

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **A. The Role of Social Media in English Language Learning**

Recent research suggests that social media, particularly video platforms such as Instagram, play a significant role in language learning (Al-Mubarak et al., 2020; Soyooof et al., 2021). Al-Mubarak et al. (2020) specifically found that social media not only increases student engagement but also provides access to authentic content related to everyday life. This is further supported by Soyooof et al. (2021), who highlighted that platforms such as Instagram enable students to learn languages more interactively and contextually. Social media not only provides a variety of content but also provides language learners with the opportunity to practice and interact with their target language in an informal setting. However, despite the many studies on platforms such as Facebook and YouTube, research on the use of Instagram in English learning is still limited. This provides an opportunity to examine how English learning video content, such as that uploaded by Zelina Fahrani, influences viewers' perceptions of learning effectiveness. Social media has become an integral part of daily life, influencing how individuals interact, communicate, and access information. In this context, Aulia (2021) highlights the importance of social media as a communication tool that facilitates interactions between individuals. Social media allows people to connect with friends, family, and even strangers from various parts of the world, creating a broader social network. This is particularly relevant in today's digital era, where communication often occurs online. The role of social media has evolved significantly beyond personal communication, impacting various sectors such as business, education, and politics. Bina Darma (2021) highlights that social media has become a crucial platform for marketing, enabling companies to directly reach consumers, build brands, and enhance customer loyalty. This strategic use of social media in modern marketing is complemented by Hidayat's (2021) examination of Instagram as a vital source of information in the 5.0 era, where users rely on the platform for news and current events. Rahman (2021) further emphasizes the effectiveness of social media

in disseminating information, allowing individuals and organizations to reach a wide audience quickly and efficiently, which is particularly beneficial for social campaigns and news distribution. In the context of education, Utami (2021) demonstrates how social media can enhance the teaching and learning process by facilitating collaboration, resource sharing, and discussions outside the classroom, thereby creating a more interactive learning environment. This is echoed by Widiastuti (2021), who discusses the importance of digital literacy in the information age, asserting that social media can raise awareness and knowledge about significant issues. Additionally, Setiawan (2021) observes that digital natives, who have grown up with technology, are more comfortable using social media for communication and information sharing, although this raises new challenges regarding ethics and privacy. Social media also plays a significant role in fulfilling users' social needs. Susanto (2021) explores how platforms like Instagram serve not only as communication tools but also as means to meet psychological needs for acceptance and recognition, fostering connections among users. Yulianto (2021) investigates how social interactions among students through Instagram can strengthen social relationships, allowing learners to share experiences, discuss academic topics, and build beneficial social networks. These journals provide in-depth insights into the positive and negative impacts of social media across various aspects of life. Social media not only changes the way we communicate but also influences how we learn, do business, and interact with the world around us. With a better understanding of the role of social media, we can harness its positive potential while addressing the challenges that may arise.

The burgeoning body of research confirms that the influence of social media in modern society is pervasive and multifaceted, extending far beyond simple communication to encompass educational, commercial, and social spheres. The pedagogical shift towards leveraging these digital tools is rooted in their capacity to provide a dynamic, authentic, and engaging environment that traditional classroom settings often struggle to replicate. While platforms like Facebook and YouTube have been widely studied, the unique features of Instagram—its visual-first approach, short-form video content, and strong community-building tools—

present a compelling case for its specific application in language learning. The video content produced by creators like Zelina Fahrani exemplifies this potential, offering a unique opportunity to investigate how the format and style of such content affect viewer perceptions of learning efficacy. The effectiveness of this approach lies in its ability to deliver language input that is both contextual and informal, bridging the gap between textbook knowledge and real-world application. For instance, learners are exposed to natural conversational patterns, slang, and cultural nuances that are integral to achieving fluency but are typically absent from formal curricula. This aligns with the principles of the input hypothesis (Krashen, 1982), which suggests that language acquisition occurs most effectively when learners are exposed to comprehensible input just slightly beyond their current level of competence. The authentic content on Instagram, coupled with visual aids and repeated exposure, serves as a rich source of this input, making complex linguistic concepts more accessible and intuitive.

Furthermore, the interactive nature of social media platforms fosters a collaborative and supportive learning community. Learners can engage with the content through comments, direct messages, and even by creating their own content, which aligns with social constructivist theories of learning (Vygotsky, 1978). This active participation transforms learning from a passive reception of information into an active process of co-construction. The social validation and peer support available in these digital communities can also significantly reduce language learning anxiety, a known barrier to acquisition. When learners feel comfortable and supported, they are more willing to take risks, such as attempting new words or speaking in the target language, which is crucial for skill development. The informal setting also provides a low-stakes environment for practice, allowing learners to experiment with language without the fear of formal assessment. This contributes to a positive emotional connection with the learning process, which, according to research on motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985), is a key driver of sustained engagement. The content's entertaining quality, as noted by participants, taps into intrinsic motivation, making the act of learning feel less like

a chore and more like a leisure activity. This fusion of education and entertainment, often referred to as edutainment, is a powerful pedagogical tool in the digital age.

The integration of social media into education also necessitates a greater emphasis on digital literacy. As Widiastuti (2021) and Setiawan (2021) point out, while digital natives are comfortable with these platforms, they may not be fully equipped to navigate the ethical and privacy challenges that come with them. Therefore, an important aspect of this new educational paradigm is teaching learners to be responsible digital citizens, capable of discerning credible information and protecting their personal data. The proliferation of fake news and misinformation on social media platforms highlights the need for critical thinking skills, which should be a core component of any curriculum that uses these tools. Moreover, while social media provides numerous benefits, it also presents challenges related to screen time, potential for distraction, and the cultivation of an over-reliance on external validation. A balanced approach is therefore essential, one that leverages the strengths of social media while mitigating its drawbacks. This involves a thoughtful integration of digital tools with traditional teaching methods to create a hybrid learning model that is both effective and sustainable. The potential for social media to democratize education is immense, as it allows learners from diverse backgrounds and geographical locations to access high-quality content and connect with a global community of peers. This is particularly relevant in a world where access to formal education is not always equitable. Content creators like Zelina Fahrani, in this context, act as informal educators, using their platforms to fill educational gaps and inspire a love of learning.

The evolving role of social media underscores a fundamental shift in how we perceive and engage with information and knowledge. It is no longer a one-way street, but a dynamic, interactive network where individuals are both consumers and creators of content. This has profound implications for all sectors, from marketing to politics, as businesses and organizations must adapt their strategies to engage with a digitally literate and connected audience. As Bina Darma (2021), Hidayat (2021), and Rahman (2021) observe, social media is now an indispensable tool for brand building, information dissemination, and social campaigns, enabling

unprecedented reach and efficiency. The ability to connect directly with consumers, gather feedback in real-time, and tailor content to specific demographics has revolutionized marketing. Similarly, political movements and social causes can leverage these platforms to mobilize support and raise awareness on a global scale. The personal and psychological dimensions of social media are equally significant. Susanto (2021) and Yulianto (2021) highlight its role in fulfilling a fundamental human need for connection and recognition, fostering a sense of belonging and community. For students, this social dimension is particularly important, as it provides a platform to share experiences, seek support, and build relationships that extend beyond the classroom. The cumulative body of research suggests that social media is not just a passing trend but a transformative force that is reshaping the fabric of society. A deeper understanding of its mechanisms and impact is essential for harnessing its full potential while addressing the complex challenges it presents. This includes a careful examination of its use in specific contexts, such as the case of English language learning, to develop effective pedagogical strategies that can prepare learners for success in an increasingly digital and interconnected world.

### **1. Language Learning Through Digital Platform**

Digital platforms have fundamentally transformed the way language is taught and learned, creating a dynamic and highly personalized educational landscape. This paradigm shift is not merely about moving traditional classroom materials online; it's about harnessing the unique capabilities of digital tools to create richer, more effective learning experiences. The research by Boonyopakorn et al. (2024) provides compelling evidence for this, demonstrating a significant improvement in students' English communication skills after just five weeks of using a digital media platform. This success is rooted in the platform's ability to integrate video and interactive content, which not only encourages a culture of lifelong learning but also nurtures the essential 21st-century skills of digital literacy, collaboration, and critical thinking.

The modern learner is no longer confined to a single learning source. As Lee and Roger (2023) observed, learners now engage with multiple digital

platforms simultaneously, creating a personalized, immersive learning environment. This "cross-platform" approach allows them to coordinate resources from online games, social networks, and media sharing sites, providing a variety of multimodal exercises that enhance the informal language learning experience. The inherent flexibility and accessibility of these platforms are game-changers, empowering learners to tailor their educational journey to their specific needs and preferences. They can learn anytime, anywhere, at a pace that suits them, transforming mundane moments into productive learning opportunities. This is further supported by a study from Alharbi (2021), which found that learners who used mobile applications for vocabulary practice showed significant improvements compared to those who relied solely on traditional methods. This finding highlights the incredible potential of mobile technology to make language learning flexible, engaging, and highly effective.

Moreover, recent studies have delved deeper into the collaborative and interactive aspects of digital platforms. Chen and Hsu (2022) investigated the use of social media platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp for collaborative language learning and discovered that students involved in these activities reported higher levels of motivation and engagement. The social interactions facilitated by these platforms did more than just improve language skills; they fostered a sense of community among learners, making the process of learning less solitary and more enjoyable. Similarly, Trust (2021) underscored the importance of online forums and discussion boards, noting that active participation in these digital conversations allowed learners to practice their writing skills and receive valuable peer feedback. This not only enhanced their language proficiency but also encouraged the development of critical thinking skills as they had to articulate their thoughts clearly and respond to others.

The application of gamification has emerged as another powerful strategy in language education. Research by Gonzalez et al. (2023) showed that incorporating game elements into language learning applications, such as earning points and badges, significantly boosted student motivation and

engagement. These game-like features incentivize active participation and give learners a sense of ownership over their educational journey, turning learning into a rewarding challenge. Beyond simple gamification, the integration of advanced technologies like virtual reality (VR) has shown remarkable promise. A study by Indriani et al. (2024) found that VR environments provided immersive experiences that were particularly effective for enhancing learners' speaking and listening skills. By simulating real-life scenarios, VR technology allows students to practice their language skills in context, leading to improved confidence and proficiency. This is a crucial advantage over traditional methods, as it provides a safe, virtual space for learners to make mistakes and build fluency without the pressure of a real-world audience.

A meta-analysis by Zhang et al. (2023) solidified these findings, concluding that when digital tools are used effectively and aligned with clear pedagogical goals, they can lead to significant improvements in language proficiency. This underscores that technology is not a magic bullet; its success depends on thoughtful implementation. Wang and Vasquez (2022) also contributed to this body of knowledge by investigating the use of YouTube as a language learning resource. They found that learners who engaged with educational videos on the platform demonstrated improved listening comprehension and vocabulary retention. The combination of visual and auditory elements in video content creates a rich, contextual environment for language learning, making it an incredibly effective tool for a wide range of learners. The accessibility of a platform like YouTube means that high-quality, authentic language content is available to anyone with an internet connection, breaking down geographical and socioeconomic barriers to education. This democratizing effect is one of the most significant impacts of digital platforms on language learning.

The holistic view emerging from these studies paints a clear picture: the integration of digital platforms has fundamentally transformed the educational landscape. The flexibility, accessibility, and interactive nature of these tools provide learners with unprecedented opportunities to enhance their language

skills. From mobile apps that make vocabulary practice a part of daily life to social media communities that foster collaboration and support, and advanced technologies like VR that offer immersive, contextual practice, the options are limitless. As research continues to explore the effectiveness of various digital tools, educators must stay informed and adapt their teaching practices. The future of language education lies in a synergistic approach that leverages the best of traditional pedagogy with the immense power and potential of digital technology, creating a learning environment that is more engaging, effective, and empowering than ever before. It's a continuous evolution, but the evidence is clear: digital platforms are no longer just supplementary tools; they are an integral and transformative force in language acquisition.

## **2. Theory of Perception**

Understanding how learners perceive their environment is crucial in the context of language learning, as perception, defined by Robbins (2003) as the process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions to give meaning to their surroundings, profoundly shapes their engagement and outcomes. This concept is particularly relevant when examining how learners interpret the content they encounter on social media platforms, which have become integral to modern language learning, acting as both powerful educational tools and potential distractions. Recent studies have compellingly shown that learners' perceptions of social media significantly influence their engagement and motivation in language learning; for instance, Alharbi (2021) found that students who viewed social media as a supportive and authentic tool for language acquisition reported higher levels of motivation and engagement, actively participating in language-related activities on platforms like Instagram and Facebook, utilizing them to practice their skills and connect with peers in a low-stakes environment, which fosters a sense of community and shared purpose. This positive perception transforms the often-isolating act of language study into a collaborative and social experience, where learners feel validated and encouraged by their peers, and are more likely to invest sustained time and

effort into their studies, as noted by Gonzalez and Garcia (2023) who argue that when students recognize the potential of social media to provide genuine language exposure and opportunities for interaction, their willingness to learn increases exponentially.

Conversely, those who perceive social media primarily as a distraction or a source of misinformation experience decreased motivation and engagement, leading to a less effective learning experience, as highlighted by Chen and Hsu (2022) who found that negative perceptions create a psychological barrier to learning, making it difficult for students to focus on educational content amidst the noise of their personal feeds. The constant stream of short-form, attention-grabbing content can lead to a state of cognitive overload, where the sheer volume and variety of information overwhelm the learner's ability to process and retain linguistic data, a significant concern raised by Indriani et al. (2024) who cautioned that learners struggling to manage their time and attention may become disengaged from their language learning goals entirely.

To navigate this complex digital landscape, educators play a vital and transformative role in guiding students through the complexities of social media, not by banning its use, but by explicitly teaching them how to be discerning consumers of information and active participants in digital communities. Trust (2021) emphasized the paramount importance of fostering digital literacy skills, which are far more comprehensive than simply knowing how to use a platform; they include the ability to critically analyze information, recognize biases, and engage in constructive discussions, all of which are essential competencies for learners to effectively harness the benefits of social media while mitigating its potential distractions. By equipping students with these skills, educators empower them to take ownership of their learning and to view social media not as a passive source of entertainment but as a strategic tool for language acquisition.

Moreover, the very perception of social media can be powerfully shaped by educators' attitudes and approaches to integrating these platforms

into their teaching practices; as Lee and Roger (2023) found, when educators model positive attitudes toward social media as a legitimate learning tool, students are far more likely to adopt similar perceptions, which creates a supportive and unified learning environment that bridges the gap between the formal classroom and the informal digital world. This alignment between educators' and learners' perceptions is key to overcoming the ingrained belief that social media is only for leisure, and it validates the learner's existing digital habits, which can be a powerful motivator. In this light, the educator becomes a crucial mediator, helping learners to filter the vast, unstructured information on social media and to identify the authentic, context-rich content that is most valuable for language development. The authentic language content, often featuring native speakers and real-world scenarios, provides a rich source of genuine language input that is difficult to replicate in a textbook, and when learners perceive this content as both interesting and educationally valuable, it fosters a virtuous cycle of increased motivation, sustained engagement, and improved language proficiency.

The intricate relationship between perception and learning is therefore a central issue in modern language education; learners' perceptions of social media are not static, but are influenced by their personal experiences, their peers, and, most importantly, the guidance they receive from their educators. The challenge for educators is to move beyond viewing social media as merely a source of distraction and to see it as a powerful, albeit complex, educational resource. By fostering positive perceptions and equipping students with the critical thinking skills to navigate its complexities, educators can help learners unlock the full potential of these platforms. As research continues to explore the interplay between perception and language learning, it becomes clear that the future of effective language education lies in a thoughtful, strategic, and proactive approach to integrating digital tools into the curriculum, transforming social media from a potential hindrance into a cornerstone of a dynamic and engaging learning journey.

### **3. Authentic Content in Language Learning**

Authentic content is absolutely essential in language learning, as it provides students with direct access to language as it is used in real-world contexts, moving beyond the often-simplified and artificial language of textbooks. This approach is not a mere preference but a pedagogical necessity, as it fundamentally shifts the learning experience from rote memorization to meaningful application. Goh and Lee (2019) precisely captured this idea, stating that learning from real-life situations can significantly improve students' understanding of language use, an assertion supported by a vast body of research that consistently emphasizes the importance of authentic materials in enhancing language acquisition.

The exposure to authentic content in language learning has been shown to significantly enhance learners' engagement and understanding of the language, acting as a bridge between the classroom and the outside world. Gilmore (2018) emphasized that authentic materials, such as news articles, podcasts, and videos, allow learners to interact with the language as it is genuinely used by native speakers. This is crucial for developing a nuanced understanding of vocabulary and grammar, as learners see how linguistic rules are applied in natural conversation, not just in isolated examples. It also familiarizes them with cultural references and idiomatic expressions that are often absent or oversimplified in traditional textbooks. This deep immersion into the cultural context of a language is a critical component of fluency. For example, understanding a phrase like "break a leg" or a reference to a specific cultural event is impossible without authentic materials. This is further supported by Wang and Vasquez (2022), who found that engaging with authentic video content, like those found on YouTube or other platforms, enhances listening comprehension and vocabulary retention, as learners are exposed to natural speech patterns, different accents, and colloquial language that they would encounter in real-life conversations. Moreover, Chen and Hsu (2022) reported that learners who engaged with authentic materials experienced higher levels of motivation and confidence, as they felt better

prepared to use the language in real-world situations, which in turn reduces the anxiety often associated with speaking a new language.

Beyond individual skills, authentic content facilitates meaningful discussions and encourages students to express their opinions, which can dramatically enhance their speaking and writing abilities. Indriani et al. (2024) noted that when learners engage with authentic materials, they are more likely to participate in conversations and debates because the content itself is interesting and relevant to them. A news story, a documentary, or a song sparks genuine curiosity, leading to more spontaneous and authentic communication. This interactive approach fosters a collaborative learning environment where students can share perspectives and learn from one another, not just from the teacher. They negotiate meaning, clarify misunderstandings, and build fluency together. Furthermore, exposure to diverse perspectives through authentic content promotes cultural awareness and sensitivity among learners. As Byram (1997) highlighted, developing cultural competence is essential for effective communication in a globalized world. Learning a language is not just about words and grammar; it's about understanding the culture that shapes it. Authentic materials provide this cultural context, enabling learners to navigate social interactions with greater ease and confidence, avoiding misunderstandings and building genuine connections.

The role of authentic content is also crucial for building learner autonomy. When students are empowered to find and use their own materials—whether it's a favorite podcaster, a news outlet from a target-language country, or a social media influencer—they take control of their learning journey. This sense of ownership leads to deeper engagement and sustained motivation. This approach is rooted in the principles of constructivism, where learners actively construct their own knowledge by interacting with their environment. Authentic materials provide a rich, real-world environment for this construction to take place. They challenge learners to think critically, solve problems, and make connections between language, culture, and society. The process of deciphering a complex news article or following a fast-paced

podcast develops skills that go far beyond simple language proficiency, such as inferencing, contextual understanding, and critical analysis.

Ultimately, authentic content plays a vital, multifaceted role in language learning. It provides learners with indispensable exposure to real-world language use, which in turn enhances their understanding of vocabulary and grammar in a nuanced way. By moving beyond simplified textbook dialogues, it prepares learners for the unpredictable nature of genuine conversation. The engaging and relevant nature of authentic materials boosts motivation and confidence, making learners more willing to take risks and use the language. It also serves as a powerful tool for fostering critical thinking and promoting cultural awareness, which are both crucial for effective communication in today's interconnected world. By incorporating authentic materials into their language studies, students can effectively bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-life application, ultimately leading to improved language proficiency, greater communication skills, and a deeper appreciation for the target language and its culture. This is the new standard for language education, where the goal is not just to learn a language, but to live it.

## **B. Study of Relevant Research**

Several studies have explored the profound impact of social media on English language learning, highlighting its transformative role in shaping student learning behaviors and engagement. As Abbas (2019) noted, social media plays a crucial part in contributing to sustainable education by changing how students interact with learning materials and their peers. The shift from traditional, top-down instruction to a more collaborative and student-centered approach is made possible by these platforms. However, this evolution is not without its challenges. The informal nature of social media often leads to the use of slang, abbreviations, and non-standard language, which may not be appropriate for formal language learning contexts (Kukulska-Hulme, 2020). Therefore, educators must find effective ways to guide students in using social media constructively, minimizing distractions and

ensuring they are exposed to high-quality, authentic language content. This requires more than just assigning a task; it involves setting clear guidelines for social media use in the classroom and providing practical strategies for managing time and attention. By doing so, teachers can help students filter out the noise and focus on the valuable learning opportunities that these platforms offer.

The role of educators is further emphasized in studies examining specific social media platforms for language learning. For instance, Chen and Chang (2021) explored the use of Facebook groups among university students and found that participation significantly increased their motivation and engagement. The platform provided a dynamic and accessible space for students to share resources, ask questions, and receive timely feedback from both peers and instructors. This created a sense of community and mutual support that is often difficult to replicate in a traditional classroom. Similarly, Wang and Vasquez (2019) examined how students used Twitter for language learning, revealing that those who engaged with language content on the platform demonstrated improved writing skills and vocabulary retention. The low-stakes, public nature of Twitter allowed students to practice their writing and receive immediate feedback from a global audience, which is crucial for language development. This continuous feedback loop encourages learners to refine their skills and gain confidence. According to Hattie and Timperley (2007), feedback is one of the most powerful influences on student learning and achievement, and social media platforms facilitate this process by enabling learners to receive responses to their contributions in real time.

In addition to feedback, social media's appeal is enhanced by its ability to incorporate gamification elements. Features like challenges, badges, and rewards can be integrated to create a more engaging and motivating learning environment. This approach taps into students' natural competitive instincts, encouraging them to actively participate and persist in their language studies. Beyond the student experience, these platforms have also become invaluable tools for educators themselves. Platforms like Twitter and LinkedIn provide rich opportunities for teachers to connect with colleagues, share best practices, and access a vast wealth

of educational resources. As Trust (2016) highlighted, social media can facilitate the formation of professional learning communities, fostering collaboration and innovation among educators across different institutions and geographical boundaries. This ongoing professional development is essential for keeping teaching practices relevant and effective in a rapidly changing technological landscape.

Moreover, the integration of advanced technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) on social media platforms is poised to revolutionize language learning even further. AI-driven tools can analyze learners' interactions and performance, offering customized content and personalized feedback that significantly enhance language acquisition (Zhang et al., 2021). An AI-powered chatbot, for example, could provide conversational practice and immediate corrections, while a content recommendation algorithm could suggest videos or articles tailored to a student's specific interests and proficiency level. Research by Chen and Hsu (2020) indicates that learners who engage with language content on social media are more likely to adopt effective learning strategies, such as self-regulation and goal-setting. The interactive and self-directed nature of social media encourages learners to take ownership of their learning, leading to more proactive and autonomous engagement with language materials. This shift toward learner autonomy is a cornerstone of modern educational theory, and social media platforms are a primary vehicle for its implementation.

The transformative power of social media in language education is undeniable. It has moved beyond a simple communication tool to become a complex and dynamic learning environment. However, its effectiveness is not guaranteed; it is heavily dependent on how it is perceived and managed. Without proper guidance from educators, the potential for distraction, misinformation, and exposure to low-quality language is significant. Therefore, the future of this integration lies in a balanced approach that leverages the social, interactive, and authentic aspects of these platforms while mitigating their inherent risks. By actively curating content, establishing clear behavioral norms, and teaching

students to be digitally literate, educators can harness the immense potential of social media to create a learning experience that is not only effective but also highly engaging and relevant to the lives of 21st-century learners. This symbiotic relationship between technology and pedagogy is the key to unlocking new levels of language proficiency and fostering a love for lifelong learning.