast amount of material accessible to people, illiterate language users are nonetheless at risk of coming across fake information, vulgar language, and ungrammatical compositions. Another drawback of social media in ELL was the absence of genuine human interaction on computer displays. Last but not least, the writing skills of internet network users have been affected by modern communication methods (Bhatti., Saad, & Gbadebo, 2020).

### **Opportunities Offered by Social Media for ELL**

A few doorways in the world of language learning are opened by social media. In these places, visitors have an opportunity to interact more extensively with English-speaking native speakers. Social media also humbly provides a 21st century learning experience near the crucial skills like communication, creativity, fundamental thinking, and teamwork. Given that technology is constantly evolving, the future of learning through online networking is also secure. It will always exist.

### **Threats - Social Media on ELL**

Three risks of social media in language acquisition were shown by information. Online networking can be disruptive for language students if not used properly. Students' time is being burned by terrible posts and content, which is abnormal given that they are studying increasingly relevant things. The different languages that people use online can also interfere with learning English and create barriers to communication. Last but not least, the rise of digital slang and the subversion of languages pose risks to language learning if they are not properly addressed by teachers.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

This study found that social media has a beneficial effect on users' English language acquisition. However, they may also have downsides and risks that interfere with one's

ability to learn sound English. The online social media platforms can be useful channels for disseminating cutting-edge information, a significant amount of linguistic input, connections with language speakers, and imaginative learning. Similar media, however, can also engage language learners with their deceit, unscholarly, improper, and offensive vocabulary, as well as their fake human associations.

The scientist suggests that instructors use these significant amounts of information (Krashen, 1985) present in the online networking whether in actual classroom situations or outside the formal kind of learning, taking into consideration that social media are broad sources of information, language writings, and vocabularies (Krashen, 2015). Because there are so many online inputs available to language learners, it would be beneficial to incorporate these media into language instruction. Teachers can also use real content from social networking sites, such as articles, noises, and videos, into their lesson plans. Additionally, the analyst encourages the language learners or "little toes" to set up their online networks and systems so they can collaborate with others and create a on the web language network under the proper adult supervision and with the right kinds of media. They get the chance to learn the target language and become proficient through these kinds of relationships.

In addition, the research suggests using these Net Genres in the teaching and learning process because individuals who were born during the era of contemporary computers are drawn to it.

According to the report, language learners should make use of social media to have easy online access to English-speaking natives. These same developments are necessary to ensure that the components of the agreements take into account 21st Century skills like communication, teamwork, innovation, fundamental reasoning, and others.

It is suggested that students be taught to choose the right media and activate their channels to distinguish between fake and real information, what is healthy and what is not, as well as between unscholarly or grammatical writings and proper language usage in order to manage the threats of social media in English language learning.

Language learners are advised to make it their goal to communicate needs more face-to-face than online as actual human interaction is limited or absent on a virtual screen. In this way, only the essential components of a letter are employed, and a strategic distance is kept from letter breakdown.

It is also advised that teachers or adults warn their students about the dangers of these patterns and direct them to content-rich sources of sound English language due to the countless condensed compositions, graphics, and web slangs that harm language learners' writing attitudes.

Additionally, these language students must limit their use of social media sites so they don't waste time and can spend quality time reflecting and engaging in other activities that will be more beneficial in the long run. However, it would be extremely beneficial for the pupils to choose the right media or information and to refrain from using inappropriate language and web slang.

Additionally, the fact that there are so many other societies and dialects besides English on the Internet poses a barrier to effective language learning. In order to do this, language learners must expose themselves to a large amount of sound language input in order to strengthen their very own channels. They can then see what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable English.

Additionally, social media usage and its theories need to be linked with language instruction in schools. To promote language learning through internet-based living destinations or devices, educational programmes, learning activities, and resources must be developed. For reading, writing, hearing, speaking, review, and extension exercises for learners, well-known tools including messages, websites, Wattpad, Facebook, Messenger, Tweeter, Instagram, Skype, and YouTube can be used efficiently.

This study could serve as an additional resource or focus for any future studies on English language acquisition through social media. More researchers are invited to dig deeper into this topic in order to advance the study. It is encouraged to conduct ongoing research or a data-driven study on the effects of social media on Indian youth.

A study that looks into the negative effects of the evolving online live language in language training also seems to need careful consideration. In the end, more studies are needed to inspire the creation of educational materials, activities, and programmes concerning integrating social media in language teaching and learning. These options for research will contribute to illuminating this poorly studied subject.

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