



A MULTIFACETED ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH MAJORS' ENGAGEMENT WITH USER-GENERATED LANGUAGE CONTENT: ATTITUDES, MOTIVATION, AND PERCEIVED SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

(Master's Thesis)

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Kütahya - 2024

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Master's Thesis

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CONTENT: ATTITUDES, MOTIVATION, AND PERCEIVED
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

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Kütahya, 2024

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KÜTAHYA DUMLUPINAR ÜNİVERSİTESİ

LİSANSÜSTÜ EĞİTİM ENSTİTÜSÜ

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27/12/2024

Tez Jürisi	İmza	
	Kabul	Ret
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Scientific Ethics Statement

I hereby declare that throughout the process of preparing my master's thesis, titled "*A Multifaceted Analysis of English Majors' Engagement with User-Generated Language Content: Attitudes, Motivation, and Perceived Skills Development*," from the proposal stage to its completion, I have meticulously adhered to scientific ethics and academic principles. I confirm that all the information presented in the thesis has been obtained in accordance with the principles of scientific integrity and tradition, that the thesis has been prepared in compliance with thesis writing guidelines, that I have properly cited all direct or indirect references made in this study, and that all the works I have used are listed in the bibliography.

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ABSTRACT**A MULTIFACETED ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH MAJORS' ENGAGEMENT
WITH USER-GENERATED LANGUAGE CONTENT: ATTITUDES,
MOTIVATION, AND PERCEIVED SKILLS DEVELOPMENT****DEMİR, Furkan****Master Thesis, Department of English Language and Literature****Advisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Burcu GÖKGÖZ KURT****December, 2024, 123 pages**

This study examines the attitudes, motivation, and language skill development of foreign language learners in relation to user-generated content (UGC) on social media platforms. Focusing on the impact of social media on language learning, the research investigates how exposure to UGC shapes learners' language proficiency, engagement, and cultural knowledge acquisition processes. It explores the contributions of different types of UGC, such as educational videos, vlogs, and humor elements, to the learning process and examines whether these resources act as an effective catalyst alongside traditional language learning methods. The study also addresses the motivational aspects of social media, investigating how interactions with social media influence learners' intrinsic motivation for language learning. Data was collected through questionnaires conducted with foreign language learners, analyzing their interactions with social media content and their perceptions of its effectiveness and relevance in language acquisition. The findings indicate that UGC on social media serves as a valuable tool for developing language skills, particularly in vocabulary learning, listening comprehension, and cultural understanding. However, the study also highlights potential challenges, such as the influence of internet slang on formal language use. This research contributes to the ongoing discussions on the integration of digital tools into language education and emphasizes the need for educators to consider the dynamic role of social media in shaping modern language learning practices.

Keywords: Social media, Language Learning, User-Generated Content, English Majors, Motivation, Language Skills

ÖZET

KULLANICI TARAFINDAN OLUŞTURULAN DİL İÇERİĞİNE İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN İLİŞKİSİNİN ÇOK YÖNLÜ ANALİZİ: TUTUMLAR, MOTİVASYON VE ALGILANAN BECERİ GELİŞİMİ

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Aralık, 2024, 123 sayfa

Bu çalışma, yabancı dil öğrencilerinin sosyal medya platformlarındaki kullanıcı üretimi içeriklere (KÜİ) ilişkin tutumlarını, motivasyonlarını ve dil becerilerinin gelişimini incelemektedir. Sosyal medyanın dil öğrenimini nasıl etkilediğine odaklanan araştırma, KÜİ'ye maruz kalmanın öğrencilerin dil yeterliliğini, katılımını ve kültürel bilgi edinme süreçlerini nasıl şekillendirdiğini araştırmaktadır. Eğitim videoları, vloglar ve mizah öğeleri gibi farklı KÜİ türlerinin öğrenme sürecine sağladığı katkılar ve bu içeriklerin geleneksel dil öğrenme yöntemlerine etkili bir katalizör olup olmadığı incelenmiştir. Araştırma ayrıca, sosyal medya ile etkileşimin öğrencilerin dil öğrenmeye yönelik içsel motivasyonlarını nasıl artırdığına dair motivasyonel yönleri ele almaktadır. Veriler, yabancı dil öğrencileriyle yapılan anketler yoluyla toplanmış ve sosyal medya içerikleri ile öğrencilerin etkileşimleri ve bu içeriklerin dil edinimindeki etkinliği ile alaka düzeyine dair algılar incelenmiştir. Bulgular, sosyal medyadaki KÜİ'nin dil becerilerini geliştirmede, özellikle kelime dağarcığı kazanımı, dinleme-anlama ve kültürel anlayış konularında değerli bir araç olduğunu göstermektedir. Bununla birlikte, çalışma, internet argosunun resmi dil kullanımı üzerindeki potansiyel olumsuz etkilerine de dikkat çekmektedir. Araştırma, dijital araçların dil eğitimine entegrasyonu konusundaki tartışmalara katkıda bulunmakta ve öğretmenlerin sosyal medyanın modern dünyada dil öğrenme pratiklerini şekillendirmedeki dinamik rolünü göz önünde bulundurması gerektiğini vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Medya, Dil Öğrenimi, Kullanıcı Tarafından Üretilen İçerikler, Yabancı Dil Öğrencileri, Motivasyon, Dil Becerileri

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Studying for a master's degree and writing a thesis is a journey filled with challenges, growth, and discovery. For me, it was literally a journey between 2 cities for long hours. This journey would not have been possible without the guidance, support, and encouragement of many incredible individuals to whom I owe a deep debt of gratitude.

First and foremost, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the esteemed jury members Prof. Dr. Ayhan Kahraman and Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Işıl Yalçın for their invaluable feedback, thought-provoking questions, and constructive critiques. Their insights have not only enhanced the quality of this thesis but also broadened my academic perspective.

A special and profound thanks go to my supervisor, Doç. Dr. Burcu Gökgöz Kurt whose unwavering guidance and mentorship have been a beacon throughout this journey. She has been an extraordinary source of inspiration and support, offering thoughtful advice, timely feedback, and constant encouragement at every stage. Her dedication to excellence and kindness in addressing my challenges has truly made an indelible impact on my academic and personal growth. I am deeply grateful for the privilege of working under her guidance.

I am deeply grateful to the expert panel members, Öğr. Gör. Dr. Halil İbrahim Karabulut, Öğr. Gör. Zeynep Sena Öztürk, Öğr. Gör. Onur Aslan, Gülşah Dikmeci, and Doç. Dr. Burcu Gökgöz Kurt, whose valuable expertise greatly contributed to the scale development process. Their insightful input was instrumental in refining the methodology and ensuring the reliability and validity of this study. Special thanks to Öğr. Gör. Arif Erdem Eryılmaz for his help in distributing the questionnaire. Moreover, heartfelt gratitude goes to the English majors who generously participated in my questionnaire.

Finally, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who supported me throughout this academic journey—my parents, Ahmet Demir, Hatice Demir, and my dear brother Burak Demir, as well as my friends, my second family, the NBI, whose unwavering belief in me kept me motivated and resilient. This thesis stands as a testament not only to my efforts but also to their invaluable encouragement. I also hope for the well-being of the strangers I encountered during my travels, whose acts of kindness and assistance made a meaningful difference along the way.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BCE	Before the Common Era
CALL	Computer-assisted Language Learning
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CLL	Community Language Learning
CVR	Content Validity Ratio
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language
MALL	Mobile-assisted Language Learning
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SRMR	Standardized Root Mean Square Residual
STD	Self-Determination Theory
TELL	Technology-Enhanced Language Learning
TLI	The Tucker-Lewis Index
TPR	Total Physical Response
UGC	User-generated Content
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development



THESIS TEXT



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Romanian philosopher and essayist Emil Cioran once said in *Anathemas and Admirations* (1986), “One does not inhabit a country; one inhabits a language. That is our country, our fatherland — and no other.” Languages can transcend physical borders, especially a lingua franca like English. In today’s digital age, English connects people across the globe, forming a linguistic community beyond geographical constraints. Modern communication tools, particularly social media, amplify this connection by allowing users to create and share user-generated content that facilitates language learning and cultural exchange. This study investigates how English majors benefit from user-generated content in language learning on social media, exploring its impact on motivation and language skills development. The goal is to understand social media's potential to enhance language proficiency and engagement through the creation and sharing of UGC.

As of 2022, there are estimated to be 7151 languages spoken in the world. English is the most popular one among them. 19% of the world population speak English but native speakers constitute only 5% (Central Intelligence Agency, 2024). So, the number of native speakers is in fact lower compared to second language learners of English. Moreover, native speakers are divided across cultures and countries, which shapes the concept of nativism in English itself. So, learning English as a second language is now more demanding and popular.

Because English is a lingua franca, people want to learn this global phenomenon. The concept of a globalized language charms people to learn English; however, learning this common language has its perks. As it is a common ground between nations, English helps in many international contexts such as business, diplomacy, education, science, technology, and academy. As for education, English provides access to an enormous number of online resources such as educational content, research papers, news articles, e-books of all times as well as to a whole entertainment world that includes movies, series, video games and songs in English. Learning English also makes traveling more accessible given that English is widely spoken as a second language in many countries. Furthermore, learning English as a global language can enhance cognitive abilities like critical thinking and problem solving.

However, learning a second language is not only valuable but also a lengthy process. So, what are the best ways to learn a second language? Many people believe that the best way to learn a second language is by immersing oneself in a country where English is spoken as a native and/or official language. This describes an English as a second language (ESL) environment since the learners are in a context in which English is spoken as a native/official language. This perspective is supported by the idea that immersion provides rich linguistic and cultural exposure, which can significantly enhance language acquisition. Indeed, studies have shown that learners often benefit greatly from this immersive experience (Feijoo et al., 2023; Kinginger, 2011). Learners need exposure to English, and going abroad can be an effective way to experience authentic language. As you must speak English in those countries, you will have to learn it to adapt to those countries' cultures and overcome feelings of inadequacy and prejudices (Tanaka & Ellis, 2003). That can be good motivation; however, there are problems with going abroad to learn English, too. As English is spoken in diverse cultures, there are a lot of variations of it. Even if most English speakers follow the same grammatical rules, every country has different accents and dialects. So, learning English in another country can be difficult and regressive because of these reasons (Kuo, 2011). Moreover, there are economic and political difficulties travelling abroad in today's world. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate the most effective strategies learners may use to access authentic and dynamic content about English.

In this regard, the internet comes to mind as a first resource in today's digitized world. Regardless of economic status, individuals can access a vast array of information on the internet using a moderately equipped smartphone, eliminating the necessity for a computer. Over the years, the internet has transformed into a vast digital library, brimming with content on virtually any topic, making it a vault of knowledge (Lynch, 2016). For language learning, the internet has been a rich resource for finding authentic English content, providing vast opportunities for exposure and practice. However, as the internet evolved, websites became increasingly static and predictable. User-generated content began to lose its uniqueness, and finding fresh, authentic material became more challenging. A need for a more dynamic and organic form of communication and content sharing emerged to promote genuine interaction and engagement among users.

Social media's rise seemed like an answer to this problem. Before social media platforms became a thing, there were blogs, texting applications and forums. There were

initial social media platforms back in the late 90s and the early 20s, but they were not mainstream. Moreover, they lacked the enthusiasm found in human interactions. So, what is today's social media and what makes it different from its predecessors? According to Dollarhide (2024), the term "social media" describes a range of technological tools that allow people to share information and ideas with one another. Smartphones are currently the most widely used technological instrument for instance, in the U.S, up to 90% of people own a smartphone (Pew Research Center, 2024). Before mobile phones became smart, social media platforms were mainly accessible from computers. Facebook, which had one million users in 2004, was available for smartphones in 2008 (Meta, 2023). With the revolutions in the mobile phone industry, smart phones became so functional and affordable at a medium range that they became an inseparable thing in our lives. Most content people create nowadays is accessible globally and instantly. This mobility and living in the moment make social media and smartphones exceptional.

Nowadays social media can affect people's behaviors, ideas, emotions, and the way they tailor their lives and culture. Furthermore, social media can even disrupt countries' economies, policies, elections and socio-cultural balances. It can even trigger social and political events like mass riots. On January 6, 2021, for instance, users from many social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter(X) contributed to the Capitol attack in the United States, which eventually went out of control (Timberg et al., 2021). Events like this and content that people share about any topic, or any field are mostly user-generated content, which refers to media, information, or resources created and published by everyday users rather than professional entities or organizations.

Social media houses various user-generated content. Users usually create content without a commercial expectation and share it via various social media platforms. The creation of such content can be teamwork or an individual effort (Lew, 2014). User-generated content can include anything from any field or profession. It has become particularly popular for language learning in recent years. The integration of social media and language learning has been extensively discussed and validated in academic literature highlighting the positive role of social media platforms on language acquisition and learner engagement (e.g., Manca & Ranieri, 2016; Wang & Vásquez, 2012). Manca and Ranieri (2016) explore how social media facilitates collaborative learning and provides learners with exposure to authentic language use, while Wang and Vásquez (2012) examine the role of social media in enhancing language skills through interactive and

user-driven content. Both studies emphasize the dynamic and organic nature of content sharing on these platforms, which supports more meaningful and practical language learning experiences. Therefore, the significance of user-generated content in language learning lies in its ability to create a collaborative and interactive learning environment, leveraging the vast and diverse resources available on social media platforms (Manca & Ranieri, 2016; Wang & Vásquez, 2012).

To master a language, one needs to get exposed to content in that target language (Krashen, 1985). Exposure to the target language helps to accelerate the speed of second language learning in EFL and ESL countries (Muñoz & Cadierno, 2021). There are a lot of social media accounts or channels that share authentic language content, tips and information about English. Influencers from these social media platforms create formal, informal, authentic and local language content that can help learners to access various language forms across cultures. Because of social media's dynamics, user-generated content can stay relevant and up to date. Lately, social media platforms have shifted their focus toward promoting short video content, a trend driven by its effectiveness in capturing audience attention and enhancing engagement. As revealed by Gausby (2015), the attention span of people throughout the years has been decreasing. In 2000, the average human attention span was 12 seconds, in 2013, this average was found to be 8 seconds (Gausby, 2015). Today, discussions are still being conducted on attention span's decline. Because of this reason, social media platforms have focused on promoting shorter content. For instance, Instagram and Facebook have stories and reels, YouTube has shorts and TikTok is mainly about short videos or edits. This led to the creation of short and effective language learning materials. Consequently, user-generated content about language learning is now mostly short videos. As there are trends in social media, content creators adopt and update themselves, creating more unique and attractive content which makes them better in the long run, too. Having all this in mind, this thesis study seeks to explore how language learners situate social media as a part of their language learning process and the effects it has on their motivation, skills, and attitudes.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As English became a global language in the context of lingua franca, learning English as a second language is now very important and popular. Traditional methods like formal learning or travelling to countries where English is spoken as a native or second

language are still popular options, but they have time-related, economic and political disadvantages. Because of that, learners try online resources and social media to learn and practice English since these resources provide authentic, dynamic and culturally rich content. However, as the internet evolved, online resources have become ordinary and repetitive. This led to the rise of user-generated language learning content on social media. Therefore, the question is to determine whether English majors find user-generated content on social media effective for language learning and whether it helps them access authentic and dynamic language content.

1.3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

User-generated content means any content people create without expecting a financial return. These people can be professionals or common users. While social media hosts a wide range of content, language learning materials have recently gained significant popularity on these platforms. There has been research on social media and language learning in the past, but these studies usually focus on a single social media platform (Fahriyah & Nikmah, 2023), certain language skills (Ravindran et al., 2022) or a specific language goal (Rahmawati et al., 2023). There is little research about user-generated content in social media and its dynamics with language learning. Besides, social media evolved a lot in recent years and old studies cannot keep up with the changes in this industry. User-generated content also changed itself. For example, videos have become shorter and most of them contain subtitles or colorful writings. Trends in social media platforms are evolving constantly, and this causes these platforms to update themselves with new features. As people adapt to these new trends, their habits and behaviors evolve accordingly. With this dynamicity, new studies are required to further research how users utilize these aspects and how such changes shape the way language learners use social media to learn languages. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the perspectives of English majors about the latest user-generated content on social media and its perceived role on their language learning. Specifically, it seeks to determine whether this content influences their attitudes and beliefs about learning English as their major. With the findings of this research, learners, teachers, lawmakers and even influencers could see the potential of user-generated content in language learning. In the English language teaching field, this study can shed light on the usage of social media in language learning and the latest developments and trends in user-generated content. As

social media evolves and trends change every day, this study can help future researchers to have an idea about today's standards and it can inspire researchers to find more unique research topics.

1.4. STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE

The aim of the current study is to investigate whether user-generated language content on social media influences the attitudes and beliefs of university students who study English as their major, specifically focusing on their views towards language learning, motivation, and skill development. To achieve that, the present study aims to find the answers to these questions:

R.Q.1: What are the attitudes of English Majors towards user-generated content on social media, and how do they perceive its effectiveness in enhancing language proficiency and cultural understanding compared to traditional methods?

R.Q.2: How does engagement with user-generated language content influence English majors' motivation for language learning, considering factors such as perceived improvement, active learning strategy development, and the impact of social media interactions and influencers?

R.Q.3: How do English majors perceive the impact of user-generated language content on their development of specific language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking)?

To understand and find answers to these research questions, the structure of this thesis is as follows: Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature on second language learning and the role of social media. Chapter 3 details the research methodology, including data collection and analysis. Chapter 4 presents the results, while Chapter 5 discusses their implications in relation to existing literature. The thesis concludes with a summary, pedagogical implications, limitations, and recommendations for future research.



CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, previous and recent literature is presented in terms of second language learning, global languages, and the effect of technology and social media in language learning.

2.1. SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Second language learning has consistently gathered significant interest over the years due to a multitude of factors. Being able to speak a second language, especially a global one, is always a valuable perk for people to have. For years and centuries, people have been in search of ways, methods, or theories to build a foundation for language learning and to understand its core disciplines.

During the early 20th century, one of the first language theories emerged. Behaviorism proposes to predict, monitor, and control human activity (Watson, 1998). Behaviorism is not mainly about second language learning, but its principles were used in language learning classes and situations as drills and repetition. It was successful in some cases. However, as new theories emerged, it was seen that behaviorism focused too much on observable behaviors and lacked the importance of cognitive processes and the emotional side of learners (Bandura, 1977).

Contrary to behaviorism, cognitivism tries to focus on mental activities that involve learning, attention, memory, problem solving, and it emphasizes that there is a universal order, a specific set of stages for language development in the brain (Piaget, 1973). Cognitivism mainly focuses on language acquisition. However, in second language learning, the role of cognitivism is important in processes like memory and comprehension, especially in vocabulary learning and reading. Nevertheless, cognitivism was also criticized because of oversimplification of mental processes, the neglect of social and emotional factors and contextual situations such as cultural background, social interactions, learning environment, socioeconomic status, motivational factors and personal experiences (Alahmad, 2020).

Constructivism focuses on learner's active role in building understanding and knowledge through meaningful language and social experiences. In other words, it is a mixture of logic and exchange between people (Ellis, 1994). In constructivism, the focus is on communicative and comprehension skills. Critical thinking, problem solving skills, creativity and expression are also key components of constructivism. Moreover, as

constructivism promotes self-learning, it can be a very effective language learning theory to apply. However, some believe that minimal guidance to learners is not effective, especially at beginner levels. Without enough counsel, learners can have a hard time learning new language skills (Kirschner et al., 2006).

Sociocultural theory was developed by Lev Vygotsky, and it focuses on social interactions and emphasize that these interactions are the core basics of this theory. He highlighted the importance of social interactions as learning and development occur through these exchanges (Vygotsky, 1978). People learn from others in their environment like parents, teachers or peers. There are key concepts of sociocultural theory that try to enrich this idea. Such as zone of proximal development (ZPD), scaffolding, cultural tools and internalization. Sociocultural theory affected other fields such as education, psychology and language learning. In language learning, this theory points out the importance of social interaction, meaningful communication and cultural context for language skills, especially speaking skills (De Costa et al., 2007). However, there is criticism about this theory, too. Some argue that Vygotsky's untimely death left certain parts of his theory incomplete (Allman, 2020). There are also doubts about the zone of proximal development. Miller (2011) argues that the range of the ZPD can vary from one person to another, potentially causing misunderstandings about the characteristics of learners. There are also cultural concerns regarding the applicability and compatibility of this theory across diverse cultural contexts.

As theories developed, new approaches that combine multiple ideologies also started to emerge. One of them was the interactionist approach. This approach emphasized the interaction between learners and their environment, highlighting the dynamic relationship that influences learning outcomes. In second language learning, the interactionist approach merges elements from other theories such as cognitive, social and linguistic to make a better sense of language learning. While developing this approach, researchers were in search of reoccurring themes in authentic conversations (Gass & Mackey, 2012). The idea was to apply these patterns to second language learning to increase learners' understanding of the language. The core elements of the interactionist approach are social interaction, the importance of input and output, feedback from teachers, peers and others from the environment, negotiation of meaning and authentic language contexts (Ellis, 1991). As this approach seems to have a broad combination of other ideas, it can be criticized by some. Ellis (2012) criticizes this theory because it can

overlook factors like individual differences, learner motivation and the role of explicit instruction. Practical implementation can also be a problem as there are diverse needs and contexts of language learners.

Input Hypothesis was another big idea that was proposed by Krashen. He suggests that language is learned best when learners are faced with input that is slightly above their present level (Krashen, 1985). The input he insisted on was comprehensible input, which means input that learners can understand mostly but not entirely. The importance of this hypothesis in second language learning comes from the prioritizing of input, content, immersion and exposure. When combined, this hypothesis has 5 core features. Comprehensible input, I+1 rule, natural order, meaning-focused language learning and low affective filter (Er, 2014). There are also criticisms of Krashen's theory. Swain (1995) argued that output may result in improvement, particularly in the areas of speaking and writing skills. Ellis (2015) also emphasized that meaningful and comprehensible input are valuable but a balanced approach that combines both communicative and explicit focus can be better in language learning.

As technology developed, new theories were needed to understand how it affects language learning. Connectivism emerged as a theory to make sense of this process. It was proposed by George Siemens and Stephen Downes in the early 2000s. It prioritizes the neural mechanisms while language learning occurs. Connectivism tries to combine its predecessor language theories with technology while also monitoring social structures (Siemens, 2005). Moreover, Siemens (2005) emphasizes that past theories about language learning were not able to combine technology with their ideologies. This combination was not available or applicable at that time. Connectivism sees the bonds we have between people as networks and things we do when we try to learn something as an action of bonding (Downes, 2019). This bonding occurs neurologically in the brain and verbally through communication. In second language learning, connectivism is valuable for its contributions to the understanding of the role of digital networks, technology, diverse resources on the internet, co-learning and social media with its user-generated content today. Connectivism does not directly mention social media, but it is the closest theory to implement it. Connectivism has evolved in online education throughout the years. Platforms like Moodle and Canvas showcase how connections among learners and digital tools can be used to promote language learning abilities (Mpungose & Khoza, 2022). There are criticisms about connectivism, too. Kerr (2006) emphasizes that connectivism

uses too generalized terms that do not seem to explain how learning actually happens. Furthermore, he believes that connectivism adds nothing unique to the field and it misrepresents previous theories about learning. Downes (2008) answers this criticism by saying that connectivism is still in the defining stage; nevertheless, it has a solid understanding of how learning happens. Moreover, he adds that it is pointless to criticize connectivism by using old theories or practices that are still being applied. However, Downes (2019) later defends connectivism's relevance again, emphasizing how it remains a key framework for understanding learning in a digital age, especially when considering the role of social media and user-generated content today.

2.2. IMPORTANCE OF GLOBAL LANGUAGES AND ENGLISH

Languages have been spoken since the earliest days of humanity, and written language texts can date back to 3200 BCE (Mark, 2023). As there were numerous languages, some of them became so demanding that they became a global language or lingua franca. The strength of a language lies in the strength of its speakers. Domination of a language is linked with the military, economic, technological and cultural power of a country or a certain group of people (Crystal, 2003). There are also new definitions that are derived from lingua franca to enrich the context. Trade language, contact language, international language and auxiliary language are new terms that enhance the concept of lingua franca (Samarin, 1968). To expand the context of the lingua franca further, new types of lingua franca emerged. There are natural lingua francas, planned lingua francas and pidgin languages (Samarin, 1968).

Before English became the last dominant language, there were other lingua francas in history. Other languages and cultures were able to dominate the world. Even if most of them were regional, they shaped and influenced other cultures in the world. Latin was one of them. As the Roman Empire dominated Europe and nearby regions, Latin became the language of administration, trade, culture, religion and diplomacy (Ostler, 2005). It was mostly spoken among educated elites and clergy. The Catholic church was also very effective in the usage and spread of Latin through religious texts. Latin's decline as a lingua franca can be attributed to a combination of political, cultural, and intellectual shifts. Following the fall of the Western Roman Empire in the 5th century, Europe fragmented into various kingdoms, each developing its own languages and dialects. The rise of regional languages in literature, administration, and education during the Middle

Ages further weakened Latin's dominance (Ostler, 2005). Today, Latin remains special as it is the official language of the Vatican City and is still used in scientific and religious terms.

With the growth of Islam, Arabic became influential in its spread after the 7th century. As Islamic empires were dominant in the Middle East and nearby areas, Arabic was the common ground between people who were busy with education, commerce, science and governance (Holes, 2004). Astronomy in the Islamic world between the 11th and 15th centuries was so developed that most astronomical terms that were discovered were named Arabic. Their observation skills were great and the naming of objects in the sky was a remarkable thing to achieve. The dominance of Arabic in the scientific world at that time is still available in astronomy today in terms of language (Walker, 1996).

French emerged as one of the dominant languages in Europe between the 16th and 20th centuries. There are multiple reasons that led to the dominance of the French in Europe. France had a remarkable military, political, cultural and economic power during that period (Wright, 2006). Moreover, as a colonial empire, France was able to carry its language's influence across the world. French was the lingua franca in terms of diplomacy, politics and culture. Paris was the center of attention in the cultural sense in Europe. However, as colonialism began to decline in the 20th century, French started to lose its influence. World Wars weakened European powers and after the end of the Second World War, the United States' economic and cultural influence empowered English and French's power as a lingua franca weakened in time (Wright, 2016).

Spanish was also one of the dominant languages between the 16th and 18th centuries. Colonization and exploration efforts were the main motivation, and it resulted in the Spanish language's domination in some regions. These regions include Canaries, America, the Mediterranean and the Balkans, and the Philippines (Penny, 2002). As Spain covered a lot of lands, Spanish eventually became an international trade, diplomacy and cultural exchange language. However, like most empires, Spanish Empire lost the influence in its colonies in the 19th century and in time, other cultures and languages became more dominant. Even if Spanish is not the modern lingua franca, it is still the most spoken 4th language in the world (Central Intelligence Agency, 2024).

Colonization efforts in the 14th and 15th century and the aim of finding new trade routes led to the rise of colonial empires. These explorers and settlers brought their

wealth, culture, religion, society and language to the new world. Especially, missionaries were very eager to spread their language in the new lands to promote their religion (Lynch, 2012). After the discovery of America and British Empire's colonial rise, English started to become dominant in the world. With the 20th century, English was being spoken on every continent through colonies and outposts (McArthur, 2003). Today it is the modern lingua franca mostly through the United States' economic and cultural influence after the Second World War. This influence was doubled during the Cold War era as countries all around the world were promoting their propaganda through English, even the Soviet Union (Crystal, 2003). English also became the mutuality for people across the world in terms of education, science, technology and popular culture. English, as the most widely spoken lingua franca today, plays a vital role in global communication. According to recent statistics, approximately 1.5 billion people use English either as a native or second language (Dotefl, 2024). Its influence extends beyond traditional domains into digital spaces, including social media and technology. English dominates platforms like YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram, where user-generated content serves as a dynamic vehicle for learning and engagement. This makes English not just a tool for communication but also a key component in the modern digital age.

2.3. BRIEF HISTORY OF TRADITIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODS

Learning and teaching a language for various purposes is a journey and requires effective methods. As languages evolve, the needs of learners and these methods evolve in time. The oldest one is the grammar-translation method. The grammar-translation method is a traditional approach to language teaching that prioritizes grammatical rules and translation of texts between 2 languages (Tsegaye, 2023). The idea is to learn the language explicitly. This method's concept goes way back to Ancient Greece as they translated texts between Latin and Greek. Moreover, first translation can date back to the 3rd century BCE in Alexandria for the translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek (Lebert, 2023). This method focuses on reading and writing while speaking and listening are not mainly prioritized. As more communicative and implicit methods were developed, the grammar-translation method was shelved in most modern teaching environments. However, it is still being practiced in language classrooms for various reasons.

After the limitations of the grammar-translation method, a new method was needed to address these restrictions, and the direct method emerged as a result. The direct method prioritizes teaching language directly through the target language. Translation or memorization is not imposed or supported (Palmer & Redman, 1969). Immersion in the target language is the main focus through demonstration, real-life contexts and authentic materials. Vocabulary and grammar are taught inductively and supported by visual aids, objects and actions. The main feature of the direct method is its emphasis on speaking through conversational contexts and practices (Skidmore, 1917). Learners can benefit from techniques like question-answer drills, role-playing and situational dialogues, which help engage them in mostly authentic conversational contexts. The ultimate goal is to build the ability to understand and speak the target language naturally without a need for translation or memorization. Even if this method seems flawlessly executable, there are criticisms about it, too. Some say without an explicit grammar instruction, learners can have difficulties understanding the target language's grammar structure and rules. Moreover, Brereton (1904) emphasizes that in the classroom learners can rely too much on teachers as they cannot fully converse in the target language, which, in time, can be a burden on teachers.

Another speaking focused and old method is the audio-lingual method. The audio-lingual method's original purpose was to find an answer to the weaknesses of its predecessor methods such as grammar-translation and direct method in the mid-20th century. It focuses on oral and auditory skills and has behaviorist principles (Kirch, 1967). In this method, language learning can be seen as habit formation. Because of that, exposure to target language structures and chunks that include meaningful dialogues and drills is the focus. This process is reinforced with repetition and imitation. Repetition, drills, word chunks and patterns can be the scaffolding in language learning, and this can be applied in the audio-lingual method (Fries, 1952). Audio materials, such as digital recordings and language-learning apps are the main components of the audio-lingual method. Error correction is also immediate and frequent. One of the first applications of this method was in the Second World War. As the United States entered the war, there was a need for a new method to teach army personnel various languages in a fast way. This led to the rise of the audio-lingual method, and for this reason, it can be called the army method, as well (Brown, 2014). Following the end of the Second World War, the audio-lingual method was used for a while, and criticisms started to appear in time. Some argue

that this method can lead to memorization and limited conversational abilities (Valdman, 1970). Reading and writing skills are neglected at the expense of listening and speaking which is a downside for some learning contexts.

The silent way is one of the unique methods of language teaching. The silent way, which encourages students to discover language rather than rely on instruction, was developed by Caleb Gattegno in the 1960s (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2000). The teacher remains mostly silent and provides very little guidance which opens the way for learners to be more active in figuring out the language. By relying on learner priority, the silent way encourages learner autonomy, problem solving and critical thinking. By limiting the dominance of the teacher, the silent way gives students more time to be active for the development of speaking skills. However, the silent way can be challenging in larger classes in terms of paying attention to each individual learner. Moreover, learners might feel confused or frustrated without direct guidance from the teacher. Also, the silent way often focuses on accuracy and pronunciation, which can limit the emphasis on real life speaking situations (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

As time passed, language teaching methods became more humane in terms of learner feelings. Suggestopedia was created by Georgi Lozanov and it was one of the first methods which valued learners' emotions and feelings in a learning environment. Suggestopedia is based on the belief that learners learn better in a relaxed environment (Lozanov, 1978). Music and positive suggestions are used to create a non-threatening atmosphere in order to reduce the psychological barriers that could hinder learning. In a nutshell, suggestopedia aims to create a positive, low-stress environment while integrating multiple senses which include visual, auditory and kinesthetic elements. However, as suggestopedia requires a specific setting that involves background music, comfortable seating and art, it can be difficult to implement it in many classroom environments (Köçeri & Aslan, 2024).

With the developments in language teaching methods, learners' and teachers' roles changed. Teachers' role as an authority figure in language teaching became passive. One of the methods that used this change of role was community language learning (CLL), which was developed by Charles A. Curran in the 1970s. CLL emphasizes a supportive learning environment where learners work together as a community (Curran, 1976). The teacher acts as a counselor and facilitator by helping learners to express themselves. Just like suggestopedia, CLL aims to create a supportive environment to reduce learner

anxiety. Learners are encouraged to set their language goals to make the learning experience more meaningful. Moreover, by learning and acting together, learners can enhance their motivation and engagement levels. However, in CLL the teacher needs strong counselling skills, and some educators may not possess this. As CLL is student-centered, it can be challenging especially in larger classrooms to apply this method, and some grammatical instructions may be lacking without properly structured lessons (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

Another unique method that was developed in the 1960s is total physical response. TPR was developed by James Asher, and it is based on the concept of enhancing language learning through physical movement. According to Asher (2009), learning is more effective when combined with physical movement. Learners respond to commands with physical actions, and this helps reinforce vocabulary and grammar. TPR is particularly effective for beginners as it offers low stress and an engaging language learning environment. TPR also promotes language retention in the long term as learners associate words with physical actions. However, TPR may not be suitable for advanced language skills and can be challenging to apply when teaching abstract vocabulary or complex grammar (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Moreover, some learners may find physical activities simplistic or childish.

2.4. CHALLENGES IN TRADITIONAL LANGUAGE METHODS

Apart from the grammar-translation method, traditional language learning methods are being used more than decades now. Even if they are called classic methods, these methods are still actively used in specific contexts. For instance, for school or language examinations, explicit language teaching with a focus on reading and listening is still popular in private tutoring and schools. Even in modern schools where the curriculum is designed according to modern methods, we can see teachers teaching in traditional ways because of personal choice, experiences and classroom culture. So, traditional methods are still popular and should not be neglected because in some cases they are still useful. However, these methods face challenges while trying to keep up with modern methods. Traditional methods often prioritize memorization of grammatical rules over meaningful usage. In time, this can create difficulties for students to speak and understand the language naturally (Nunan, 1999). Focus on form over function is the main weakness of these methods. Additionally, these methods are often teacher-centered,

providing only a few opportunities for learners to participate in active learning. Moreover, traditional methods rely on pre-made artificial language materials that are not up to date according to authentic real-life situations and this can cause problems for learners while interacting in conversations (Brown, 2007). There are concerns about translation and transition between native and target language, too. Some expressions and culture-specific words and phrases can be difficult to translate. Overuse of the first language of the user can also be problematic in the future in terms of interference with the target language. Traditional methods vary in their stance on the use of the native language: some support it, others discourage it, and some ban it entirely. In terms of curriculum, traditional methods usually have a specific pace and rules. Individual differences of the learners are not prioritized, and this can lead to students who can stay behind the program. However, as humanistic thoughts spread throughout the world after the Second World War, education systems and language learning were affected by this, too. Post-war language methods focused on a learner-centered approach instead of teacher-centered. This resulted in more student participation and activities. As the world started to become globalized during that time, communication and usage of language in practical conversational contexts became more important. Social media and technology have completely changed language learning, breaking assumptions and changing how learners interact with languages.

2.5. EMERGENCE OF TECHNOLOGY IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Technology has affected everything in the world. Education and language learning got their share of it, too. The first modern computer in the world was developed during the 1940s (Harris & Pollette, 2023). They were even used in the Second World War for calculations about airplanes and codebreaking (Wallace, 2016), but they were not practical. It took some time for computers to become more efficient and flexible. In the 1960s technology started its rise in the education field via more advanced computer systems. This whole process is called Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL). This term includes the use of any technological device or opportunity to support language learning (Akman Yeşilel, 2017). Today, these opportunities include computers, mobile devices, the internet, multimedia resources, online learning platforms and ultimately social media. Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) on the other hand, is a subfield of TELL. CALL's main specialization is the use of computers in language

learning. In time, CALL has evolved to include the newest trends in language learning like drill-based exercises, interactive simulations and language learning games.

As technology developed, CALL has improved over the years. Between the 1960s and 1970s, CALL introduced language learning tasks like grammar drills and vocabulary memorization with the help of computers in that era (Chapelle, 2001). During the 1980s and 1990s, CALL upgraded itself with the rise of communicative approach in language teaching. CALL implemented more communication and interaction focused applications like email exchanges and simulations (Levy, 1997).

With the rise of the internet in the 1990s and forward, CALL revolutionized itself with infinite number of contents. Learners are now able to find vast number of online resources, interactive websites, rich materials and online communities for people to find communicative environments (Warschauer, 1996). Today, with social media and user-generated content, the content pool is bottomless.

With the developments in the mobile phone industry from the 2000s and forward, smartphones and tablets made the context of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) possible. MALL, which is a subfield of CALL, emphasizes the importance of using mobile devices for language learning (Çakmak, 2019). MALL can promote activities like vocabulary practice, listening exercises and further location-based learning games. Moreover, with the addition of social media to smartphones, MALL is now available everywhere and anytime.

CALL has been extensively studied for its effectiveness in language learning, with research demonstrating its role in various language skills and learner motivation (Ambrose & Palpanathan, 2017; Huang et al., 2016; Pirasteh, 2014). These studies highlight the evolution of CALL from simple grammar and vocabulary exercises to more interactive and context-based learning experiences. For instance, Pirasteh (2014) explored grammar learning through CALL by having Iranian EFL learners practice sentence formation via emailing, revealing that this method was more effective than traditional classroom practices. Similarly, Ambrose and Palpanathan (2017) examined the use of Google Docs for enhancing writing skills, noting that students expressed positive feedback about their experiences and improvements. Huang et al. (2016) developed a location-based mobile learning tool that showed significant gains in vocabulary learning, making language learning more flexible and authentic. Collectively, these studies

emphasize that CALL, including its subfield MALL, provides a dynamic and versatile approach to language learning, especially with the integration of current technologies like smartphones and AI.

With the continuous advancement of mobile technology and social media, CALL has evolved to offer learners opportunities for anywhere, anytime learning, promoting user engagement through interactive content and collaborative tools. However, challenges such as potential learner fatigue and over-reliance on technology also need to be acknowledged. More research and analysis are needed to see how these breakthroughs in technology affect language learning and learners.

2.6. ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

The latest addition to CALL and its subfields is social media, also sometimes referred to as social networking sites. Social media was only accessible from computers for a time. With the breakthroughs in smartphone technology, all smartphones today support all kinds of social media platforms. Moreover, with the user-generated content on these platforms, language learning materials are now as authentic as possible and very easy to access from all around the world. One of the main features of social media in language learning comes from exposure and skill development (Zhou, 2021). In countries where English is learnt as a foreign language, exposure to English is difficult because there are few opportunities outside of the schools to practice it. Learners should spend more time and try to create their own opportunities to learn English in those countries. Social media comes to light because of this reason in today's world. Connecting with native speakers, finding authentic content for exposure, constantly evolving user-generated content, accessibility and communities across the platforms are the peak highlights of social media in language learning (Nasution, 2022).

Social media, without a doubt, has potential in language learning on paper. However, learners' opinions about this topic are important to see if this hypothesis is true, especially young generations' opinions, as they are more frequent users of social media. Safitri et al. (2022) conducted their study on high school students to examine their opinions about this topic. The study was a case study and used questionnaires and interviews to gather data from 83 participants. Overall, students had a positive attitude towards social media in language learning. Their most commonly used application was YouTube. Some students expressed that YouTube was easy to use while trying to mimic

conversations in videos by pausing. On Instagram on the other hand, participants said that they followed certain influencers to see how people react to their content in English. Participants' teacher used WhatsApp for group conversations, and this also made participants eager to talk in English about classroom stuff. Moreover, most participants agreed that using social media in language learning made them happy and this granted them a fun experience. Listening, vocabulary and pronunciation were the most popular skills that participants were engaged in while traversing through social media. However, students also voiced their opinions about the challenges of using social media. While there were concerns about safety and privacy, the most common concern was the quality of the internet connection. All in all, Safitri et al. (2022) suggest that social media helps language learners outside of the school and teachers should explore possibilities of combining formal lessons with social media platforms to make this whole process productive and fun.

While most students like to use social media in their language learning adventure, teachers have their own opinions and concerns, too. Allam and Elyas (2016) wanted to learn EFL teachers' ideas about using social media in teaching English. They used a survey to gather data from participants. There were 75 participants. They had participants from age 25 to 56 and different years of experience. According to the results, EFL teachers see social media as an opportunity for language learning and teaching. Most of them believe that it can be a valuable pedagogical asset especially for university and college level EFL learners, but they expressed their concerns, too. Allam and Elyas (2016) suggest that without proper monitoring and assessment, using social media in EFL classes can disrupt the flow of lessons and can lead to distractions that revert the intended outcomes of language learning through social media.

As technology and social media evolved, learners' needs and expectations also changed. Exposure to English outside of classroom is needed in EFL countries to further develop communication skills. In Thailand, this was also the case. Tantarangsee (2016) conducted his research to see how learners use social media outside of the classroom for language learning. His participants were 78 3rd year English Major students. This study used a questionnaire to gather participants' ideas and their usage frequency of social media. The results of this study found how frequently learners use social media outside the school as well as the language functions they engage with while surfing social media. According to the results, the most used social media application was Line (WhatsApp's

equivalent of the region mentioned in the study), followed by Facebook and YouTube. Participants also reported using social media for 6 to 8 hours a day. This could be considered a high amount of usage, and as the most used application is a messaging platform, it can be emphasized that learners use English via texting and voice calls. Other language functions included watching cartoons with English soundtracks, reading English articles and magazines, watching English TV programs and using online dictionaries to overcome linguistic barriers. All in all, Tantarangsee (2016) suggests that social media usage outside of classroom changes and benefits learners' learning behaviors and supports language skill development. However, he does not mention that excessive use of social media may lead to other problems, which should be further researched and emphasized.

Gathering insights from students and teachers about social media is essential to develop strategies in language learning. What about teacher candidates' ideas who are also language learners? Voicing their perceptions can be vital because they are a unique group of individuals who will be language teachers in the future. With this aim in mind, Bağcı and Atar (2018) conducted a study on 140 pre-service English teachers studying at two different state universities. They used a survey model to gather the data. The participants ranged from first- to fourth-year university students. Nearly half of the participants spent time on social media 1-3 hours a day. The frequency of social media usage was optimal. So, participants had enough ideas about social media. Moreover, 87% of participants used social media for their language learning purposes before. Ultimately, Bağcı and Atar (2018) suggest that acceptance of social media in language learning is high among pre-service English teachers, and they are eager to use it in their future teachings.

As observed in the studies mentioned above, there is a moderate amount of research addressing social media, individual social media platforms, and their role in language learning. However, comprehensive studies that focus on the role and impact of user-generated content, social media influencers, and how these elements influence motivation and language development among university students majoring in English Language and Literature, Translation, and Linguistics remain limited. This thesis aims to fill this gap by exploring the unique experiences and perspectives of these English majors. It seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of how user-generated content and influencer driven social media interactions contribute to or challenge their learning

processes and academic motivation, supported by an analysis of data collected from our participants.

2.7. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.7.1. Krashen's Input Theory and Language Learning through Social Media

Newborn babies after some time start to gather input from their surroundings. Via language center in the brain, babies consume everything they are exposed to unconsciously. In time, as they gather more input, language systems and vocabulary of a native language start to arise (Krashen, 1982). This is a very brief explanation of language acquisition, which takes place unconsciously, and through this process, babies acquire their first language(s) without effort. Only exposure and comprehensible input are needed for this process to happen naturally. However, for an adult to learn a language, a more conscious effort is needed. Adults need to get exposed to meaningful language content. This learning process in Krashen's exposure theory requires and provides additional steps. Repeated and consistent exposure is needed to form the vocabulary and grammar structure of a language. More frequent encounters with language content are needed to make learning and core structures of a language lasting.

Krashen also highlights the importance of comprehensible input. Input learners encounter should be slightly higher than their current proficiency level. Contextual learning is also important in exposure theories. Exposure to meaningful, context-rich and real-life like situations are vital for a more memorable language learning. As learners are exposed to more content in the target language, cognitive processes develop, and this helps learners to undertake more complex language tasks such as producing and understanding detailed language content. Lastly, Krashen (1982) suggests that emotional factors like motivation, anxiety and confidence play an important role in language exposure, which is called affective filter hypothesis.

When we look at exposure theories' core principles, we can see that social media provides these easily in language learning. The repeated exposure, input's flexibility and abundance, rich contexts about every topic and enjoyment in social media align with what exposure theories require. As a result of that, the current thesis study uses exposure theories' core principles as a compass while combining user-generated language learning materials on social media with language learning.

2.7.2. Self-determination Theory and Language Learning through Social Media

Another core theory the current study is built upon STD. As learners learn a language, they start to change themselves and their learning behaviors. A need for a change awakens as learning continues. In SDT, learner autonomy, competence and relatedness are the main elements (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Learners need to feel in control of their own behaviors and goals. Learners need to feel capable and confident in completing tasks and challenges. Learners need meaningful and supportive relationships with others around them. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are the core motivational principles of SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Like exposure theories, SDT's views about learner principles align with using social media in language learning. Learners evolve their learning with autonomy, and the content they are exposed to also evolves as user-generated content is designed in a way that it must be competitive and up to date to rival similar content (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Engaging and relatable user-generated content keeps learners motivated and excited. Diverse content creators provide different and flexible learning styles. It is very easy to find language learning communities on social media which is parallel to relatedness principle of SDT. The current thesis study uses SDT's principles to understand how user-generated language content on social media affects the basic psychological needs and motivation of language learners.

Exposure theories, SDT and user-generated language content on social media can create a motivating and effective language learning environment. This combination requires further research, and the current thesis study aims to fill this gap.



CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

This chapter explores the data collection and data analysis steps by explaining and illustrating the research design, participants, instruments, and analysis types suitable for explaining research questions.

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1.1. Data Collection

This study employs a mixed-methods research design to comprehensively address the research questions. Mixed-methods research integrates both quantitative and qualitative approaches, allowing researchers to capitalize on the strengths of both methods while offsetting their limitations (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

In the quantitative phase, numerical data were collected and analyzed to uncover patterns, trends, and relationships between variables. Quantitative research focuses on the use of standardized methods, such as surveys, questionnaires, and existing datasets, to gather comparable and consistent data over time. This data is represented numerically such as scores, percentages, and frequencies and analyzed using statistical techniques, ensuring objectivity and repeatability. Quantitative findings can often be generalized to larger populations, offering precise measurements and visual representations like charts, graphs, and tables that clarify complex relationships.

The qualitative phase complements the quantitative findings by providing rich, contextual insights into participants' perceptions and experiences. Qualitative data were collected through open-ended questions and analyzed using content analysis. This method systematically identifies themes and patterns within textual data, offering depth and detail that cannot be captured through numerical analysis alone. By combining these methods, the study provides a complete understanding of the research problem, where numerical trends are contextualized with participants' voices and narratives.

A scale was developed, piloted, and applied as a questionnaire to gather the data from our participants. A new scale was developed instead of adopting or adapting a readily available survey because this study focuses on investigating attitudes, motivation, and skill development associated with user-generated language learning content on social media, a relatively niche and context-specific area. Existing surveys in the field did not adequately capture the unique dimensions and variables that this study aimed to measure.

In research, scale development is a multi-phase process that is essential to creating accurate and dependable measurement instruments, particularly when evaluating complex constructs like attitudes, motivations, or perceptions. Finding key terms and aspects relevant to the subject field through an extensive literature review is the first step in the approach (DeVellis, 2017). For instance, describing “language learning motivation” could involve separating out elements like “engagement,” “intrinsic motivation,” and “goal orientation.” Once the construct is well defined, researchers move on to item creation, crafting statements or questions that thoroughly address every aspect of the construct. At this point, feedback from the experts is needed to see if the items are relevant, comprehensible, and significant. These first steps lay the groundwork for accurate measurement.

After initial item creation, pilot testing is conducted with a small sample to refine the scale which allows initial reliability assessment and item reworking if needed.

3.1.2. Data Analysis

This study uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze the data. In the quantitative phase, descriptive statistics were employed to understand participants’ perceptions of using user-generated content on social media for language learning. Additionally, inferential statistics were used to explore relationships between variables. Following the pilot testing, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was utilized to uncover the underlying structure and group items into distinct factors reflecting the construct’s sub-dimensions. Through EFA, items aligning with specific dimensions were retained, while others that did not align well were revised or removed (Kline, 2016). Reliability was assessed using indicators such as Cronbach’s alpha to ensure internal consistency, while validity tests were conducted to confirm the scale’s accuracy (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Finally, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) with a larger sample validated the factor structure discovered in EFA, ensuring the scale’s stability. This multi-step process ensures a statistically reliable and theoretically supported instrument capable of capturing subtle characteristics of the target construct across various contexts.

The qualitative data collected through the open-ended pre-study questionnaire was analyzed using content analysis. This method, defined as a systematic and replicable technique for compressing large amounts of text into fewer content categories based on

explicit rules of coding (Krippendorff, 2004), allowed for the identification of themes and patterns in participants' responses. Following this approach, responses were carefully coded and categorized into overarching themes, reflecting key attitudes and perceptions. This process provided a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences and insights into the role of user-generated content in language learning.

3.2. SAMPLE AND PARTICIPANTS

Participants in this study are students majoring either in English Language and Literature or English Translation and Interpreting at Kütahya Dumlupınar University. The sample includes students from various academic years. A convenience sampling method was used for this study. This sampling approach emphasizes participants' availability and willingness (Fraenkel et al., 2019), offering practicality and easy access to the target population. It is consistently applied across the pretest, posttest, pilot, and final phases of scale development and distribution. Additionally, all data were collected from the participant students during the 2023-2024 academic year.

For the scale development, a single-question questionnaire was prepared and conducted to gather the main themes and ideas about the study topic and research questions (See APPENDIX A for the pre-scale question). For this questionnaire, there were 45 participants. With the answers from the participants, the main themes were identified, and an item pool was created, which will be discussed further in the study. After expert panel analysis ($n=5$) and CVR evaluation (See Table 2 and 3), a pilot questionnaire was created with 50 items. The pilot study had 51 participants. Finally, after factor analysis and statistical feedback, the final questionnaire was prepared. The final questionnaire had 301 participants. In these scale development procedures, all participants were unique to maintain the reliability of the study.

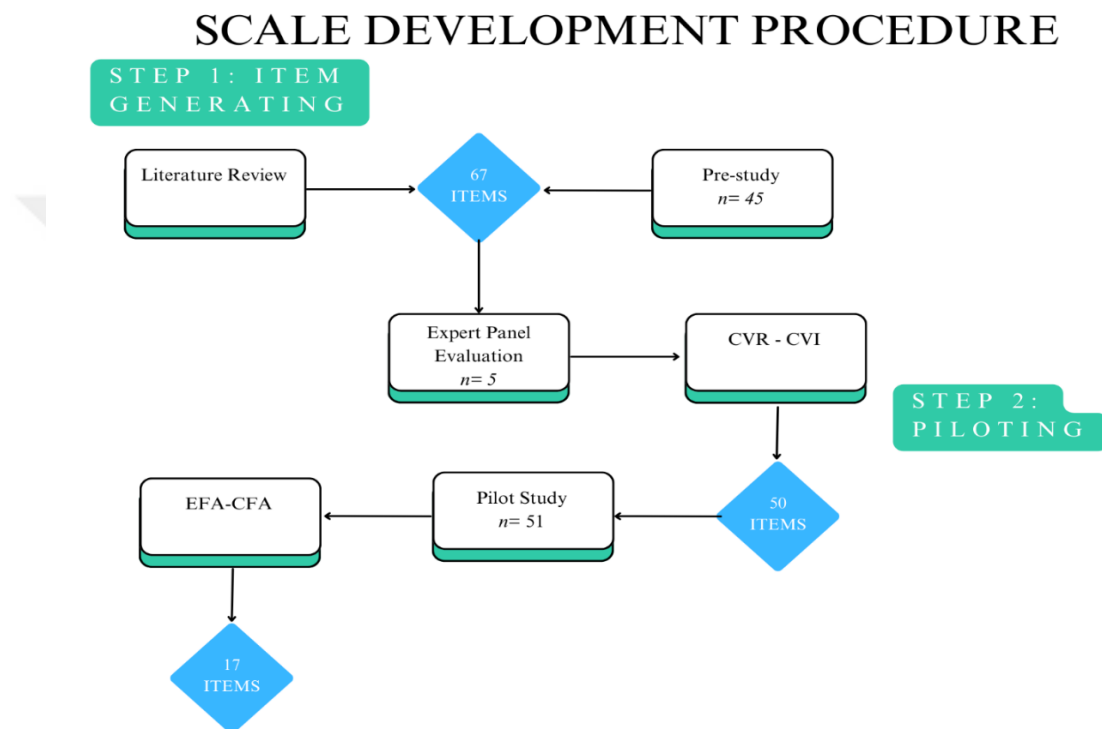
3.3. INSTRUMENTATION

3.3.1. Development of a Scale on User-Generated Language Learning Content on Social Media

The scale development procedure for this study was a multi-step process, as shown in Figure 1. It began with generating items through a thorough literature review and pre-study analysis. These items were then evaluated by an expert panel to assess

their relevance and clarity. The Content Validity Ratio (CVR) and Content Validity Index (CVI) were calculated to ensure the validity of the items. After refining the scale based on expert feedback, a pilot study was conducted with a sample of participants. The data from the pilot study underwent Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to finalize the scale, reducing the items to those most representative of the construct being measured.

Figure 3.1: Visualization of Scale Development Process



3.3.1.1. Item Pool Creation Process and Content Validity Ratio

To develop a scale and apply it as an instrument, an item pool was created. An extensive literature review was conducted to gain further insights into the main themes and main topics about using user-generated content on social media for language learning. In the literature review about the topic (Abdelhamid et al., 2022; Altaleb, 2018; Aryanti et al., 2024; Hamadeh, 2019; Kornelius & Antonio, 2024; Lew, 2014; Muftah, 2024; Nielsen, 2022; Pitaloka et al., 2021; Vogiatzis, 2023; Wannas & Hassan, 2023) several primary themes/topics were found: social media's possible role in language learning, user-generated content and the advantages of using it in language learning, specific social media platforms and their performances in language learning on specific language skills, motivation and challenges of using social media. After that, an open-ended question was

asked to get more ideas and confirm our thoughts about possible main themes. The question was “Do you believe that the language learning content you access on social media contributes to the development of your language skills? Explain how these resources (for example, short videos on Instagram, TikTok or YouTube) have been helpful to you.” This and the other questions in this study are asked in English. However, there are answers in both English and Turkish. The answers were not limited to English to help participants explain themselves freely. Google Forms software was used to reach out to participants and get their answers. With the answers from the participants and thematic analysis done by an expert; 3 main and 5 potential themes were discovered (see APPENDIX B for the themes). In developing the scale, three main themes were identified. These main themes include exposure to authentic and cultural language content, skill development, and learning strategies, along with the personalization of learning. They were identified based on consistent patterns in participant responses that align with this study’s objectives and core areas of language learning. These categories were prioritized because they reflect frequent and significant ideas in participant feedback and are central to understanding the role of social media and user-generated content in language learning. Additionally, five supplementary topics were identified. These include interactive learning communities, challenges and limitations, long-term language retention, the role of influencers, and integration with formal education. These additional aspects emerged through subtle participant hints, comparisons to existing studies, and logical extensions of primary ideas, allowing for a balanced and comprehensive scale item pool that explores various dimensions of language learning through social media and user-generated content.

- **Theme 1: Exposure to Authentic and Cultural Language Content**

Social media provides exposure to different cultures and language content, contributing to a deeper understanding of language use. Participants highlighted that this continuous exposure on social media platforms supports lifelong learning. They particularly emphasized the simplicity and availability of language content on social media as significant advantages.

- **Theme 2: Skill Development**

Participants expressed that exposure to various content on social media contributes to language skills development, including reading, listening, speaking,

vocabulary and understanding the language as a whole. Specific learning environments like YouTube were excessively emphasized.

- **Theme 3: Learning Strategies and Personalization of Learning**

Short content, such as Instagram reels and YouTube videos, is highlighted for its effectiveness in providing quick language tips and improving daily language exposure. Participants highlight the ability to tailor their learning experiences on social media based on personal preferences and needs. Also, the subtitle availability on these social media platforms seems to have a positive effect on some participants.

After the identification of the main themes and additional literature review, there were additional ideas and topics that participants implied. In light of these implications and examples from other studies, the first potential theme is called “Interactive Learning Communities.” Participants did not give explicit examples about online forums or language groups on social media that they joined or experienced. Platforms such as Instagram, Telegram, YouTube, and Twitter(X) Spaces, with features like groups and live streams, provide opportunities for interactive language learning.

The second potential theme is “Challenges and Limitations.” During our item pool creation, we took examples from studies and real-life examples that can lead to potential misinformation, distractions, or over-reliance on the use of social media. Caution about the authenticity of language content on social media and how it can affect the learning process was an important idea, so we included it in our item pool.

The third potential theme is “Long-Term Language Retention.” Language retention is essential for learning to be lasting. Items about this idea were seen important as social media can provide materials for language retention. Participants say social media has a good impact on learning language skills, but they did not give enough real-life examples and how this learning can last.

The fourth potential theme is “Role of Influencers.” Naturally, user-generated content about language learning and practice needs social media influencers, specifically those focused on language learning or cultural exchange. In our item pool creation, mentioning these specific influencers or content creators who have positively influenced their language learning experience was seen important.

The fifth potential theme is “Integration with Formal Education.” Social media is now being widely used by both teachers and students. Participants could provide input on

how they balance social media learning with more structured language learning programs. They are not ELT students, but they are language learners, and they could have opinions about combining or implementing social media with formal education programs or curricula.

3.3.1.1.1. Sub-Dimensions of Attitudes of the Scale Items

Attitudes towards using social media and user-generated content in language learning are likely to be multi-dimensional. When developing a questionnaire, considering a tripartite model of attitudes (cognitive, affective, and behavioral) is essential for a richer understanding of the target context (Krosnick & Petty, 1995). After themes were identified and the literature review, our item pool's sub-dimensions of attitudes were also declared. As can be seen from Table 3.1, 31 items were cognitive, 20 items were affective, and 18 items were behavioral. Cognitive, affective, and behavioral are listed as (C, A and B) in the table.

Table 3.1: Sub-Dimensions of Attitudes Scale Table

Exposure to Authentic and Cultural Language Content		Sub Dimension of Attitudes		
		C	A	B
1	Social media has exposed me to different and various cultural content in the language I'm learning. (+)	■		
2	Exposure to authentic language use on social media has helped me understand how native speakers communicate. (+)	■		
3	I find that social media helps me stay connected with the cultural features of the language I'm learning. (+)	■		
4	Social media content that uses cultural language makes me feel uninterested or indifferent. (-)		■	
5	The continuous exposure to language content on social media platforms has positively influenced my lifelong learning journey. (+)		■	
6	On social media, I have come across situations where the language content was presented as authentic, but it was actually misleading or inaccurate. (-)	■		
7	Social media has broadened my exposure to diverse linguistic styles, including formal and informal language, enhancing my overall language comprehension. (+)	■		
8	I believe that exposure to cultural events, discussions, and news on social media contributes significantly to my language learning experience. (+)	■		
9	Discovering and engaging with content related to holidays, traditions, and festivities on social media has positively impacted my cultural knowledge in the target language. (+)	■		
10	I have sometimes failed to engage with cultural language content on social media, which has limited my understanding of various linguistic styles and cultural features. (-)			■
Skill Development				
11	The various content on social media has contributed to the development of my reading skills in the target language. (+)	■		

Table 3.1: (continued): Sub-Dimensions of Attitudes Scale Table

12	Listening to content on platforms like YouTube and Instagram has improved my language listening skills. (+)	Yellow	
13	I have noticed improvement in my speaking skills due to engaging with language content on social media. (+)	Yellow	
14	My ability to write in the target language has been positively influenced by interactions with social media language content and other people. (+)	Yellow	
15	Exposure to language content on social media has positively impacted my pronunciation and vocabulary skills in the target language. (+)	Yellow	
16	I feel discouraged or frustrated when trying to develop my language skills through social media content. (-)		Yellow
17	I have improved my language skills by participating in real-time language challenges and quizzes on social media platforms. (+)		Yellow
18	Participating in language-related challenges that social media influencers offer has provided rise to an innovative method of skill development. (+)		Yellow
19	I have concerns about the effectiveness of social media's skill development process and how it will affect my language ability. (-)		Yellow
Learning Strategies and Personalization of Learning			
20	I use short content on social media platforms to quickly learn language tips and enhance my daily language exposure. (+)	Yellow	
21	I actively search for language learning resources or strategies on social media. (+)		Yellow
22	When I attempt to customize my language learning on social media to fit my specific needs and preferences, I frequently feel overwhelmed and frustrated. (-)		Yellow
23	The availability of diverse content on social media allows me to customize my language learning experience based on personal preferences. (+)	Yellow	
24	Platforms like Instagram and YouTube provide me with personalized language learning opportunities. (+)	Yellow	
25	I rarely actively search for language learning resources or strategies on social media, relying more on traditional methods for my learning approach. (-)		Yellow
26	I find that social media allows me to adapt my language learning strategies to suit my individual needs. (+)	Yellow	
27	I sometimes intentionally misinterpret complex language content on social media to challenge myself and improve my language comprehension skills. (-)	Yellow	
28	Experimenting with different language learning approaches shared by influencers on social media can allow me to discover the most effective strategies for myself. (+)	Yellow	
Interactive Learning Communities			
29	Being part of language-learning communities on social media can positively influence my learning experience. (+)		Yellow
30	Interacting with others learning the same language on social media can be a valuable aspect of my language journey. (+)		Yellow
31	I find it difficult to extract valuable insights or knowledge from language-learning communities on social media. (-)	Yellow	
32	Engaging with language learning communities on social media can be helpful to share my language learning experiences with others. (+)		Yellow

Table 3.1: (continued): Sub-Dimensions of Attitudes Scale Table

53	Influencers contribute to creating a sense of community among language learners on social media. (+)			
54	I doubt the educational value of content created by influencers, leading me to question the effectiveness of their impact on my language skills. (-)			
55	I actively seek recommendations from influencers for effective language learning resources and techniques. (+)			
Integration with Formal Education				
56	I integrate social media into my formal language education for additional practice and exposure. (+)			
57	Integrating social media into formal language education and curriculum can enrich learning experience by offering real-life examples and authentic content. (+)			
58	I feel frustrated when attempting to integrate social media into my formal language education, as it disrupts the traditional learning environment. (-)			
59	Social media platforms have become an essential supplement to the materials provided in my formal language education. (+)			
60	I believe that social media can be effectively used as a tool for assessments and evaluations in formal language education. (+)			
61	I experience anxiety about the potential negative perceptions from educators or peers when using social media as part of my formal language education. (-)			
62	Social media platforms provide opportunities for interactive discussions and knowledge-sharing related to topics covered in my formal language education. (+)			
Motivation				
63	Engaging with language content on social media enhances my motivation to learn the language. (+)			
64	Discovering new and interesting language content on social media inspires me to explore and learn more about the language. (+)			
65	The diverse and dynamic nature of language content on social media keeps me motivated to consistently practice and improve my language skills. (+)			
66	I often doubt the effectiveness of language learning through social media, leading to a lack of motivation in my studies. (-)			
67	Making connections on social media with other language learners and native speakers motivates me to improve my language skills. (+)			
68	Observing the language proficiency of others on social media motivates me to improve my own language skills. (+)			
69	I regularly postpone or avoid participating with language information on social media, which has a negative impact on my overall enthusiasm to learn the language. (-)			

3.3.1.1.2. Evaluation of the Item Pool by the Expert Panel in the Pre-Study

After the main themes and additional ideas were identified based on participant responses, 69 items were created to reflect these main themes and potential ideas. These items were both positively (+) and negatively (-) worded. There were 48 positive and 21 negative worded items. Before sending our items for expert panel analysis, our item pool

was checked by an experienced researcher with an M.A. degree in the field of English Language Teaching (see APPENDIX C for the expert panel form). After grammatical and vocabulary feedback, the item number was reduced to 67 and the item pool was ready for further expert panel analysis. Our expert panel consisted of 5 experts in the field of English Language Teaching, Educational Statistics and Technology. Nine invitation emails were prepared and sent to possible experts via e-mail, and five of them agreed to review our item pool. An expert form was sent to all experts. This expert form included all items and appropriate table for experts to label each item as “Essential”, “Useful but not essential” and “Not essential”. There were also explanation and recommendation boxes to get feedback and additional advice from our experts. Lawshe's (1975) Content Validity Ratio was used to calculate our experts' reviews. According to CVR evaluation of 67 items, the lowest CVR was -1 for one item, -0.6 for one item, -0.2 for 3 items, 0.2 for 7 items, 0.6 for 11 items and 1 for 44 items. Items below 0.2 CVR were dismissed from the item pool while items with CVR value of 1 were included in the scale. Items above a CVR of 0.2 were discussed in terms of acceptability to be in the final scale. At the end of this process, the ultimate item pool was created. Before pilot testing, the final item number was 50 with CVR ranging from 0.6 to 1 as seen in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Content Validity Ratio and Content Validity Index Results of the Scale

Items	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	CVR
1 Social media has helped me find different cultural content in English.	x	x	x	x	x	1
2 Using social media has helped me learn how people really talk in their native language.	x	x	x	x	x	1
3 I think social media helps me stay engaged with English culture.	x	x	x	x		0,6
4 Social media has broadened my exposure to formal language.	x	x	x	x	x	1
5 My exposure to casual language has grown as a result of social media.	x	x	x	x	x	1
6 Social media engagement with traditional content has improved my cultural understanding of English.	x	x	x	x	x	1
7 The language content on social media has contributed to the development of my reading skills in English.	x	x	x	x	x	1
8 Listening to content on social media has enhanced my listening skills in English.	x	x	x	x	x	1
9 I have noticed improvements in my speaking skills due to engaging with language content on social media.	x	x	x	x	x	1
10 My ability to write in English has been positively influenced by interactions with social media language content and other users.	x	x	x	x		0,6
11 Exposure to language content on social media has positively impacted my vocabulary skills in English.	x	x	x	x	x	1
12 Engaging with language content on social media has improved my pronunciation skills in English.	x	x	x	x	x	1

Table 3.2: (continued): Content Validity Ratio and Content Validity Index Results of the Scale

13	I feel discouraged when trying to develop my language skills through social media content.	x	x	x	x	x	1
14	I have improved my language skills by participating language challenges and quizzes on social media platforms.	x	x	x	x	x	1
15	I have concerns about the effectiveness of social media on the language skills.	x	x	x	x	x	1
16	I use short content on social media platforms to quickly learn language tips.	x		x	x	x	0,6
17	I actively search for language learning strategies on social media.	x	x	x	x	x	1
18	I think the content on social media is unrealistic for my language learning needs.	x	x	x	x	x	1
19	Social media platforms provide me with personalized language learning opportunities.	x	x	x	x	x	1
20	I find that social media allows me to adapt my language learning strategies to suit my individual needs.	x	x	x	x		0,6
21	I intentionally analyze challenging language content on social media to enhance my language comprehension skills.	x	x	x	x	x	1
22	Trying out diverse language learning methods shared by influencers on social media helps me find the most effective strategies for myself.	x	x	x	x		0,6
23	Being part of language-learning communities on social media can positively influence my learning experience.	x	x	x	x	x	1
24	Interacting with others learning the same language on social media is a valuable aspect of my language journey.	x	x	x	x	x	1
25	I find it difficult to extract valuable insights from language-learning communities on social media.	x	x	x	x	x	1
26	Engaging with language learning communities on social media is helpful to share my language learning experiences with others.	x	x	x	x	x	1
27	Joining language-focused groups on social media is an effective way to stay updated on language-related resources and trends.	x	x	x	x	x	1
28	The information in language-learning communities on social media is overwhelming to focus on specific language learning goals.	x	x	x	x	x	1
29	Sharing language-related content within online communities can help reinforce my understanding of linguistic concepts.	x	x	x	x	x	1
30	I think it is confusing to navigate through different social media platforms for language learning purposes.	x	x	x	x	x	1
31	The overwhelming amount of language content on social media makes it challenging to focus on specific learning goals.	x	x	x	x	x	1
32	Social media exposure to language content, in my opinion, has contributed to my ability to maintain my language proficiency over time.	x	x	x	x	x	1
33	I don't use the language skills I've learned on social media, which might have an impact on how long they last with me.	x	x	x	x	x	1
34	Influencers on social media have played a significant role in my language learning journey.	x	x	x	x	x	1
35	I find that content created by influencers in the target language has positively influenced my language skills.	x	x	x	x	x	1
36	I pay attention to the experience of language influencers on social media.	x	x	x	x	x	1
37	The language proficiency of influencers motivates me to set higher goals for my own language learning journey.	x	x	x	x	x	1
38	Influencers contribute to creating a sense of community among language learners on social media.	x	x	x	x	x	1
39	I doubt the educational value of content created by influencers, as it may be inefficient for improving language skills.	x	x	x	x		0,6
40	I actively seek recommendations from influencers for effective language learning resources and techniques.	x	x	x	x	x	1

Table 3.2: (continued): Content Validity Ratio and Content Validity Index Results of the Scale

41	I integrate social media into my formal language education for additional practice.	x	x	x	x	x	1
42	Integrating social media into formal language education enriches learning experience by offering real-life examples.	x	x	x	x	x	1
43	Social media platforms have become an essential supplement to the materials provided in my formal language education.	x	x	x	x	x	1
44	I believe that social media is an effectively tool for assessments in formal language education.	x	x	x	x	x	1
45	Engaging with language content on social media enhances my motivation to learn the language.	x	x	x	x	x	1
46	Discovering new language content on social media inspires me to learn more about the language.	x	x	x	x	x	1
47	The dynamic nature of language content on social media keeps me motivated to improve my language skills.	x	x	x	x	x	1
48	Making connections on social media with other language learners motivates me to improve my language skills.	x	x	x	x	x	1
49	Observing the language proficiency of others on social media motivates me to improve my own language skills.	x	x	x	x	x	1
50	I avoid participating with language information on social media, which has a negative impact on my overall enthusiasm to learn the language.	x	x	x	x	x	1
CVI							0,952

As shown in Table 3, all expert panel members hold at least an M.A. degree and include instructors as well as experts from departments related to the field. With the final 50 items, the scale was ready for pilot testing, and it was presented to participants via Google Forms. Ethics committee approval for pilot testing was also granted (see APPENDIX D).

Table 3.3: Expert Panel Members

Expert	Academic Rank	The Institution
E1	Ph.D. in Education	Kütahya Dumlupınar University
E2	Ph.D. in Educational Statistics	Kütahya Dumlupınar University
E3	M.A. in ELT	Kütahya Dumlupınar University
E4	M.A. in ELT	Kütahya Dumlupınar University
E5	M.A. in ELT	Bahçeşehir University

3.3.2. Results of the Pilot Study of the User-Generated Language Learning Content on Social Media Scale

At the end of the piloting procedure, participants' answers were collected and analyzed using Excel and Jamovi statistical program (Version 2.3.28). The pilot study had 51 participants. As is presented in Table 4, the Mean, Standard Deviation, Maximum Value, Minimum Value, Standard error of the mean, Range, Variance, and Total Number are presented based on analysis obtained from the average of the scale. The table includes abbreviations such as N (sample size, representing the number of participants), SE (Standard Error, indicating the precision of the sample mean), and SD (Standard Deviation, reflecting the variability within the data set).

Table 3.4: Descriptive Analysis of the Pilot Study Results

Descriptives								
	N	Mean	SE	SD	Variance	Range	Minimum	Maximum
Based on the Average	51	3.47	0.0537	0.383	0.147	1.74	2.62	4.36

In the pilot study, there were a total number of 51 participants which is moderate sample size, sufficient for statistical analysis. As can be seen from Table 4, the mean score of the scale was found to be 3.47 based on average. For the reliability of the scale, Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Analysis was conducted to see the results. Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.7 and above is considered acceptable for internal consistency reliability (Forero, 2014). As can be seen from Table 5, the pilot scale's Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.920 which is above standard numbers.

Table 3.5: Results for the Scale Reliability based on the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient

Scale Reliability Statistics		
	Cronbach's α	N of Items
Scale	0.920	50

3.3.2.1. Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Pilot Study

Descriptive statistics can lead to vital assumptions about a study or a group of datasets. However, in order to provide a deep dive into the statistic principles of a study,

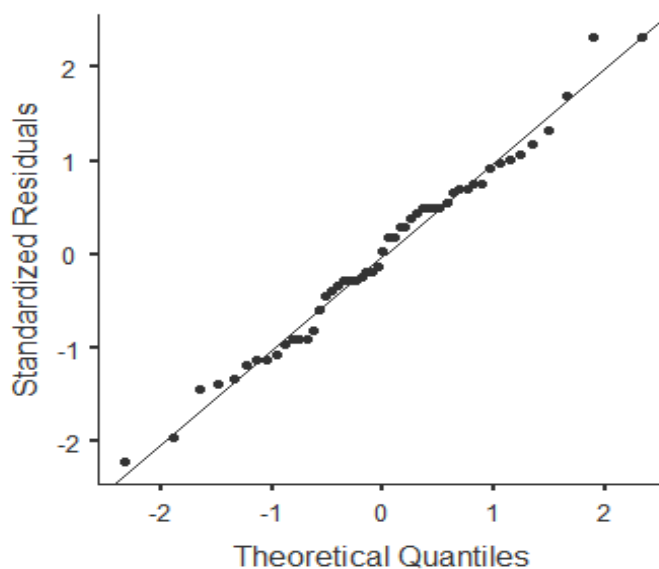
a researcher needs to identify underlying relationships between measured variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) provides instruments to measure these connections. After the pilot study ended, we looked at further statistics that include EFA to analyze if questionnaire items and their factors were stable. However, a set of data should have optimal normality to further run EFA.

Table 3.6: Skewness – Kurtosis and Shapiro-Wilk Test Findings of the Pilot Study

	Skewness		Kurtosis			Shapiro-Wilk	
	SE	Skewness	SE	Kurtosis	SE	W	P
Scale	0.0537	0.0878	0.333	-0.101	0.656	0.985	0.753

As can be seen from Table 6, Skewness and Kurtosis measurements are near 0 which suggests a symmetric and normal distribution. Moreover, with a W value close to 1 and p-value above .05, the Shapiro-Wilk test shows our data to be normally distributed. Additionally, after the analysis of Q-Q plot, it can be seen from Figure 2 that most of the data points fall very close to the diagonal line, which is a sign of normal distribution. There are minor deviations, but they are expected in real-world data and not a major concern. For the outliers that can be detected by a boxplot, it was seen that no outliers were detected to be eliminated. All in all, our pilot study was suitable for EFA.

Figure 3.2: Q-Q Plot Graph for the Normality of the Pilot Study



3.3.2.1.1. Results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis and Item Reduction Process

To apply and see the results of the EFA, we used minimum residuals extraction method and oblimin rotation. This approach is suitable for situations where factors are likely to be correlated (Fabrigar et al., 1999). Factor loadings represent the correlation between each variable and the extracted factors. After the elimination of items with low factor loadings and further evaluation through Jamovi statistical program, 33 items were removed. These items had low factor loadings, and they were not unique enough to represent a single factor. Factor loadings were sorted by size below 0.3. Eliminated items include item 1, 2, 5, 7, 10, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. As can be seen from Table 7, the final analysis identified four factors based on the pattern of factor loadings. When we look at Table 8, together, these four factors explain %53 of the total variance showing a strong factor structure. Moreover, it can be seen from Table 9 that model fit measures indicate an excellent fit to the data. The RMSEA value of 0.0470 falls within the acceptable range, suggesting a close fit of the model in the population. The TLI value of 0.918 further supports the model's good fit. The BIC of -207 indicates a strong model fit, and the Chi-Square test ($\chi^2 = 83.8$, $df = 74$, $p = 0.204$) shows no significant deviation from a perfect fit, supporting the adequacy of the model (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Table 3.7: Factor Loadings

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Uniqueness
6	0.789				0.361
9	0.748				0.335
8	0.690				0.382
3	0.631		0.323		0.462
11	0.548			0.313	0.491
12	0.537				0.666
4	0.402	0.363			0.702
43		0.819			0.280
44		0.756			0.471
42		0.631			0.525
41		0.529	0.420		0.308
36			0.798		0.309
34			0.549		0.607
38			0.504		0.620
17				0.702	0.420

Table 3.7: (continued): Factor Loadings

16	0.319	0.649	0.358
24		0.501	0.562

Table 3.8: Factor Statistics Summary

Factor	SS Loadings	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.06	18.0	18.0
2	2.47	14.6	32.5
3	1.83	10.8	43.3
4	1.78	10.5	53.8

Table 3.9: Model Fit Measures for EFA

Measure	RMSEA	90% CI Lower	90% CI Upper	TLI	BIC	χ^2	df	P
Value	0.0470	0.00	0.0994	0.918	-207	83.8	74	0.204

3.3.2.1.2. Declaring the Names of the Factors

After the statistical distribution of the items into factors, the names of the factors were ready to be declared. There were 4 factors to be named.

- **Factor 1: Exposure to English Culture and Language Input**

In our scale, Item 3, Item 4, Item 6, Item 8, Item 9, Item 11, and Item 12 can lead to Factor 1. After examining these items, it can be seen that they lead to the topic of exposure to authentic content. Because of that this factor is named “Exposure to English Culture and Language Input.”

- **Factor 2: Formal Education**

Item 4, Item 41, Item 42, Item 43, Item 44 belong to the Factor 2 in the scale. These items were categorized under formal education and supplying it with social media. Because of that, they are categorized under “Formal Education”. These items question

whether social media is beneficial in language learning and whether it is possible to integrate social media with formal education.

- **Factor 3: Influencers and User-Generated Content**

Item 34, Item 36, Item 38, and Item 41 categorize themselves under Factor 3. While trying to understand these items, it was clear to see that they are about influencers and language learning content created by them which is user-generated content. These items try to test whether influencers and their content affect the learners' language learning journey or not. Because of this, the name of this factor is "Influencers and User-Generated Content."

- **Factor 4: Language Learning Strategies and Tips**

Item 16, Item 17, Item 24, and Item 11 promote to Factor 4. After the analysis of these items, it was seen that they were about language learning strategies, tips, and accessibility. These items focus on user-generated content on social media and these contents' ability to shape the way learners learn a language and personalize it the way they see it. Hence, this factor is named "Language Learning Strategies and Tips."

3.3.2.2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Results

To further investigate the underlying structure of the scale uncovered by EFA and to evaluate the fit of the scale, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using the Jamovi statistical program. In CFA, there are additional instruments to help this process such as RMSEA, TLI, BIC and Chi-Square (χ^2) Test (Brown, 2006). These are called model fit indices. Our scale's fit measures (see Table 10) are mostly nominal according to Schreiber et al. (2007).

Table 3.10: Fit Measures

				RMSEA 90% CI	
CFI	TLI	SRMR	RMSEA	Lower	Upper
0.908	0.875	0.0816	0.0757	0.0223	0.113

The confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to validate the factor structure identified through exploratory factor analysis. The fit indices indicated an acceptable model fit: CFI = 0.908, TLI = 0.875, SRMR = 0.0816, and RMSEA = 0.0757 (90% CI: 0.0223, 0.113). While the CFI and RMSEA values suggest an acceptable fit, the TLI and SRMR values indicate areas for potential improvement. After these statistics and confirmation of our items and factors, the final scale was ready to be applied with ethics committee approval (see APPENDIX E).

3.4. RELIABILITY OF THE FINAL SCALE

As seen from Table 11, the final questionnaire, composed of 17 items, exhibits strong internal consistency, indicated by a Cronbach's alpha of 0.928 and a McDonald's omega of 0.931. Both metrics significantly exceed the commonly accepted threshold of 0.7, suggesting excellent reliability and consistency among the items in measuring the intended construct. The close values between Cronbach's alpha and McDonald's omega further support the reliability, implying that the scale's items consistently contribute to the overall score, even if item loadings vary slightly. Additionally, the scale's mean of 3.69, with a standard deviation of 0.661, suggests that responses tend to be on the higher end, indicating generally favorable participant attitudes. Overall, these reliability measures affirm that the scale is well-suited for capturing responses with consistency and accuracy.

Table 3.11: Reliability Statistics

Scale Reliability Statistics				
Number of Items	Mean	SD	Cronbach's α	McDonald's ω
17	3.69	0.661	0.928	0.931

3.5. PROCEDURES

First, to create an item pool, a one-question scale was prepared to get ideas to develop our scale. After getting the participants' answers, three main and seven potential themes were identified. With these themes in mind and a thorough literature review, an item pool consisting of 69 items was created. These items' sub-dimensions of attitude

were also identified which include cognitive, affective and behavioral. Before sending the items to expert panel members, a review was done by an expert with M.A degree in the field of English Language Teaching. With the feedback from our expert, the item number was reduced to 67. These 67 items were then sent to our expert panel members. After an expert panel process with 5 panel members, the content value ratio was calculated for each item. With the CVR evaluation, 17 items were removed which had CVR values below 0.6. After that, a pilot study was conducted including 50 items. With the results from the pilot study, a factor analysis was done to discover potential factors. Finally, 4 factors were identified, and items were eliminated according to factor loadings and cumulative statistics. In the end, the ultimate scale was formed with 17 items (See APPENDIX F for the final scale). The final scale with 17 items was distributed to participants, and their answers were analyzed, discussed and concluded. All scale distribution was done via Google Forms.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This study utilized a quantitative design, incorporating a data collection instrument developed by the researcher through multiple stages of refinement and adjustment. Descriptive statistical analyses were employed to uncover insights into participants' perceptions regarding the role of user-generated content on social media in language learning. The study aimed to investigate participants' attitudes, motivational levels, and perceived skill development associated with this content.

In this section, results from the questionnaire are explained and analyzed. These results include an open-ended question, demographic information, social media usage and the rest of the items from the questionnaire with factors in regards of research questions. These research questions are:

R.Q.1: What are the attitudes of English Majors towards user-generated content on social media, and how do they perceive its effectiveness in enhancing language proficiency and cultural understanding compared to traditional methods?

R.Q.2: How does engagement with user-generated language content influence English majors' motivation for language learning, considering factors such as perceived improvement, active learning strategy development, and the impact of social media interactions and influencers?

R.Q.3: How do English majors perceive the impact of user-generated language content on their development of specific language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking)?

4.1. Interpretation of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

4.1.1. Factor Loadings

Like the pilot study, to see the EFA results, the current study used Jamovi statistical program. For factor loadings, minimum residual extraction method and oblimin rotation were used. As can be seen from Table 1, items are mostly placed exactly according to established factors. When we look at the items in factor 1, items have high loadings, and this suggests a strong association with each other. This factor was about exposure to language and language skills. Items on factor 2 also have a strong connection

through high loadings. This factor was about integration with formal language and items are categorized perfectly into this factor. Factor 3 also has items with high loadings and potent correlation with each other. This factor was about influencers and items are again fitted perfectly to this factor. These last items are fitted into factor 4 with high loadings except item 10 which has lower loading than others. This factor was about language learning strategies and tips. Items are mostly correlated with this factor correctly.

In conclusion, the factors are well-differentiated, with each comprising a distinct set of high-loading items, clearly indicating a structured pattern in the data. Each factor is interpretable and represents different dimensions of social media use in language learning.

Table 4.1: Factor Loadings

Factor Loadings	Factor				Uniqueness
	1	2	3	4	
Item 1	0.627				0.450
Item 2	0.310	0.404			0.595
Item 3	0.487				0.580
Item 4	0.796				0.428
Item 5	0.503				0.460
Item 6	0.766				0.415
Item 7	0.692				0.415
Item 8				0.629	0.439
Item 9				0.580	0.420
Item 10	0.303				0.483
Item 11			0.672		0.360
Item 12			0.729		0.284
Item 13			0.804		0.340
Item 14		0.773			0.325
Item 15		0.715			0.394
Item 16		0.811			0.336
Item 17		0.697			0.458

4.1.2. Factor Summary

As can be seen from Table 2, factor 1 explains the largest portion of the variance in the data which has identical factor loadings accounting for 19% of the variance. Factor 2 explains an additional 18% and is nearly similar to factor 1 in terms of capturing another important dimension. Factor 3 accounts for 12% of the variance which increases the cumulative to 50%. The last factor explains 7% of the variance. With the final factor, total cumulative number goes up to 57% which indicates that these four factors capture a significant portion of the variability in the data.

Table 4.2: Factor Summary

Factor	SS Loadings	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.30	19.38	19.4
2	3.21	18.86	38.2
3	2.09	12.27	50.5
4	1.23	7.24	57.8

4.1.3. Model Fit Measures

As can be seen from Table 3, model fit measures are mostly at reasonable rates. RMSEA values less than 0.05 indicate a close fit and values between 0.05 and 0.08 indicate a reasonable fit. The RMSEA value is 0.06 which suggests a reasonable fit. TLI values range from 0 to 1 and closer values to 1 indicate a better result. So, TLI value of 0.926 indicates a good fit. As for BIC, lower values indicate better fit models. The value of -243 looks optimized for our model. Finally, for the chi-square test value, values lower than .05 indicate a poor fit. Model test results are at .001 which suggests a poor fit. However, because of its sensitivity to sample size, the chi-square test frequently results in the model fit being rejected in large samples. As other fit values are reasonable, this low value may not be a major concern.

Overall, the factor model fits the data reasonably well. With good fit characteristics and very small flaws, it is a robust solution for our exploratory analysis.

Table 4.3: Model Fit Measures

Model Fit Measures							
RMSEA 90% CI			Model Test				
RMSEA	Lower	Upper	TLI	BIC	χ^2	df	p
0.0686	0.0560	0.0818	0.926	-243	179	74	<.001

4.1.4. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

As can be seen from Table 4, all values are similar to EFA values. RMSEA is reasonable at .0770, CFI is near excellent with a value of .926, and TLI is acceptable with a .911 value. The fit indices suggest that our confirmatory factor model fits the data well.

Table 4.4: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Statistics

Fit Measures				
			RMSEA 90% CI	
CFI	TLI	RMSEA	Lower	Upper
0.926	0.911	0.0770	0.0669	0.0872

4.2. Demographic Information and Social Media Usage

After the distribution of the final questionnaire (see APPENDIX F for the final questionnaire), the participant number is 301 as can be seen from Table 5.

Table 4.5: Participant Number

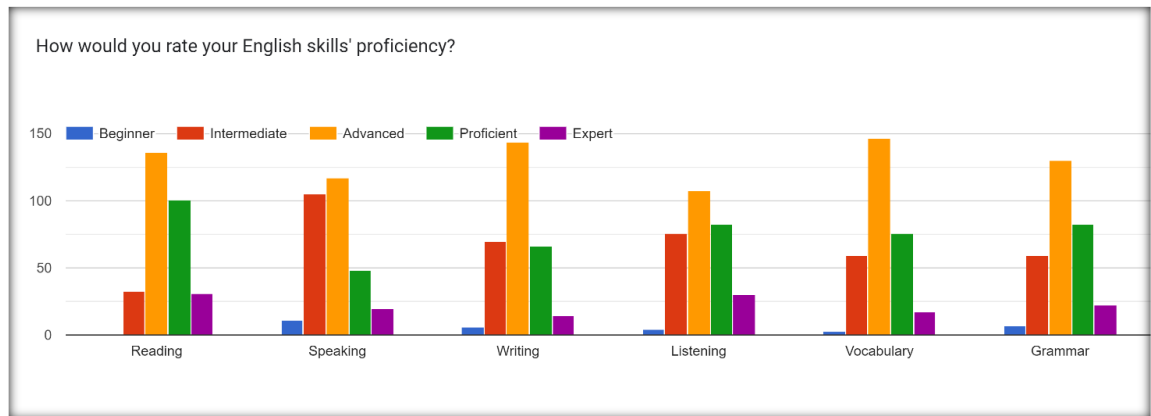
Descriptives		
	N	Missing
Participants	301	0

4.2.1. English Proficiency Levels

As seen in Figure 1, the distribution suggests a generally high proficiency among English Majors, with stronger skills in reading and vocabulary. Most participants rate themselves as advanced in reading (45%) and vocabulary (49%). A significant portion also considers themselves advanced in writing (48%) and grammar (43%). In listening, 36% of participants rate themselves as advanced, while speaking shows a notable spread,

with 35% at the intermediate level and 39% at advanced. Fewer participants identify as experts, with the highest expert ratings in reading and listening, both around 10%. Very few participants rate themselves as beginners across all skills. Overall, participants mainly fall within the B1 and B2 proficiency levels, aligning well with the minimum standards required to pass the preparatory program.

Figure 4.1: English Proficiency Levels

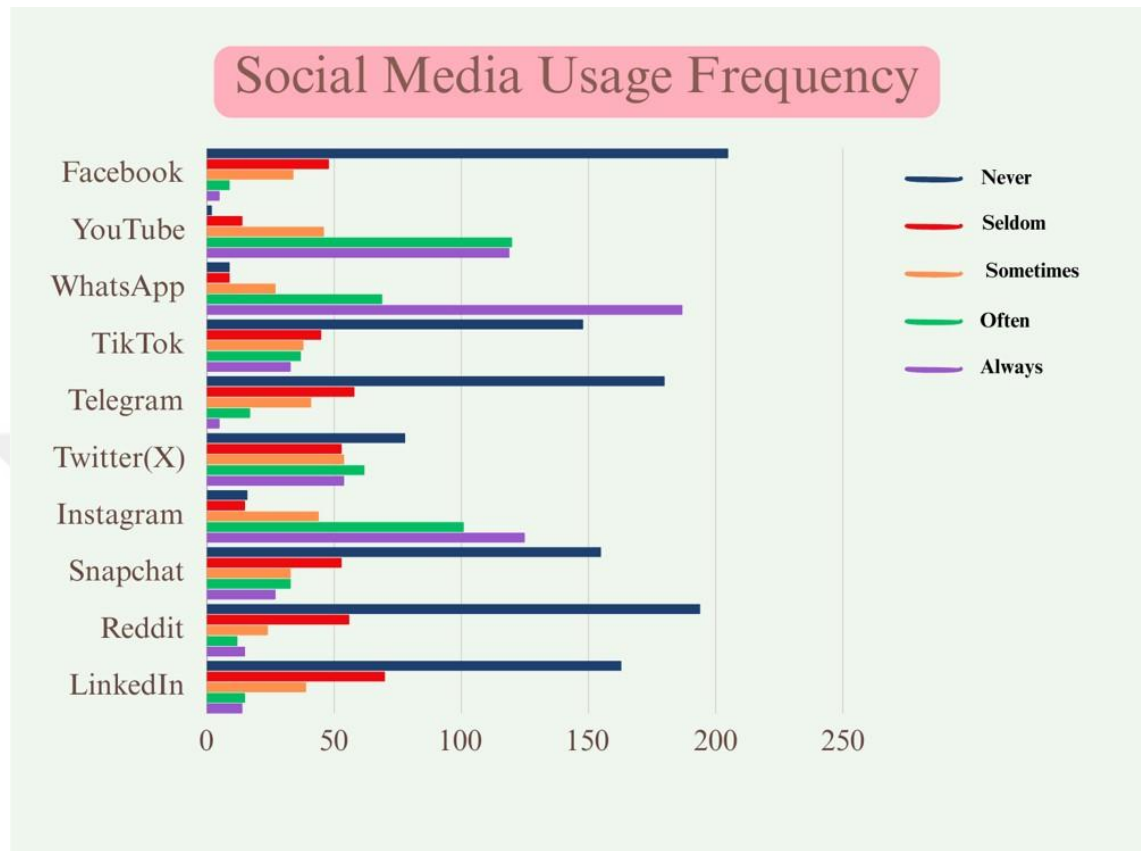


4.2.2. Social Media Usage Frequency

As for social media usage frequency, when we look at Figure 2, it can be seen that certain platforms are popular among our participants according to their specifications. WhatsApp dominates for messaging, with 62% of participants using it always, indicating its integration into daily communication habits. YouTube and Instagram are primary sources for content consumption and social interaction, with 39% and 41% of participants, respectively, using these platforms always. Facebook shows lower engagement, with 68% of participants reporting they never use it, and Twitter (X) has mixed engagement, with 25% never using it but 20% using it often. This could reflect cultural and global trends and shifting preferences toward more visual and instant content. TikTok and Snapchat usage is moderate, with 49% and 51% of participants, respectively, reporting they never use these platforms, indicating that the content on these platforms may not be as appealing as other platforms for those in this study. Telegram, LinkedIn, and Reddit have very low usage rates, with 59%, 54%, and 64% of participants, respectively, reporting they never use these platforms. This suggests that these platforms are niche platforms used for specific purposes by the participants. Although not

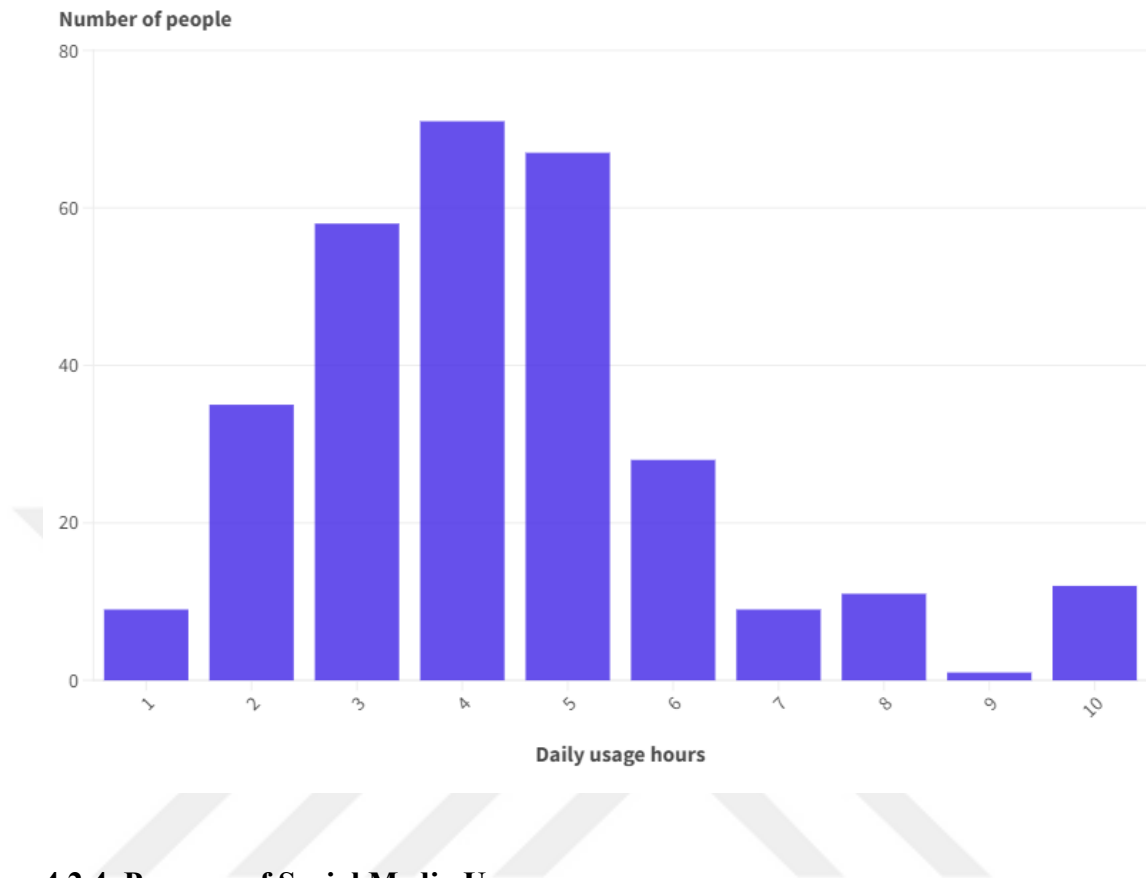
commonly used by the participants, Telegram offers groups with thousands of people, which could provide significant language learning community opportunities.

Figure 4.2: Social Media Usage Frequency



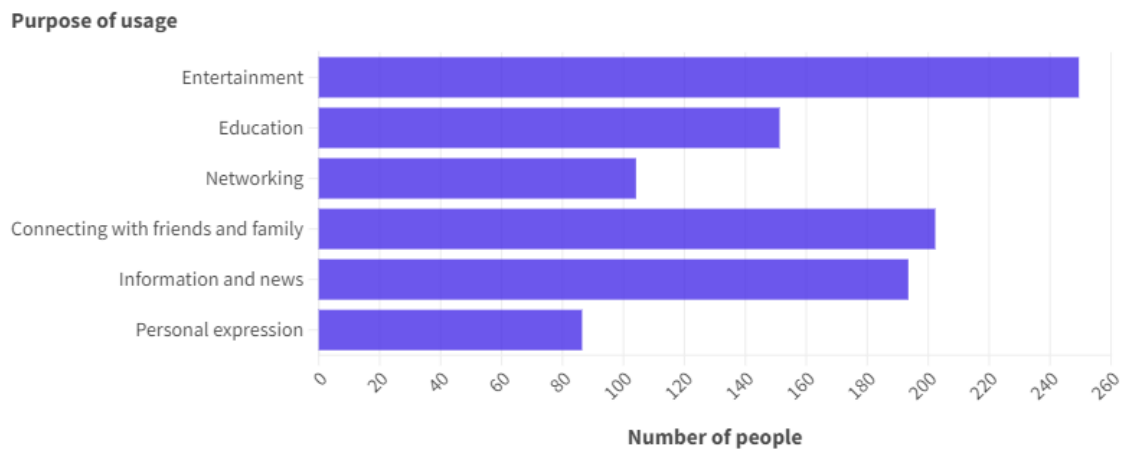
4.2.3. Daily Social Media Usage

When we look at Figure 3, we can see that overall, most participants engage with social media for several hours daily. This suggests social media plays a significant role in their daily routines. About 4-5 hours a day dominates the chart with 23% for 4 hours and 22% for 5 hours. A significant portion uses social media for 2-3 hours, 11% for 2 hours and 19% for 3 hours. Only a small fraction exceeds 6 hours daily with minimal numbers like 10 hours which is 4%. Very few participants use social media for just 1 hour a day and they are only 3%. Overall, the participants seem to have moderate experience with social media, and they are probably exposed to language content during their social media usage, which suggests that they are expected to be aware of user-generated language content on social media.

Figure 4.3: Daily Social Media Usage

4.2.4. Purpose of Social Media Usage

According to Figure 4, we can see that entertainment is the most common purpose to use social media among our participants with 84%. Over half of the participants use social media for educational purposes with a number of 51%. This indicates a strong role for social media as a learning tool. Around 35% of the participants use social media to network, which is crucial to find professional connections. A significant 68% use social media to maintain personal relationships. 65% use social media to stay informed about current events and news, which highlights the role of social media in news distribution and shows the dominance of digital media over traditional media. For personal expression, 29% of participants use social media for self-expression, which indicates that these platforms can provide a place for sharing personal thoughts and express creativity. Overall, with this data we can see that the participants use social for various purposes including education and language learning.

Figure 4.4: Main Purpose of Social Media Usage

4.3. Research Question 1: Attitudes Towards User-Generated Language Content

To address this research question, the study examined participants' attitudes towards the effectiveness and relevance of user-generated content on social media, using specific questionnaire items. The mean scores of each item indicate an overall trend in participants' attitudes, with stronger positive responses on certain aspects.

However, before the questionnaire items, participants were asked to answer an open-ended question. "Do you find content on social media useful for language learning? If your answer is no, explain why not. If your answer is yes, explain what kind of language content interests you." The question was asked to prepare participants brainstorm and to get glimpses of fresh ideas about language learning and user-generated content. The attitudes of participants regarding this question were analyzed through NVivo analysis software (version 14) and a word cloud was created.

Figure 4.5: Word Cloud of Positive Attitude



Out of 300 answers, 266 were labelled as positive attitude, showing a very favorable attitude towards social media. 21 answers were negative, and 10 answers were neutral. Language skills was the second most populated one with 79 answers. Finally, influencers and sharing content had 25 answers. As seen from Figure 5, words like "using," "language," "social," "media," "learning," "content," "yes" indicate a positive response to the usefulness of social media for language learning. Moreover, other words like "videos," "watch," "follow," "interested" highlight the types of content participants seem to find engaging and beneficial for language learning. Especially, videos seem to be the most dominant type of content users get exposed to, which suggests visual and auditory materials are highly valued for language learning. Additionally, words like "articles," "news," "pages," "posts" indicate a preference for different forms of written content to likely develop reading skills. Words that indicate platforms like "Instagram," "YouTube," "TikTok," and "reels" are also mentioned which shows participants find these platforms valuable in the process of finding language content. The frequency of words like "vocabulary," "grammar," "speaking," "listening," "reading," and "writing" shows that participants feel can be improved through social media. Moreover, words like "improve," "help," and "beneficial" emphasize the perceived positive role on language proficiency.

All in all, these and the rest of the words in this word cloud analysis reveal that participants find social media highly useful for language learning. The high number of participants who categorized language learning through user-generated content on social

media with a positive attitude shows that participants' attitude is driven by the engagement with dynamic content like videos, the potential of language skills development and accessibility of content across various platforms.

4.3.1. Summary of the Attitudes

Participants rated the enhancement of listening skills through social media as the most beneficial, with a mean score of 4.24 (SD=0.825), indicating a strong sense that social media effectively supports listening practice. Additionally, short content on social media for quickly learning language tips scored a mean of 3.65 (SD=1.108), suggesting that participants generally find this content helpful, though there is notable variation in responses, reflecting diverse opinions on its usefulness.

Regarding cultural engagement, the item "Social media has helped me stay engaged with English culture" received a mean score of 4.09 (SD=0.847), suggesting that participants largely agree that social media helps them stay connected to English culture. This sentiment aligns closely with ratings on cultural understanding, as participants rated the role of traditional content on social media in improving their cultural understanding of English at 3.96 (SD=0.797).

Participants expressed a moderate view of social media's role in providing exposure to formal language, with a mean score of 3.52 (SD=0.944), suggesting that while social media is seen as beneficial for cultural and skill-related aspects, its role in formal language exposure is perceived as less direct.

Table 4.6: Descriptive Analysis of Attitude Items

Descriptives			
	Items	Mean	SD
1.	I think social media has helped me stay engaged with English culture.	4.09	0.847
2.	Social media has broadened my exposure to formal language.	3.52	0.944
3.	Social media engagement with traditional content has improved my cultural understanding of English.	3.96	0.797
4.	Listening to content on social media has enhanced my listening skills in English.	4.24	0.825
8.	I watch short content on social media platforms to quickly learn language tips.	3.65	1.108

4.4. Research Question 2: The Role of User-Generated Content in Shaping Motivation Levels

This research question aims to find the motivational levels of participants about user-generated content on social media. These motivational levels include engagement, perceived improvement, active search for learning strategies, and the influence of social media interactions and influencers.

4.4.1. Summary of Motivational Levels

Overall, the responses suggest a moderate level of motivation across all areas. Engagement with language learners and influencers shows a moderate impact, as reflected in the mean score of 3.80 for interaction with other learners ($SD=0.943$) and 3.53 for influencers contributing to a sense of community ($SD=0.968$). This implies that social media is seen as beneficial for motivation, though not crucial.

Regarding influence from social media and influencers, participants rate the influence of influencers on their motivation at 3.13 ($SD=1.246$) and 3.21 ($SD=1.168$) for valuing influencers' experiences. This suggests that while influencers contribute to motivation, participants do not solely rely on them for engagement.

For active search for learning strategies, the mean score of 3.28 ($SD=1.172$) shows that participants are moderately motivated to seek out strategies via social media, indicating it's a supplementary rather than a primary tool.

In conclusion, while participants find user-generated content and social media interactions moderately motivating, these platforms are part of a broader set of learning strategies rather than the main source of motivation in their language journey.

Table 4.7: Descriptive Analysis of Motivation Items

Descriptives			
	Items	Mean	SD
9.	I actively search for language learning strategies on social media.	3.28	1.172
10.	Interacting with others learning the same language on social media is a valuable aspect of my language journey.	3.80	0.943
11.	Influencers on social media have played a significant role in my language learning journey.	3.13	1.246

Table 4.7: (continued): Descriptive Analysis of Motivation Items

12. I pay attention to the experience of language influencers on social media.	3.21	1.168
13. Influencers can contribute to creating a sense of community among language learners on social media.	3.53	0.968

4.5. Research Question 3: Role in Development of Language Skills

The purpose of this research question is to see the participants' views as to whether and how user-generated content on social media can influence the development of language skills.

4.5.1. Summary of Language Skills

The responses reveal that participants perceive social media as beneficial across various language skills, particularly in reading (Mean = 3.93, SD = 0.801) and vocabulary (Mean = 4.16, SD = 0.748), likely due to the diverse and accessible content on these platforms. Listening skills show significant enhancement, with a high mean rating of 4.24 (SD = 0.825), reflecting the strong impact of audial content on social media. Speaking (Mean = 3.83, SD = 0.886) and pronunciation (Mean = 4.06, SD = 0.894) are also positively influenced, as social media offers practical avenues for verbal practice and pronunciation refinement. Writing, although showing a slightly lower mean of 3.56 (SD = 0.899), suggests that some participants encounter fewer opportunities for writing practice.

When it comes to integrating social media with formal education, participants express moderate agreement on its value as a complement to traditional learning materials (Mean = 3.52, SD = 0.961), particularly for real-life examples (Mean = 3.72, SD = 0.870). They see potential in using social media as an assessment tool (Mean = 3.61, SD = 1.012), although caution in planning and monitoring is recommended to maximize its effectiveness in an educational context. Overall, these insights underscore the role of social media as both a supportive learning resource and an enriching supplement to formal language education.

Table 4.8: Descriptive Analysis of Language Skills Items

Descriptives			
	Items	Mean	SD
	4. Listening to content on social media has enhanced my listening skills in English.	4.24	0.825
	5. I have noticed improvements in my speaking skills due to engaging with language content on social media.	3.83	0.886
	6. Exposure to language content on social media has positively impacted my vocabulary skills in English.	4.16	0.748
	7. Engaging with language content on social media has improved my pronunciation skills in English.	4.06	0.894
	14. I integrate social media into my formal language education for additional practice.	3.46	0.943
	15. Integrating social media into formal language education enriches learning experience by offering real-life examples.	3.72	0.870
	16. Social media platforms have become an essential supplement to the materials provided in my formal language education.	3.52	0.961
	17. I believe that social media is an effective tool for assessments in formal language education.	3.61	1.012
Items Outside of the Questionnaire			
	1. Do you think language content on social media can benefit reading?	3.93	0.801
	2. Do you think language content on social media can benefit writing?	3.56	0.899

4.6. Summary of the Results

In this results section, the data gathered from the questionnaire was analyzed and what the participants think about using user-generated content on social media in language learning was explored through research questions.

First, the demographic data gathered from the participants was analyzed. According to this data, the participants reported being mostly between B1 and B2 language proficiency level throughout language skills. For the frequency of social media platform usage, WhatsApp, Instagram and YouTube dominates this field. In terms of how many hours a day participants use social media; most participants reported using social media around 3-5 hours a day. For the purpose of social media usage, entertainment, connecting with others and getting information and news are the most popular reasons why our participants use social media. Finally, as the last question for the demographics part, an open-ended question was asked to get more creative and fresh ideas from the

participants about language learning through social media. Most of their answers were positive. A big majority of the participants think that language learning through social media is possible, and language skills can be further developed through social media platforms. Very few participants think that social media is not a viable choice for language learning, and it can lead to distractions and errors because of informal language content. Moreover, 25 participants mentioned the importance of influencers and only 10 participants had neutral ideas about social media and language learning.

Second, there were 17 questionnaire items consisting of 4 factors (exposure to English culture and language input, language learning strategies and tips, influencers and their content, and formal education). A vast majority of participants agree that user-generated content on social media benefits their language skills and exposure to language content which includes cultural, formal and informal language. Most participants also actively use social media to find language learning strategies, and they often rely on short content on social media. Moreover, most participants believe interacting with others on social media can improve language learning. However, most participants are neutral about the role of influencers in their language learning journey, and the ones who think influencers are beneficial for them also care about influencers' experience. Finally, most participants integrate social media into their formal language education, and they believe it can enrich language learning experience and assessments in formal language learning.

Table 4.9: All Questionnaire Items and Mean Scores

Descriptives			
	Items	Mean	SD
1.	I think social media has helped me stay engaged with English culture.	4.09	0.847
2.	Social media has broadened my exposure to formal language.	3.52	0.944
3.	Social media engagement with traditional content has improved my cultural understanding of English.	3.96	0.797
4.	Listening to content on social media has enhanced my listening skills in English.	4.24	0.825
5.	I have noticed improvements in my speaking skills due to engaging with language content on social media.	3.83	0.886
6.	Exposure to language content on social media has positively impacted my vocabulary skills in English.	4.16	0.748
7.	Engaging with language content on social media has improved my pronunciation skills in English.	4.06	0.894
8.	I watch short content on social media platforms to quickly learn language tips.	3.65	1.108

Table 4.9: (continued): All Questionnaire Items and Mean Scores

9. I actively search for language learning strategies on social media.	3.28	1.172
10. Interacting with others learning the same language on social media is a valuable aspect of my language journey.	3.80	0.943
11. Influencers on social media have played a significant role in my language learning journey.	3.13	1.246
12. I pay attention to the experience of language influencers on social media.	3.21	1.168
13. Influencers can contribute to creating a sense of community among language learners on social media.	3.53	0.968
14. I integrate social media into my formal language education for additional practice.	3.46	0.943
15. Integrating social media into formal language education enriches learning experience by offering real-life examples.	3.72	0.870
16. Social media platforms have become an essential supplement to the materials provided in my formal language education.	3.52	0.961
17. I believe that social media is an effective tool for assessments in formal language education.	3.61	1.012
Overall mean and SD score	3.54	0.895

In summary, as seen from Table 9, a high overall mean score of 3.54 would indicate moderate engagement and positive attitudes toward using social media as a tool in language learning, especially for cultural immersion, listening, and vocabulary. However, opinions are more mixed regarding influencers and social media's formal educational applications.



CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

In this study, user-generated content on social media, its effects on language learning and English Majors' ideas about it were investigated. This chapter discusses the reported findings of Research Question 1, Research Question 2 and Research Question 3.

5.1. DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION 1

What are the attitudes of English Majors towards user-generated content on social media, and how do they perceive its effectiveness in enhancing language proficiency and cultural understanding compared to traditional methods?

It is important to note that the findings of this study are based on self-reported perceptions of participants rather than objective measurements of their motivation, cultural knowledge, or language skills. While these perceptions provide valuable insights into learners' attitudes and experiences, they do not reflect directly assessed improvements in these areas. The focus of this study is on understanding how participants perceive the strengths of user-generated content on social media as a resource for language learning, rather than measuring its direct impact on their proficiency or cultural competence.

There are various resources to boost language learning and exposure to authentic content. These resources can be traditional like textbooks, lesson plans, workbooks, flashcards and charts. However, in today's world, there are online resources and social media platforms with unlimited content that evolve every day. In previous and recent literature, there are a number of studies about social media and language learning; however, most of these studies focus on the function of social media about a specific language skill instead of content. Studies that examine social media holistically, including its content, remain limited. The present study focuses specifically on language learning and user-generated content on social media. As there are a limited number of studies about the content on social media in terms of language learning, the present study has unique perspectives and potential.

User-generated content on social media has reshaped the landscape of language learning by providing learners with accessible, authentic, and culturally diverse materials. Unlike traditional methods that often rely on curated and standardized resources, social media enables learners to immerse themselves in language as it is used in everyday life. This intractability and relevance make user-generated content appealing, especially for

learners seeking real-world application of their skills. While traditional methods offer foundational structure and discipline, the adaptability and interactive nature of social media platforms help learners to shape their needs for personalization and contextual learning, fostering a positive attitude toward its use.

The first research question examines English majors' attitudes toward user-generated content on social media compared to traditional language learning methods. Results indicate that social media plays an influential role, as learners recognize the potential of user-generated content and are inclined to use it to access authentic English language and cultural content. These findings align with previous research which show positive attitudes towards social media as a language resource (Alqarni, 2021, Ariantini et al., 2021; Ahmed, 2019). Notably, Alqarni's (2021) study, conducted among both students and teachers, reveals that despite differences in participant groups, both generally held positive attitudes, valuing social media for language learning due to easy access to diverse content and opportunities for interaction with native speakers. Like the current study, participants found user-created content to be a valuable addition to their language-learning resources.

Increasing exposure to English culture is necessary to enhance language proficiency through authentic content. The present study highlighted that participants find content on social media beneficial to maximize cultural understanding. These results align with the studies of Jin (2015) and Islam (2022). Jin's study found that using Facebook facilitated Korean EFL learners' engagement with authentic English language content, resulting in enhancements in intercultural competence and language proficiency. This means that social media platforms provide learners with a rich variety of cultural and linguistic input, which contributes to a deeper understanding of English language and culture. Both the present study and Jin (2015) suggest that participants appreciate social media as a valuable tool for language learning. However, it should be noted that exposure to informal language can sometimes be misleading for learners, as some respondents mentioned in response to the open-ended question.

The language learning journey can be enhanced during and outside of formal education through various tools which also include social media. Moreover, integrating social media and user-generated language content into formal language education is also a popular phenomenon among learners. The present study's results show that learners are

positive about integrating social media into their formal language education, and they are also receptive about assessments through social media. In Greenhow and Lewin's (2015) study, it is also emphasized that the content on social media can serve as a bridge between formal and informal learning environments. Both studies are aligned by highlighting the potential of integration and further engagement chance in language learning through motivation and various structured and unstructured learning opportunities.

5.2. DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION 2

How does engagement with user-generated language content influence English majors' motivation for language learning, considering factors such as perceived improvement, active learning strategy development, and the impact of social media interactions and influencers?

The second research question explores how user-generated content on social media influences learners' motivation levels by facilitating engagement with language communities, encouraging interactions with influencers, and providing relevant language-learning content. Motivation, among other factors, is a very crucial concept in language learning. It fuels learners' engagement to learn and master the target language. High levels of motivation can enhance learners' engagement with language activities and increase their willingness to participate in challenges. This results in a positive attitude towards the learning process. Without motivation, learners are less likely to practice consistently, seek out additional resources, or push through difficulties, which can extinguish their overall progress.

Social media with visuals and audial reinforcements, has become a powerful motivator by making learning an engaging and interactive experience. By enabling users to interact with peers, influencers, and native speakers, platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube give language learners a feeling of community and purpose. While the variety of information satisfies individual interests and maintains long-term engagement, the instant feedback from comments, likes, and shares reinforces positive behaviour. Additionally, social media gives students the ability to observe real progress, which can inspire them to make new plans and actively look for ways to get better, boosting their motivation both internally and externally. With this research question, the present study found that social media motivates learners to find other learners and

language communities to help their own language learning journey. Moreover, participants acknowledge the importance of influencers, and they seek language tips from various user-generated content created by influencers.

The present study's findings on the motivational role of social media align with multiple studies that underscore the positive influence of these platforms on language learning motivation (Patra et al., 2022; Ucar & Göksel, 2020; Zheng et al., 2023). The present study's results about motivation can also be seen in Alberth's (2019) study. His study highlights that social media platforms, especially Facebook, can positively influence students' motivation. In the case of Facebook, students' intrinsic motivation to study writing increased, which shows the potential of social media to boost motivation by making language learning more engaging and accessible. In terms of the benefits of supplementary content on Facebook, Ucar and Göksel's (2020) study further highlights the significant contribution of user-generated content to the motivation, interest, and academic performance of EFL learners. Alberth's (2019) participants also acknowledge that direct corrective feedback on social media is preferred over indirect feedback. This is important to note as the present study's participants appreciate social media for language learning strategies which include feedback, as well.

Learners without motivation usually get anxious while trying to perform language skills. Looking for language strategies is a good way to get past the obstacles caused by low motivation. As learners can encounter other experienced people or influencers on social media, they can look up to them and gain learning strategies and motivation. As the present study explained, learners look for experienced influencers who have considerable language skills. Namaziandost and Nasri (2019) also proved that use of social media platforms improved EFL learners' speaking skills by increasing their motivation to engage in speaking activities. These findings also align with the present study's findings as English majors believe social media interactions and content can significantly enhance motivation levels. Moreover, both studies acknowledge the importance of active participation and interaction through social media which leads to higher engagement levels, an essential factor for language learning.

In EFL countries, finding native or experienced English speakers to communicate is a valuable search. Learners look for exposure opportunities and social media platforms can provide this as explained by the present study. Even if some applications, like Skype,

are not strictly classified as social media, people still use them to find and communicate with others. The present study's results about motivation also resemble Dirjal et al.'s (2020), both of which underline the importance of interactivity in learning. Skype made interactivity and real-time communication possible for language learners in terms of exposure to authentic listening skill content (Dirjal et al., 2020). According to both studies, social media provides freedom to personalize language learning, and learners can choose content that suits their interests and needs which contributes to increased motivation.

In terms of motivation and self-development, the content on social media can play a significant role as presented in the present study. However, there are additional effects of social media exposure that can further develop the features of language learning cognitively. In Blattner and Fiori's (2011) study, it is emphasized that learners can actively enhance their sociopragmatic awareness through interacting with authentic content on social media communities. This develops a deeper understanding of cultural norms and helps to build communicative competence through real-life contexts. These findings align with the present study's results as the present study also emphasizes the importance of authentic, interactive content in developing motivation and effective language learning.

While there are various good reasons to use social media in language learning in terms of motivation, there are also concerns about it, too. From the results of the open-ended question the present study explained, some participants find social media to be addictive and distractive. These possible negative effects should be considered while practicing language learning through social media content.

5.3. DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION 3

How do English majors perceive the impact of user-generated language content on their development of specific language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking)?

Social media offers a multifaceted method for improving language proficiency. With a wide range of written and audiovisual content, platforms give learners a variety of chances to improve their speaking, listening, reading, and writing abilities. For example,

students can concurrently develop their reading and listening skills by watching short videos with subtitles, and they can improve their writing and conversational skills by leaving comments on posts or taking part in live conversations. Learners' comprehension of the language is greatly enhanced when cultural context is incorporated into these exchanges. Although user-generated content encourages informal learning, because it is unstructured, learners must be critical and self-directed, especially when it comes to differentiating between formal and informal language use.

The third research question investigates the role of user-generated language learning content on social media in the development of language skills among English majors, particularly in areas such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. As there are a vast number of users on social media platforms, it is expected to see various types of content which also include language learning content. Language learning content on social media mostly includes main and sub-language skills. In terms of language skills, the present study's findings align with studies that suggest social media platforms provide a rich environment for language learners to engage with authentic content, which not only enhances language proficiency but also deepens cultural understanding. The present study observed that students who actively interact with language content on platforms like TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram reported significant improvements in their language skills, particularly in listening and speaking. These findings align with those of Vikneswaran and Krish (2015). While Vikneswaran and Krish's study focuses specifically on writing, both studies find that social media platforms, through their collaborative and interactive features, create a positive learning environment that motivates students to improve their language skills.

Many aspects of social media and user-generated content were investigated in the present study. This investigation highlights that exposure to English content can contribute to language proficiency. Similar positive effects are observed in Mustafa's (2018) study, which highlights that social media platforms enhance speaking skills by providing learners with opportunities to practice in a more natural and less formal environment. The same study also emphasizes the effectiveness of platforms like Skype and WhatsApp in facilitating the use of collaborative learning strategies, which supports the present study's findings that social media encourages active learning and strategy development.

The findings also show that some social media platforms are preferred more than others. For listening skills, YouTube has great content with both visual and audial support. The present study's participants use YouTube in their daily life and believe that listening skills can be developed through social media, too. Moreover, Silviyanti (2014) highlights the use of English movie videos on YouTube as a beneficial tool for improving listening skills. Silviyanti's research showed that students had positive perceptions of using YouTube videos for listening practice, which resembles the present study's results.

While most social media platforms help learners to develop certain language skills, sometimes reading skills can be neglected because most social media content is visual and audial. However, as the present study explained, learners appreciate the role of social media in the development of reading skills. In their study, Silarayan Ruiz et al. (2022) emphasize how social media platforms like Facebook can be effectively integrated into educational practices to improve students' reading skills. Similar to the present study's findings, this study highlights the motivational aspects of social media and shows that when used properly, social media can serve as a powerful tool for improving language skills, particularly reading comprehension.

As the present study explained, English majors believe the social media can be a valuable asset to learn and practice vocabulary. There are influencers who specifically focus on vocabulary, and they offer a wide range of content according to the language proficiency levels of their followers. These influencers also share language strategies and tips for learners to maximize their efficiency in vocabulary learning. When combined, all these facts about social media can be very effective in the vocabulary learning journey of English majors. Zainal and Rahmat's (2020) study highlights the importance of the positive role that social media plays in enhancing vocabulary learning, too. They emphasize the significance of exposure to new words and phrases that learners can encounter on social media. As stated in the present study, Zainal and Rahmat (2020) further discuss the interactive nature of social media which can increase the engagement and motivation levels of learners.

Like other language content, language learners can find various content on social media about grammar learning. There are influencers who share grammar videos that teach certain topics both deductively and inductively. The present study emphasized the importance of this flexibility on social media and English majors' positive attitude

towards grammar learning through user-generated social media content. Elyonova's (2021) study further confirms this as her participants also stated that social media proved to be an effective tool for grammar practice and encouraged more active participation in grammar discussions. Furthermore, according to both studies, social media can increase motivation by offering a stress-free environment.

In terms of pronunciation, social media also provides various examples to get influenced from in order to improve pronunciation. Listening to authentic content is needed to develop pronunciation skills. As the present study shows, English majors see the potential of social media to practice their pronunciation skills, and they have a positive attitude. The results align with Purnamasari's (2018) study as the use of YouTube was seen as an engaging and motivating tool for his participants by providing authentic audiovisual content. The number of native speaker videos and real-life language contexts were seen as a crucial part of pronunciation development through social media. However, there are also concerns about bad influences from daily life usage of English on social media with different accents, which increases the value of experienced or native language learning influencers.

As the present study emphasized, exposure to language content on social media can help learners build and develop competence in various language skills. Haryanto et al. (2019) explored this broadly by combining digital media as a whole. In terms of social media and communicative competence, they found that students who engage with English content on digital platforms tend to show improved communicative competence. This exposure helps learners to become more familiar with communicative features like colloquial expressions, pronunciation, and conversational contexts. These results align with the present study's findings about enhancing language skills beyond traditional classroom learning as participants from both studies acknowledge the importance of social media and language content.

Regardless of the specific platform or content type, multimedia resources can significantly enhance learner engagement and skill development. Even though there are concerns about social media in terms of content and addiction, it is still a valuable source for language learning through various platforms and content types.

CONCLUSION

The present study was conducted to analyze English majors' attitudes, motivation, and language skill development influenced by user-generated content on social media. The participants, English majors studying at a Turkish state university, were surveyed to understand their perspectives on social media as a tool for language skill enhancement. To achieve this aim, a 17-item questionnaire was developed, incorporating additional demographic questions. After a pilot test, the survey was distributed online, with 301 students agreeing to participate. The study utilized quantitative methods to evaluate these responses, providing insights into the role of social media in language learning contexts.

To sum up, most English majors agree that user-generated content on social media has a potential in language learning, and they use it in their daily lives to develop their language skills outside of formal education. Moreover, English majors state that they feel motivated while using social media, and they search for language tips and strategies through influencers. Most participants also believe social media should be integrated into formal language education, and even assessments can be done using social media tools. Even though there are some participants who do not use social media in language learning, they still spend time on social media. Overall, English majors have a positive attitude towards social media and user-generated content within language learning.

Although attitudes towards user-generated content on social media are generally positive, there are concerns, too. Some participants believe it is not possible to develop language skills through social media as it is not as planned as a formal education plan. There are also concerns about distractions and exposure to informal language which can lead to fossilization. However, participants with these negative thoughts are very minimal.

Furthermore, the findings reveal a critical intersection between formal education and informal learning. While traditional methods provide structured and comprehensive instruction, social media offers a dynamic and personalized space for learners to practice and explore language skills in real-world contexts. This synergy highlights the importance of integrating user-generated content to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

The results of this study highlight the growing demand for digital literacy among instructors and students as education increasingly uses digital resources. Social media is an essential part of modern language instruction because of its capacity to offer individualized learning experiences that complement current trends towards learner-centered education.

With the developments in smartphones and ease of access through the internet, user-generated content on social media can play a significant role in language learning. The competition to create better content among language influencers provides ongoing, unlimited and fresh content for language learners. Moreover, with the help of algorithms on social media platforms, more appropriate content is available for each need in language learning journey for learners.

As social media affects every aspect of the world positively and negatively, it is under the surveillance of decision-making and policymakers. All around the world, because of sociopolitical reasons, social media platforms can be banned, or access can be limited for an amount of time. For these reasons, we believe this study will hold an archival value for future reference. Furthermore, the insights gained from this research can inform policymakers and educators about the complex roles that social media plays in language learning and cultural exchange.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Social media has fundamentally reshaped the landscape of language learning, offering unprecedented access to authentic materials, real-time communication with native speakers, and adaptive content tailored to individual preferences. This transformation challenges traditional notions of language education and calls for a reevaluation of pedagogical approaches.

As the present study's results acknowledged, social media can play a significant role in language learning. Language learners can craft their own language learning style. This process can happen both in formal education and outside of it. Both teachers and students can take advantage of this learning style. With visual and auditory aids, the content on social media can be entertaining and motivating for learners from all age groups. However, monitoring should be done to ensure security and addiction. As young

learners are very interested in smartphones and social media, parents and teachers should monitor each student very carefully. Moreover, most primary, secondary and high schools ban smartphones which should be considered while planning to use social media in language learning. The best age group seems to be university level.

For university level, both English majors and other departments can use user-generated content on social media to increase their engagement level. Social media platforms offer many unique features which can be discovered for each class to further develop learner motivation and participation. In terms of communication, tasks and assessments groups can be formed in many social media platforms which can speed the process of formal education's paperwork. Expanding these practices to other disciplines, instructors could encourage broader interdisciplinary language learning, as social media content crosses cultural and topical boundaries, providing students with language practice that is relevant, up-to-date, and aligned with diverse academic or professional interests. This approach can make language learning more relevant to learners' lives and future career paths, ultimately promoting lifelong language skills through digital and social platforms.

In order to create a hybrid learning environment, educators might also think about integrating social media into blended learning strategies, which combine conventional techniques with digital resources. A method like this could improve group projects where students engage with classmates from around the world to develop their language skills in authentic settings. To help promote innovative usage of the target language and improve students' language proficiency as well as their digital literacy, educators can also create targeted social media challenges or campaigns.

Additionally, social media gives students the ability to develop autonomy in their learning process by enabling them to select and engage with tailored content. This promotes increased motivation and independence and is consistent with the ideas of self-regulated learning. Teachers can help students find excellent instructional resources by promoting the usage of hashtags, online communities, and user-generated content.

Finally, it's critical to address accessibility. Despite the widespread use of social media, not all students may have equal access to social media platforms, smartphones, or reliable internet. To ensure that all students can make use of these cutting-edge methods,

educational institutions must try to close the digital gap. By taking these pedagogical considerations into account, social media can revolutionize language instruction by developing transferable abilities and preparing students for a world that is interconnected.

LIMITATIONS

This study is limited by several factors that should be considered when interpreting the results. One key limitation is the sample size, which consists exclusively of English majors. While this sample is representative of the targeted population of English majors, the findings may not be fully generalizable to students from other disciplines or varying language proficiency levels. Future studies may benefit from including a larger and more diverse sample to enhance the generalizability of the results. Additionally, self-report measures were used for data collection, which can introduce biases such as social desirability or misrepresentation of actual behaviors. Therefore, the results should be interpreted with caution. Finally, some participants may have limited or no use of social media, which could influence their perspectives on language learning through social media platforms. Some participants might also hold prejudices against social media, which could affect their responses.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The present study investigated user-generated content on social media and its role in English majors' language learning. Perceptions of English majors were collected with a well-crafted questionnaire and analyzed for results.

Further studies could focus on specific language skills among user-generated content with a deep dive into other functions of language. They could explore a larger and more diverse population of English majors or different departments from various regions or educational backgrounds to see if attitudes and roles vary across different contexts.

Moreover, a longitudinal approach could be used to examine the long-term effects of user-generated content on social media on language learning. This would allow researchers to observe how motivation, language skills development, and integration with formal education evolve over time.

Researchers could also focus on different and specific social media platforms with a deeper understanding of features and mechanics. Different social media platforms can be mixed with different language skills for comparison.

Teachers' roles could be investigated in terms of the integration of social media into English classrooms and curricula. Teacher-student relationship via social media could be researched, with a focus on language skills and psychological aspects of language learning.

Finally, instead of user-generated content, AI-generated content could be investigated through different social media platforms and language skills. There are various AI tools which can create any type of content including visual and audial. These effects on self-learning could be investigated.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. Pre-scale Question

Do you believe that the language learning content you access on social media contributes to the development of your language skills? Explain how these resources(for example, short videos on Instagram, TikTok or Youtube) have been helpful to you. *

Yanıtınız

APPENDIX B. Analysis of the Pre-scale Question

Insights from the pre-scale question:

1. Exposure to Authentic and Cultural Language Content:

Insight: Social media provides exposure to different cultures and language content, contributing to a deeper understanding of language use. This continuous exposure to language content on social media platforms is considered beneficial for lifelong learning according to participants. In particular, the simplicity and availability of the language content on social media are a big plus for our participants.

- **Examples:**

- "Evet, çok yardımcı oluyor. Instagram'daki reels videolarındaki bazı İngilizce içerikler sayesinde daha kolay şekilde günlük İngilizceye maruz kalıp İngilizcemi geliştirebiliyorum."
- "Bazı hesaplar, başka dillerde kelimelerin nasıl yazılıp okunduğuyla alakalı videolar yapıyor. Ben de bunları gördüğümde kaydediyorum."
- "Kelime dağarcığını genişlettiğini ve yapılan çevirinin kalitesini artırdığına inanıyorum."
- "Bence yabancı dile maruz kalmak öğrenme konusunda yardımcı. Bence YouTube özellikle bu konuda çok yararlı. Eğlence içeriğine veya öğretici içeriklere yabancı dilde erişim sağlanabiliyor."
- "Bence sosyal medyanın dil öğrenimi üzerinde çokça faydası var. Bazı kalıpların, ana dili İngilizce olan insanlar tarafından nasıl ve ne zaman kullanıldığını anlayabilmemiz bağlamında bu videoları yararlı buluyorum."

- "Bence sosyal medyanın dil öğrenimi üzerinde çokça faydası var. Twitter ortamında birçok yabancı arkadaşım var ve bu sayede cümle kurma, yabancı kelime kısaltmaları öğrenmem ve kendimi geliştirmem benim için çok daha kolay oldu."
- "Dil öğrencisi olmadığım için bütün dil bilgim bu uygulamalardan geliyor zaten. Spotify kullanarak şarkılardan öğreniyorum."
- "Evet, benim için çok etkili oluyor çünkü video veya dizilerden kelimeler öğreniyorum. Gramer kullanımını yerli insanların nasıl kullandığını duyuyorum ve otomatik olarak kulak alışkanlığı oluşuyor. Böylece ben de konuşurken onlara göre cümle kurabiliyorum."
- "I've learnt the English language specifically through the use of the internet primarily because I was exposed to it frequently as a child. While I think the peak of its effectiveness is at a younger age, it still contributes to your development at older ages."
- "Sosyal medya uygulamalarından yabancı içerik tüketmek insana o dilde göz aşinalığı sağlayabiliyor. Herkesin yurt dışına çıkma imkânı olmadığından bu tarz içerikler oldukça yardımcı olabilir."
- "Bence sosyal medya dil becerilerimizi kesinlikle etkiliyor. Örneğin, en çok Instagram kullanıyorum ve önüme birçok yabancı dilde içerik çıkıyor. Bazen anlamını bilmediğim bir kelime olsa bile, sayfanın içeriğinden ya da görsel içeriklerinden onu dil havuzuma ekleyip hayatıma devam ediyorum."
- "YouTube'da TWD series isimli oyunun videolarını izlerken bir anda İngilizce bilmediğim halde kafamda yazan cümleleri çevirmeye başladım. İngilizce bir anda kafamda belirdi diyebilirim. Onun dışında pek bir faydası olduğunu düşünmüyorum."

2. Skill Development:

Insight: Participants note that exposure to various content on social media contributes to language skills development, including reading, listening, speaking, vocabulary and understanding the language as a whole.

- **Examples:**
- "Evet kesinlikle izlediğim İngilizce içerikler youtubedan olur instagram üzerinden olur hem listening skillimi hem reading skillimi ek olarak anlama yeteneğimi de geliştiriyor."
- "YouTube Instagram gibi platformlar İngilizcemi geliştirirken bana çok yardımcı oldu. İngilizce içerikler dinleme yeteneğimi daha da geliştirdi."
- "Youtube bana dil öğrenirken çok büyük yardım sağladı. İzlediğim vloglar hem kelime haznemi geliştirdi hem de listening yapmama olanak sağladı. Günlük konuşma kalıplarını öğrenmeme ve ezberlememe yardım etti. Ayrıca instagramdan takip ettiğim bazı sayfalar paylaştıkları günlük kelimelerle kelime haznemi geliştirdi."
- "I do believe that the accessing on social media contributes with the development of anyone's language skills, and that refers to my own experience. I think that these short videos on Instagram or tiktok or even YouTube can improve anyone's language skills because my english language skill had improved over the years by just listening to the things that people are saying or even read the things that they write under the videos it is so helpful to learn the right accent of the native speakers of any language in this world. I have learned the native language of the Americans just by listening to their videos and then i was able to write easily."
- "YouTube Instagram gibi platformlar İngilizcemi geliştirirken bana çok yardımcı oldu. İngilizce içerikler dinleme yeteneğimi daha da geliştirdi."
- "Evet yardımcı oluyor özellikle sosyal medyada hem İngilizce hem Türkçe alt yazıların aynı anda olduğu videolar sıklıkla görüldüğü için güzel bir altyapıya sahip olanlar daha da ilerleyebiliyor podcastler ve YouTube videoları da ayrıyeten güzel ve katkılı olabiliyor."
- "Ben geliştirdiğini düşünüyorum çünkü örneğin diğer insanların aksine tiktok'u ingilizcemi geliştirmek için kullandığım nokta olabiliyor mesela speaking için kullanıyorum. Bazen de youtube'da bazı phrase'leri ve onların nasıl kullanıldığını öğreniyorum. Sadece ingilizce için değil

ispanyolca için de instagram'da takip ettiğim sayfalar var. Bence sosyal medya dil geliştirmede oldukça yardımcı."

- "İngilizce öğrenmek için olan uygulamalar veya kısa videolar İngilizce gelişimini olumlu olarak etkiliyor bence. Bunun yanında oynanan oyunlar, izlenen kısa videolar da ister istemez etkili olabiliyor, görsellikle de desteklendiği için Türkçe çevirisi yazmasa bile izleyen kişi demek isteneni anlayabiliyor ve o kelime ya da kalıp beynine yerleşiyor. Aynı zamanda diziler de bu görsellikten yararlanıp kişiye İngilizceyi dil bilgisi olarak öğretemese de kelime, kalıp bilgisi olarak yeterli biçimde öğretebiliyor. "
- "Evet, bence kesinlikle geliştiriyor. Mesela Instagram'da reels izlerken altyazılı şekilde dizi/film kesitleri oluyor, bu da dil öğrenimini ve artı olarak dinleme yeteneğini geliştiriyor. Ayrıca yeni çıkan sosyal medya uygulamaları sayesinde insanlar daha hızlı şekilde dil öğrenebiliyor."
- "Tabiki de arttırır. Sosyal medyada gördüğün İngilizce yeni kelime ile kelime haznesini geliştirip özellikle YouTube gibi platformlarda duyduğun kelimeler ile söylenişlerini öğrenebilirsin telaffuz ve kelime haznesi manasında gayet etkilidir sosyal medya uygulamaları."
- I think social media can improve our language skills. As a person watchig youtube and youtube shorts all seventy-five percent of the people i am following are talking English or an other language. This really helped me because sometimes i learnt new words and new meanings of a word. So, for short yes. I think social media if used properly can contribue to development of Language Skills and it did to mine.

3. Learning Strategies and Personalization of Learning:

Insight: Short content, such as Instagram reels and YouTube videos, is highlighted for its effectiveness in providing quick language tips and improving daily language exposure. Participants highlight the ability to tailor their learning experiences on social media based on personal preferences and needs. Also, the subtitle availability on these social media platforms seems to have a positive effect on some participants.

- **Examples:**
- "Evet. YouTube ve Instagram bana çok yardımcı oldu. Ayrıca İngilizce manga ve manhwa okumak da bana bayağı yardımcı oldu. YouTube'dan daha çok ders videolarını izledim. Manga ve manhwa bana gramer ve kelime açısından çok yardım etti. Instagram'dan ise daha çok günlük konuşma ve argo kelimelerle kültür öğrendim."
- "YouTube, Instagram gibi yerlerde birçok şarkının çeviri videolarıyla karşılaşıyorum. Her şarkının bir sürü çevirisi olduğundan hepsini karşılaştırma fırsatı buluyorum ve kelime hazinemi genişletiyor. Bunun dil becerilerimi daha iyi hale getirdiğini düşünüyorum. Ayrıca yabancıların attığı TikTok videolarına gelen çeviri özelliği de buna katkı sağladı."
- "Bence evet, ayrıca çeşitli olarak düşünülebilir. Mesela YouTube'dan o uzun açıklama videolarını izlemek istemiyorsan Instagram Reels'da birkaç saniyelik, sana küçük ipuçları (tips, keywords etc.) veren videolarla işini kolaylaştırabilirsin."
- "İngilizce öğrenmek için kullanılan uygulamalar veya kısa videolar İngilizce gelişimini olumlu olarak etkiliyor bence."
- "Evet, Instagram ve YouTube gibi uygulamalar sayesinde izlediğim yabancı dil kaynaklı içeriklerle dil becerim artıyor. Ayrıca farklı kültürlere ait içeriklere ilgim olduğu için Twitter'ım genellikle Türkçe değil. Böylelikle her gün etkileşimde olmam sayesinde yeni kelimeler öğrenmem, konuşma ve okuma becerilerime katkı sağlıyor."
- "Yes, you can learn small details, tactics, and more. And I watch İclal; I see her tactics on learning a lot of languages. Like when you learn a language, you can learn some languages faster and easier than others. For instance, if you learn Turkish, Azerbaijani or Kazakh languages are much easier compared to learning Japanese or Spanish, etc."
- "Evet, herhangi bir sosyal medya platformunda karşımıza çıkan videoların çoğunda altyazı özelliği var. Altyazı özelliği sayesinde cümle yapısı, kelime öğrenme vs. gibi şeylere katkı sağlar."

Potential insights or perspectives that participants did not explicitly mention:

- 1- **Interactive Learning Communities:** Participant did not give explicit examples about online forums or language groups on social media that they joined or experienced. For example, groups and live streams on Instagram, Telegram and YouTube or Twitter Spaces.
- 2- **Impact on Pronunciation:** There are just 3 examples from participants about pronunciation learning or practice on social media. Nearly everything they watch or see on social media has a chance to impact their pronunciation (in a good or bad way). Maybe we can address this in our questionnaire.
- 3- **Challenges and Limitations:** Participants could give examples about potential misinformation, distractions, or over-reliance on the use of social media. Some participants might express caution about the authenticity of language content on social media and how it can impact the learning process.
- 4- **Influence on Writing Skills:** None of our participants gave examples of the writing skill. They communicate with others through comments, posts, or direct messages but writing skill in particular was not mentioned by our participants. Maybe if we mention this in our questionnaire, participants could reflect on how regularly interacting with written content on social media can affect their ability to express themselves in written form.
- 5- **Long-Term Language Retention:** Participants might share their thoughts on the long-term retention of language skills acquired through social media. Participants could discuss whether they feel the language skills gained on social media are durable and applicable in various real-life situations. They say social media has a good impact on learning these skills, but they did not give enough real-life examples.
- 6- **Role of Influencers:** Naturally, user-generated content about language learning and practise needs social media influencers, specifically those focused on language learning or cultural exchange. Participants could mention specific

influencers or content creators who have positively influenced their language learning experience. There is just one content creator example from our participants.

- 7- Integration with Formal Education:** Social media is now being widely used by both teachers and students. Participants could discuss how they balance social media learning with more structured language learning programs. Of course, they are not ELT students, but they are language learners, and they could have opinions about combining or implementing social media with the formal education programs or curricula.

APPENDIX C. Expert Panel Member Form

Dear Panel Member,

I am conducting research on the attitudes of English Majors studying in Kütahya Dumlupınar University regarding the the role of user-generated language learning content on social media. In this context, the items intended to be included in the attitude scale that I am preparing are presented below.

I kindly request your evaluation on whether each item measures the intended characteristic. If you find expressions that are not suitable for the purpose or consider a statement to be erroneous as an attitude scale item, please mark it as "Not Essential." For statements that you think are suitable as items but need improvement, mark them as "Useful but not Essential," and in the "EXPLANATION" section, please make the necessary corrections or specify how it should be corrected. For statements you generally find appropriate and believe measure the intended characteristic, please mark them as "Appropriate." If you have improvement suggestions for generally suitable statements, please make notes accordingly. If you have new items that you believe should be added to the scale, please write them in the "RECOMMENDED ITEMS" section at the bottom of the scale.

- Essential: The statement is purposeful and can be used in its current form.
- Useful but not essential: The statement measures the intended structure but requires changes. (Please provide details on how the suggested changes should be implemented in the "EXPLANATION" section.)
- Not essential: The statement does not measure the intended structure and should be removed.

Thank you for your valuable contribution to the refinement of this attitude scale.

Best regards,

Furkan Demir

Exposure to Authentic and Cultural Language Content	Essential	Useful but not essential	Not essential	EXPLANATION
1				Social media has exposed me to different and various cultural content in the language I'm learning. (+)
2				Exposure to authentic language use on social media has helped me understand how native speakers communicate. (+)
3				I find that social media helps me stay connected with the cultural features of the language I'm learning. (+)
4				Social media content that uses cultural language makes me feel uninterested or indifferent. (-)
5				The continuous exposure to language content on social media platforms has positively influenced my lifelong learning journey. (+)
6				On social media, I have come across situations where the language content was presented as authentic, but it was actually misleading or inaccurate. (-)
7				Social media has broadened my exposure to diverse linguistic styles, including formal and informal language, enhancing my overall language comprehension. (+)
8				I believe that exposure to cultural events, discussions, and news on social media contributes significantly to my language learning experience. (+)
9				Discovering and engaging with content related to holidays, traditions, and festivities on social media has positively impacted my cultural knowledge in the target language. (+)
10				I have sometimes failed to engage with cultural language content on social media, which has limited my understanding of various linguistic styles and cultural features. (-)
Skill Development				
11				The various content on social media has contributed to the development of my reading skills in the target language. (+)

12	Listening to content on platforms like YouTube and Instagram has improved my language listening skills. (+)
13	I have noticed improvement in my speaking skills due to engaging with language content on social media. (+)
14	My ability to write in the target language has been positively influenced by interactions with social media language content and other people. (+)
15	Exposure to language content on social media has positively impacted my pronunciation and vocabulary skills in the target language. (+)
16	I feel discouraged or frustrated when trying to develop my language skills through social media content. (-)
17	I have improved my language skills by participating in real-time language challenges and quizzes on social media platforms. (+)
18	Participating in language-related challenges that social media influencers offer has provided rise to an innovative method of skill development. (+)
19	I have concerns about the effectiveness of social media's skill development process and how it will affect my language ability. (-)
Learning Strategies and Personalization of Learning	
20	I use short content on social media platforms to quickly learn language tips and enhance my daily language exposure. (+)
21	I actively search for language learning resources or strategies on social media. (+)
22	When I attempt to customise my language learning on social media to fit my specific needs and preferences, I frequently feel overwhelmed and frustrated. (-)
23	The availability of diverse content on social media allows me to customize my language learning experience based on personal preferences. (+)
24	Platforms like Instagram and YouTube provide me with

	personalized language learning opportunities. (+)
25	I rarely actively search for language learning resources or strategies on social media, relying more on traditional methods for my learning approach. (-)
26	I find that social media allows me to adapt my language learning strategies to suit my individual needs. (+)
27	I sometimes intentionally misinterpret complex language content on social media to challenge myself and improve my language comprehension skills. (-)
28	Experimenting with different language learning approaches shared by influencers on social media can allow me to discover the most effective strategies for myself. (+)
Interactive Learning Communities	
29	Being part of language-learning communities on social media can positively influence my learning experience. (+)
30	Interacting with others learning the same language on social media can be a valuable aspect of my language journey. (+)
31	I find it difficult to extract valuable insights or knowledge from language-learning communities on social media. (-)
32	Engaging with language learning communities on social media can be helpful to share my language learning experiences with others. (+)
33	Joining language-focused groups on social media is an effective way to stay updated on language-related resources and trends. (+)
34	The information shared in language-learning communities on social media often appears overwhelming and hinders my ability to focus on specific language learning goals. (-)
35	Sharing language-related content within online communities can help reinforce my understanding of linguistic concepts. (+)
Challenges and Limitations	

36	I have concerns about the security and privacy implications associated with engaging with language content on social media. (+)
37	It is challenging for me to identify and distinguish authentic language content from misleading or inaccurate information on social media platforms. (+)
38	Navigating through different social media platforms for language learning purposes sometimes feels confusing. (-)
39	When interacting with linguistic content on social media, I actively look for ways to improve my online security and privacy to reduce worries about any threats. (+)
40	The overwhelming amount of language content on social media makes it challenging to focus on specific learning goals. (-)
41	I consciously use strategies to identify and verify authentic language content amidst the vast amount of information on social media, ensuring a more focused and goal-oriented learning experience. (+)
42	The risk of encountering inappropriate or offensive content on social media is a concern for me in my language learning journey. (-)
Long-Term Language Retention	
43	I believe that using social media has helped me remember the language I'm learning in the long run. (+)
44	Social media exposure to language content, in my opinion, has contributed to my ability to maintain my language proficiency over time. (+)
45	I do not always practise or use the language skills I've learned on social media, which might have an impact on how long they last with me. (-)
46	I regularly revisit and review language content encountered on social media to reinforce my long-term memory and retention of the learned material. (+)

47	I worry that the language skills acquired through social media may not stay with me in the long term. (-)
48	I am confident in retaining language skills gained through social media, compared to other traditional learning methods. (+)
Role of Influencers	
49	Influencers on social media have played a significant role in my language learning journey. (+)
50	I find that content created by influencers in the target language has positively influenced my language skills. (+)
51	I often question the credibility and expertise of language influencers on social media, impacting their role in my language learning journey. (-)
52	The language proficiency of influencers motivates me to set higher goals for my own language learning journey. (+)
53	Influencers contribute to creating a sense of community among language learners on social media. (+)
54	I doubt the educational value of content created by influencers, leading me to question the effectiveness of their impact on my language skills. (-)
55	I actively seek recommendations from influencers for effective language learning resources and techniques. (+)
Integration with Formal Education	
56	I integrate social media into my formal language education for additional practice and exposure. (+)
57	Integrating social media into formal language education and curriculum can enrich learning experience by offering real-life examples and authentic content. (+)
58	I feel frustrated when attempting to integrate social media into my formal language education, as it disrupts the traditional learning environment. (-)
59	Social media platforms have become an essential supplement to the

	materials provided in my formal language education. (+)
60	I believe that social media can be effectively used as a tool for assessments and evaluations in formal language education. (+)
61	I experience anxiety about the potential negative perceptions from educators or peers when using social media as part of my formal language education. (-)
62	Social media platforms provide opportunities for interactive discussions and knowledge-sharing related to topics covered in my formal language education. (+)
Motivation	
63	Engaging with language content on social media enhances my motivation to learn the language. (+)
64	Discovering new and interesting language content on social media inspires me to explore and learn more about the language. (+)
65	The diverse and dynamic nature of language content on social media keeps me motivated to consistently practice and improve my language skills. (+)
66	I often doubt the effectiveness of language learning through social media, leading to a lack of motivation in my studies. (-)
67	Making connections on social media with other language learners and native speakers motivates me to improve my language skills. (+)
68	Observing the language proficiency of others on social media motivates me to improve my own language skills. (+)
69	I regularly postpone or avoid participating with language information on social media, which has a negative impact on my overall enthusiasm to learn the language. (-)
	RECOMMENDED ITEMS
1	
2	
3	
4	
	EXPLANATION

APPENDIX D. Ethics Committee Approval for Pilot Testing

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 05.02.2024-38



KÜTAHYA DUMLUPINAR ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği
Kurulu

TOPLANTI TUTANAĞI

Toplantı No : 2024/01
Toplantı Tarihi : 02.02.2024
Toplantı Saati : 11:00
Toplantı Yeri : Spor Bilimleri Fakültesi Toplantı Salonu

GÜNDEM

37: Kütahya Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü Müdürlüğü'nün 24.01.2024 tarih ve 263471 sayılı yazısı gereğince İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı (İngilizce) Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Furkan DEMİR'in "*Sosyal Medya Üzerinde Kullanıcı Tarafından Üretilen Dil Öğrenme İçeriğinin İngilizce Anabilim Dalı Öğrencileri Arasındaki Motivasyon ve Dil Becerileri Gelişimi Üzerindeki Etkisinin Analizi*" başlıklı akademik çalışmada kullanılmak üzere, uygulama, görüşme ve anket yapma talebinin etik açıdan uygunluğu üzerine görüşme

KARAR

37: Kütahya Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü Müdürlüğü'nün 24.01.2024 tarih ve 263471 sayılı yazısı gereğince İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı (İngilizce) Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Furkan DEMİR'in "*Sosyal Medya Üzerinde Kullanıcı Tarafından Üretilen Dil Öğrenme İçeriğinin İngilizce Anabilim Dalı Öğrencileri Arasındaki Motivasyon ve Dil Becerileri Gelişimi Üzerindeki Etkisinin Analizi*" başlıklı akademik çalışmada kullanılmak üzere, uygulama, görüşme ve anket yapma talebinin etik açıdan uygunluğu üzerine görüşüldü.

Yapılan görüşmeler ve değerlendirmeler sonucunda, çalışma kapsamında yapılacak olan uygulama, anket-görüşme sorularının ve ölçeklerin, gerekli izinlerin alınması kaydıyla, fikri, hukuki ve telif hakları bakımından sorumluluğu başvurucuya ait olmak üzere etik açıdan uygun olduğuna oy

birliği ile karar verildi.

Prof. Dr. Çetin Özdilek
Başkan

Prof. Dr. Emin ZEYTİNOĞLU
Üye

Prof. Dr. Emre SEZİCİ
Üye

Prof. Dr. Levent MERCİN
Üye

Prof. Dr. Metin
DEMİR Başkan
Yardımcısı

Bu belge, güvenli elektronik
imza ile imzalanmıştır.

Prof. Dr. Fulya TOPÇUOĞLU
ÜNAL
Üye

Prof. Dr. Niyazi KURNAZ
Üye

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Bilgi için: Emir Özekmekçi Unvanı:
Raportör



APPENDIX E. Ethics Committee Approval for the Final Questionnaire

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 04.06.2024-247



KÜTAHYA DÜMLUPINAR ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği
Kurulu

TOPLANTI TUTANAĞI

Toplantı No : 2024/05
Toplantı Tarihi : 27.05.2024
Toplantı Saati : 14:00
Toplantı Yeri : Spor Bilimleri Fakültesi Toplantı Salonu

GÜNDEM

16: Kütahya Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü Müdürlüğü'nün 06.05.2024 tarih ve 289351 sayılı yazısı gereğince; İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı (İngilizce) Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Furkan DEMİR'in "*Analyzing the Impact of User-Generated Language Learning Content on Social Media: Motivation and Language Skills Development Among English Major*" başlıklı akademik çalışmasında kullanılmak üzere, uygulama, görüşme ve anket yapma talebinin etik açıdan uygunluğu üzerine görüşme.

KARAR

16: Kütahya Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü Müdürlüğü'nün 06.05.2024 tarih ve 289351 sayılı yazısı gereğince; İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı (İngilizce) Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Furkan DEMİR'in "*Analyzing the Impact of User-Generated Language Learning Content on Social Media: Motivation and Language Skills Development Among English Major*" başlıklı akademik çalışmasında kullanılmak üzere, uygulama, görüşme ve anket yapma talebinin etik açıdan uygunluğu üzerine görüşme.

Yapılan görüşmeler ve değerlendirmeler sonucunda, çalışma kapsamında yapılacak olan uygulama, anket-görüşme sorularının ve ölçeklerin, gerekli izinlerin alınması kaydıyla, fikri, hukuki ve telif hakları bakımından sorumluluğu başvurusuya ait olmak üzere etik açıdan uygun olduğuna oy birliği ile karar verildi.

Prof. Dr. Çetin Özdilek
Başkan

Prof. Dr. Metin DEMİR
Başkan Yardımcısı

Prof. Dr. Emin ZEYTİNOĞLU
Üye

Prof. Dr. Emre SEZİCİ
Üye

Prof. Dr. Fulya TOPÇUOĞLU
ÜNAL
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Bilgi için: Emir Özekmekçi
Unvanı: Raportör



Bu belge, **güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.**

APPENDIX F. Final Questionnaire

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I think social media has helped me stay engaged with English culture.					
2. Social media has broadened my exposure to formal language.					
3. Social media engagement with traditional content has improved my cultural understanding of English.					
4. Listening to content on social media has enhanced my listening skills in English.					
5. I have noticed improvements in my speaking skills due to engaging with language content on social media.					
6. Exposure to language content on social media has positively impacted my vocabulary skills in English.					
7. Engaging with language content on social media has improved my pronunciation skills in English.					
8. I watch short content on social media platforms to quickly learn language tips.					
9. I actively search for language learning strategies on social media.					
10. Interacting with others learning the same language on social media is a valuable aspect of my language journey.					
11. Influencers on social media have played a significant role in my language learning journey.					
12. I pay attention to the experience of language influencers on social media.					
13. Influencers can contribute to creating a sense of community among language learners on social media.					
14. I integrate social media into my formal language education for additional practice.					

15. Integrating social media into formal language education enriches learning experience by offering real-life examples.

16. Social media platforms have become an essential supplement to the materials provided in my formal language education.

17. I believe that social media is an effective tool for assessments in formal language education.



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