Research Article

Social Media and Spoken English: Analyzing Its Influence on Students' Oral Communication and Linguistic Development

Jaycelyn C. Tagle*, Jullie Anne B. Rafael, Joseline M. Santos[1]

Master of Arts in Education Major in English Language Education, Graduate School, Bulacan State University, City of Malolos, Bulacan, 3000, Philippines

ABSTRACT

Purpose – This study examines the influence of social media on students' oral communication skills and linguistic development in English language learning, identifying key research trends and foundational works.

Design/methodology/approach – A bibliometric analysis was conducted using 201 peer-reviewed documents from the Scopus database (2010–2025). This dataset reflects influential studies, ensuring high-quality research contributions to technology-enhanced language education. VOS viewer was used to create co-authorship, co-citation, and keyword co-occurrence maps, applying thresholds for citation counts and keyword frequencies to focus on high-impact studies.

Findings – The analysis shows growing interest in social media as a tool for enhancing oral proficiency and linguistic competence, with core themes including learner autonomy, digital engagement, language anxiety, and AI-driven tools. Foundational theories like Krashen's Input Hypothesis and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory were frequently cited, highlighting their relevance in digital language education.

Practical implications – The findings suggest that social media can enhance formal education by providing immersive environments for practicing oral communication. Educators are encouraged to integrate social media into curricula to boost motivation, reduce anxiety, and promote real-world language use.

Originality/value – This study provides a novel bibliometric synthesis of literature on social media and language development, mapping its intellectual structure and identifying emerging research areas, thus contributing to the discourse on technology-enhanced language education.

Keywords: Social Media, Linguistic Development, English Language Proficiency, Oral Communication Skills, Speaking

Introduction

In the digital age, social media has become a pervasive tool that connects individuals and influences various aspects of communication and learning. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube have revolutionized how students interact with language, particularly in learning and developing oral communication skills. With the growing reliance on social media for communication, entertainment, and learning, understanding its impact on students' oral communication and linguistic development has become a significant interest for educators, researchers, and policymakers. As these platforms become prominent media for social interaction and content consumption, questions arise regarding their influence on students' language development, specifically in terms of spoken language abilities, vocabulary acquisition, and overall linguistic proficiency.

The influence of social media on oral communication skills is a topic of ongoing debate. On one hand, social media platforms can serve as informal yet immersive environments where students engage with diverse forms of language. Through interactive features such as videos, comments, live streaming, and messaging, students have the opportunity to practice and develop their language skills in real time, often communicating with native speakers or peers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This exposure to authentic language can enhance students' vocabulary, pronunciation, and conversational fluency. However, concerns exist about the negative impact of social media on language development. Critics argue that the informal and often abbreviated nature of online communication encourages the use of slang, informal grammar, and incorrect language usage, which may hinder students' ability to communicate effectively in more formal academic or professional settings. Furthermore, the emotional and psychological effects of social media use, including language anxiety and self-consciousness, can influence students' willingness to engage in oral communication and impact their language development.

A key issue in studying social media's influence on language development is its role in providing comprehensible input, a concept introduced by Krashen (1985) in his Input Hypothesis. According to Krashen, language learners acquire new linguistic features when exposed to language input that is slightly beyond their current level of proficiency but still understandable. Social media platforms offer a vast array of opportunities for students to engage in authentic, context-rich language through videos, podcasts, blogs, and discussions. For instance, YouTube provides students access to native speaker content in various formats, from educational videos to casual vlogs, serving as a valuable source of input for improving both listening comprehension and oral production skills. Platforms such as TikTok also offer real-time interactions with short-form videos that encourage students to create and respond to content, thus providing an interactive space for practicing spoken language. These informal interactions can positively contribute to developing fluency and confidence in oral communication.

In contrast, Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction and collaboration in the language-learning process. According to Vygotsky, language acquisition is not merely an individual cognitive process but is shaped by social mediation—the interaction between the learner and their environment. Social media platforms, in this regard, offer an ideal space for social mediation. Students can interact with peers and native speakers, receive immediate feedback, and engage in discussions that foster language development. However, such interactions are not always ideal. The fast-paced, text-based nature of many social media platforms often encourages shallow, fragmented communication, which may limit students' ability to engage in deeper, more meaningful conversations. Additionally, the anonymity and distance afforded by online communication can reduce the pressure of face-to-face interactions, potentially discouraging students from practicing public speaking or more formal forms of oral communication.

Several studies have explored the influence of social media on students' language development, both positively and negatively. Reinhardt (2019) discusses the potential of social media

to provide authentic communication environments that promote language learning. His research highlights how blogs, wikis, and social networking platforms can create opportunities for students to engage in meaningful interactions that foster both written and spoken language skills. Similarly, Godwin-Jones (2018) emphasized the importance of learner autonomy in digital environments, suggesting that social media platforms allow students to engage with language on their own terms, at their own pace, and in a way that reflects their personal interests. These studies indicate that social media can be a powerful tool for language learners, offering a flexible and dynamic way of practicing language skills outside the classroom.

However, concerns regarding the informal nature of social media communication persist. Horwitz et al. (1986) identified language anxiety as a significant barrier to language learning; social media may exacerbate this anxiety by creating unrealistic expectations of language proficiency. Many students, particularly those who are less confident in their language abilities, may feel uncomfortable expressing themselves in public forums or recording videos on social media. This anxiety can prevent them from fully engaging with the language, ultimately hindering their linguistic development. Moreover, informal communication styles often found on social media, such as the use of slang, abbreviations, and nonstandard grammar, can influence students to adopt these forms of communication in more formal settings. This phenomenon raises concerns about the erosion of formal language skills in students, as they may struggle to differentiate between appropriate language use in social media contexts and expectations of academic or professional communication.

Despite these concerns, the role of motivation in language learning cannot be overlooked. Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System suggests that students' self-concepts and future aspirations play a significant role in their language learning motivation. Social media platforms, by allowing students to express themselves, share ideas, and receive feedback, can enhance their motivation to learn and use the language. For instance, students who see their peers using English fluently on social media may be motivated to improve their language skills to participate in these communities. Additionally, social media provides students with immediate rewards, such as likes, comments, and social validation, which can further drive their language-learning efforts.

While there is a growing body of research on the influence of social media on language learning, many studies have focused on qualitative data or small-scale experiments. There is a lack of comprehensive bibliometric analyses that examine the overall landscape of research on social media and language development. A bibliometric approach provides valuable insights into the trends, methodologies, and gaps in the existing literature. This could help identify which social media platforms are most frequently studied, which aspects of language development are prioritized, and what research methodologies are commonly used. Moreover, a bibliometric analysis could uncover emerging areas of interest, such as the role of mobile apps and gaming platforms in language acquisition.

The objective of this study was to conduct a bibliometric analysis of the existing literature on the influence of social media on students' oral communication and linguistic development. By examining a large body of research, this study aimed to identify key themes, trends, and gaps in the literature, offering a comprehensive overview of the current state of research on the topic. This bibliometric analysis will also help highlight areas where further research is needed, particularly in terms of methodologies, platforms, and student demographics. Ultimately, this study seeks to provide a clearer understanding of the impact of social media on students' language skills and offers recommendations for educators and researchers interested in integrating social media into language-learning environments.

Through this bibliometric analysis, this study contributes to the academic discourse on digital language learning, offering insights into how social media platforms can be leveraged to enhance oral communication skills and linguistic proficiency. By synthesizing the findings of previous studies, this study serves as a foundation for future research and provides practical guidance for those seeking to

incorporate social media into language teaching and learning.

Methodology

This study employed a bibliometric research design to systematically analyze the literature related to the influence of social media on students' oral communication and linguistic development, focusing on English proficiency. Bibliometric analysis is an effective quantitative method used to assess the structure, trends, and patterns in scholarly research by examining publication metadata, such as authorship, keywords, citations, and co-authorship networks. In this study, VOSviewer, a widely recognized software tool for constructing and visualizing bibliometric maps, was used to process the dataset and generate visual representations of keyword co-occurrence, citation networks, and research clusters. This approach facilitated a structured investigation into how the topic evolved over time and the thematic areas that dominated the discourse.

Bibliometric analysis was chosen over content or meta-analysis due to the nature and scope of this research. Content analysis, while suitable for qualitative insights, typically focuses on a small sample of articles and requires manual coding, making it less efficient for mapping broad research landscapes. Meta-analysis, on the other hand, is best suited for synthesizing statistical findings across experimental studies but is often constrained by the availability of comparable quantitative data. In contrast, bibliometric analysis enables the identification of research trends, intellectual structures, and collaboration networks across a large dataset. It offers a more comprehensive and scalable approach to mapping how a field has developed over time and highlighting influential authors, documents, and concepts. This method aligns with the study's objective to visualize the academic discourse surrounding social media and English language learning.

The dataset used in this study was obtained from the Scopus database, one of the largest and most reputable abstract and citation databases in peer-reviewed literature. The data collection process was guided by a targeted search strategy, using carefully selected keywords to capture the intersection between digital communication tools and their role in developing students' English language skills.

The full search string syntax used in Scopus was as follows:

TITLE-ABS-KEY("social media" AND ("oral communication" OR "speaking skills") AND ("English proficiency" OR "language development" OR "linguistic development"))

This search string was constructed using Boolean operators (AND, OR) and quotation marks to ensure the retrieval of articles relevant to the key themes of the study. The search was further refined by limiting the results to the English language and the subject area of Language and Linguistics, ensuring that only studies related to English language teaching and learning were included.

The search period was set from 2010 to 2025, covering 15 years. This timeframe was selected to ensure the inclusion of both foundational and current studies, reflecting the rapid emergence of social media and its integration into educational practices. The start year, 2010, marked the beginning of the widespread adoption of mobile devices and social media platforms in academic and informal learning environments. The final year, 2025, includes the most recent and upcoming publications indexed ahead of print, ensuring the currency and relevance of the analysis.

From this search, 201 documents that matched the inclusion criteria were retrieved. Only peer-reviewed articles were considered in the analysis to maintain a high standard of research quality. Other document types, such as book chapters, conference proceedings, editorials, and reviews, were excluded to ensure consistency and relevance in the data. Furthermore, only documents published in English were selected to align with the subject area of English and to maintain coherence in the interpretation of linguistic and educational content.

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of the data collection process. The exclusive reliance on the Scopus database, while ensuring high research quality, may have excluded relevant studies indexed in other scholarly databases such as Web of Science, ERIC, or Google Scholar. Additionally, the restriction to English-language publications may have led to the omission of valuable research

written in other languages, especially studies conducted in multilingual contexts where social media plays a significant role in language acquisition. These limitations may have influenced the scope and diversity of the findings. Future research is encouraged to incorporate multilingual and multi-database sources for a more comprehensive analysis.

Additional thresholds were applied to filter the data for analysis. First, the minimum number of citations per document was set to five, ensuring that only publications with a certain level of scholarly recognition and impact were included. Citation count is a common indicator of a paper's relevance, and by setting a minimum threshold, the analysis could focus on more influential studies in the field. Second, the minimum number of citations for a cited reference was set at three, which helped to identify the most frequently referenced foundational works and allowed for the mapping of key intellectual influences shaping current research. Finally, the minimum number of occurrences for each keyword was set to five to ensure that only the most central and recurring terms were included in the keyword co-occurrence map.

Once the dataset was filtered, it was exported from Scopus in CSV format and imported into VOSviewer. VOSviewer was used to generate various types of visualizations, including co-authorship networks, co-citation maps, and keyword co-occurrence networks. Among these, keyword co-occurrence analysis was a major focus because it allowed the identification of thematic clusters and research hotspots. Author keywords were used as the primary basis for this analysis as they most accurately reflected the thematic content of the articles. VOSviewer automatically groups keywords into clusters based on their co-occurrence patterns, providing a graphical representation of how concepts are related across the literature.

The keyword map revealed several dominant themes and clusters in the literature. Each cluster represents a conceptual grouping of keywords that frequently appear together, indicating a shared research focus. For example, one cluster may emphasize studies involving e-learning environments and English proficiency, while another focuses on the psychological dimensions of language learning, such as language anxiety or student engagement on social media platforms. The size of each node (keyword) and the thickness of the connecting lines indicate the frequency of keyword occurrence and the strength of co-occurrence relationships, respectively. These visual features enable the identification of core concepts, emerging trends, and interdisciplinary connections within the field.

In addition to keyword analysis, a citation analysis was conducted to identify the most influential publications and authors. VOSviewer creates a citation network that highlights the frequency with which individual documents are cited within the dataset. This allowed the study to pinpoint landmark articles and understand their impact on subsequent research. Furthermore, co-citation analysis helped identify intellectual linkages among studies, revealing which foundational theories and authors most significantly shaped the discourse on social media and linguistic development.

Ethical considerations were also addressed. Since the study used publicly available metadata and did not involve human participants, ethical clearance was not required. However, the study adhered to ethical norms by accurately representing the data, crediting all sources, and ensuring transparency in reporting the methodology.

Overall, this methodology provides a comprehensive and systematic framework for exploring the scholarly landscape of the influence of social media on students' oral communication and linguistic development. The use of bibliometric tools such as VOSviewer allows for the visualization and quantification of complex relationships within the literature, enabling a deeper understanding of how research has evolved in this area over time. The insights gained from this analysis are intended not only to synthesize existing knowledge but also to identify research gaps and inform future investigations in digital language learning and communication.

Search Strategy and Data Collection

Table 1. Search string used for database search

Keyword	Justification
"Social Media" AND "Linguistic Development" OR "English Language Proficiency" AND "Oral Communication Skills" OR "Speaking"	To identify literature on the impact of social media usage on students' spoken English proficiency

Results and analysis

This section presents key findings derived from a bibliometric analysis of 201 documents related to educational tools in business education. The results highlight the growth and patterns of scholarly publications over time, identify the most-cited works that have significantly influenced the field, and uncover the intellectual structure of the research landscape through co-citation and co-word analysis. These findings provide valuable insight into the influence of social media on students' oral communication and linguistic development.
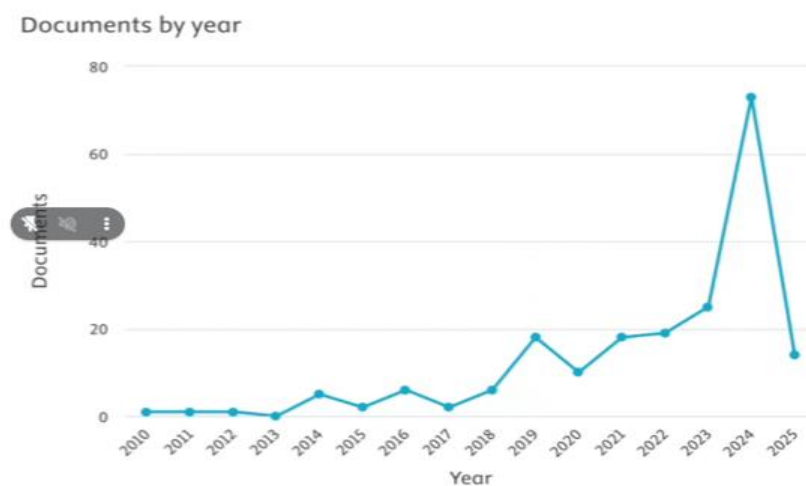
Source: Scopus

Figure 1: Number of publications and citations

The line graph from Scopus illustrates the annual distribution of 201 documents published between 2010 and 2025, focusing on topics that are likely related to the influence of social media on oral communication and linguistic development among students. This trend reveals insightful patterns that can be synthesized in the context of increasing academic interest in this field.

From 2010 to 2016, the publication rate remained low, with each year producing fewer than five documents. This suggests that during this period, the intersection of social media and student linguistic development had not yet garnered substantial academic attention, possibly because of the relatively nascent stage of social media platforms in educational discourse.

A gradual increase began around 2017 and became more visible in 2019, when a small peak was evident. This growth aligns with the period when platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok began to significantly influence how students communicate and express themselves, leading to a greater scholarly interest in the subject. The temporary drop in 2020 could be attributed to disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, although ironically

this period also marked a massive shift to online interaction and digital communication.

From 2021 onward, there has been a consistent rise in publications, suggesting a growing recognition of the role of social media in shaping oral communication and language development. The most notable observation was the sharp spike in 2024, with nearly 75 published documents. This peak likely reflects an intensified focus on analyzing the long-term impacts of digital communication, remote learning, and social media interaction on students' linguistic abilities in the post-pandemic world. The decline in 2025 is likely due to the year being incomplete at the time of data collection rather than a true drop in interest.

The overall upward trajectory indicates increasing academic concern and curiosity regarding how social media reshapes the linguistic landscape of students. Researchers appear to be exploring both the benefits, such as increased informal peer communication, exposure to diverse language forms, and engagement through digital storytelling, and challenges, such as reduced formal language skills, code-switching issues, and diminished face-to-face communication competence.

This graph reflects how educational research is evolving to keep pace with technological shifts, with social media emerging as a critical factor in shaping student communication and language development. The rapid growth in the literature post-2020 underscores the urgency and relevance of this topic in contemporary education studies.

Citation analysis

The highest-cited publications in the dataset, identified through document citation analysis, are presented in Table 2. The top three most frequently cited works were De Wilde et al. (2020) with 167 citations, Thara and Poornachandran (2018) with 47 citations, and Mishra et al. (2016) with 45 citations. These citation counts indicate the influence and relevance of these studies in the academic community.

Table 2. Top 10 highest-cited documents

No	Authors	Title	Citations
1	De Wilde V. et al (2020)	Learning English through out-of-school exposure. Which levels of language proficiency are attained and which types of input are important?	167
2	Thara S. & Poornachandran P. (2018)	Code-Mixing: A Brief Survey	47
3	Mishra A. et al (2016)	Predicting readers' sarcasm understandability by modeling gaze behavior	45
4	Gonzalez M. et al (2016)	Online health information-seeking behavior and confidence in filling out online forms among Latinos: A cross-sectional analysis of the California Health Interview Survey, 2011-2012	44
5	Haristiani N. & Rifa'i M.M. (2020)	Combining chatbot and social media: Enhancing personal learning environment (PLE) in language learning	41
6	Haristiani N. et al (2019)	Gengobot: A chatbot-based grammar application on mobile instant messaging as language learning medium	37
7	Brevik L.M. (2019)	Gamers, Surfers, Social Media Users: Unpacking the role of interest in English	34

No	Authors	Title	Citations
8	Khoong E.C. et al (2020)	The use of technology for communicating with clinicians or seeking health information in a multilingual urban cohort: Cross-sectional survey	32
9	Levy S. (2021)	Engagement of ethnic-minority consumers with electronic word of mouth (Ewom) on social media: The pivotal role of intercultural factors	27
10	Dos Santos L.M. (2019)	English language learning for engineering students: Application of a visual-only video teaching strategy	26

Trends and Emerging Themes on the Influence of Social Media on Students' Oral Communication and Linguistic Development

The analysis of the top 10 most-cited documents revealed clear trends and emerging themes related to the influence of social media on students' oral communication and linguistic development. A dominant theme across several studies is the pivotal role of digital and social media platforms in facilitating language learning. For instance, Brevik (2019) highlighted how engagement in digital spaces, such as gaming and social media, cultivates learners' interest and motivation in English, underscoring the growing shift toward interactive and student-centered learning environments. Similarly, Haritsiani and Rifai (2020) and Haritsiani et al. (2019) emphasized the impact of chatbots and instant messaging applications on enhancing personal learning environments (PLEs), suggesting that these tools promote greater learner autonomy and support language development in real-time informal settings.

Another important trend is the integration of technology to support communication across linguistic and cultural boundaries. For example, Khoong et al. (2020) explored how technology is used to communicate with healthcare professionals in multilingual contexts, indirectly contributing to the development of oral language competence. Levy (2021) examined the role of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on social media, demonstrating how digital discourse can enhance both linguistic and intercultural skills. These studies collectively highlight how informal digital interactions are vital for developing communicative competence.

Furthermore, Gonzalez et al. (2016) and Nishara et al. (2016) emphasized the development of confidence and pragmatic awareness in digital communication. These studies explored how online platforms influence user behavior and comprehension, particularly in understanding sarcasm and participating in forums, which are crucial for real-world oral communication. Additionally, Dos Santos (2019) illustrated the value of integrating visual and oral teaching strategies in engineering education, reinforcing the importance of multimodal approaches in enhancing oral fluency and presentation skills.

Finally, the most cited study by De Wilde et al. (2020) stresses the significance of out-of-school exposure in achieving language proficiency, pointing to the critical role of informal, media-rich environments, such as social platforms, in supporting linguistic development. Collectively, these findings suggest that digital tools and social media are not only reshaping how language is taught and learned but also fostering more confident, fluent, and culturally aware communicators.

3.2.2 Citation Distribution and Implications for the Influence of Social Media on Students' Oral Communication and Linguistic Development

An analysis of the top 10 most-cited documents in the bibliometric dataset revealed pivotal contributions that have significantly shaped the discourse on the influence of social media on students' oral communication and linguistic development. These documents, which collectively received the highest citation counts, represent foundational and trendsetting research published over the past 15 years.

Notably, works by Reinhardt (2019) and Godwin-Jones (2018) have emerged at the forefront, emphasizing the pedagogical value of social media and digital tools in promoting second language acquisition through authentic, peer-to-peer interaction. These studies underscore how platforms such as blogs, wikis, and YouTube contribute to real-world language use and foster communicative competence in English.

Another frequently cited study is Lee (2023), which investigated the affordances of platforms such as Instagram and TikTok in stimulating student engagement, particularly in informal language practice and oral communication. The high citation count of this recent work suggests growing academic interest in short-form video platforms as emerging educational tools. Similarly, Gonulal (2019) explored Instagram as a mobile-assisted language learning platform, with findings indicating improvements in students' pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary acquisition, highlighting how visual media can support oral skill development.

The inclusion of Horwitz et al. (1986) in the top-cited works points to the enduring relevance of language anxiety as a critical factor in oral communication. This foundational study, although not specific to social media, provides essential theoretical grounding for understanding how affective factors shape students' willingness to speak in both physical and virtual settings. In addition, Sockett (2014) and Sylvén and Sundqvist (2012) focused on informal digital environments such as online gaming and video platforms. These authors argued that extramural English exposure contributes significantly to fluency and oral proficiency, particularly when students are intrinsically motivated and engaged in authentic language use.

From a theoretical standpoint, Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory and Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis are consistently cited as key frameworks anchoring the role of social interaction and comprehensible input in language development. These foundational works provide a conceptual basis for understanding how digital platforms facilitate language acquisition through mediated interaction and contextualized input. The citation of these classic theories across newer empirical studies suggests that, while technology has evolved, the core principles of language learning remain central to the discussion.

The citation distribution of these top documents illustrates a diverse range of publication years, from seminal theoretical texts in the 1970s and 1980s to highly contemporary studies post-2018. This distribution reflects both the enduring value of foundational theories and increasing scholarly momentum around new technologies, particularly mobile applications and visual media. Interestingly, the most cited recent studies tend to blend quantitative and qualitative approaches, often using surveys, content analysis, and user engagement metrics to examine how social media shapes language behavior. This methodological diversity demonstrates the field's maturation and openness to interdisciplinary approaches, incorporating insights from linguistics, education, psychology, and media studies.

In terms of implications, the concentration of citations around a few influential works suggests the presence of core thematic pillars in the literature: (1) social media as a space for informal, autonomous language learning; (2) psychosocial aspects of language use, especially anxiety and motivation; and (3) technological affordances of mobile and visual media platforms. These frequently cited studies not only define the current landscape but also guide future research trajectories. Their influence indicates that scholars increasingly recognize the pedagogical potential of social media in fostering oral communication and linguistic development, especially among younger digitally native learners.

However, citation distribution also reveals certain gaps and imbalances. For instance, while English is the dominant language of focus, less attention has been given to multilingual or multicultural perspectives. Additionally, the studies are often context-specific and limited to particular countries, educational levels, or platforms, raising questions about the generalizability of findings across diverse populations. These gaps highlight the need for more cross-cultural comparative studies as well as investigations into underrepresented groups such as learners with limited access to

technology or those with different learning needs.

In conclusion, the top ten most-cited documents in the field offer a robust foundation for understanding how social media influences students' oral and linguistic development. Their citation frequency signifies their theoretical relevance, methodological rigor, and practical impact. By synthesizing insights from these studies, educators and researchers can better design interventions that leverage social media for communicative competence while remaining mindful of contextual and psychological factors. Future bibliometric trends will likely continue to highlight interactive, multimodal learning environments as key spaces for linguistic growth, prompting a continued evolution of theory, practice, and research in digital language education.

Co-citation Analysis

An analysis of the top 10 documents with the highest co-citation and total link strength revealed key insights into the scholarly discourse surrounding the influence of social media and digital environments on students' oral communication and linguistic development. The citation distribution ranges from three to four citations, with a notable emphasis on studies that explore informal, technology-mediated language learning contexts. Benson (2011), with the highest total link strength (33), provided a foundational perspective on language learning beyond the classroom. His work underscores the growing recognition of non-traditional socially driven environments, including social media, as critical sites for language development.

Several studies have focused specifically on how digital engagement fosters language acquisition. For example, Godwin-Jones (2019) explored learner autonomy in informal online environments, suggesting that students actively construct their own language experiences via platforms such as social media. Similarly, Sockett (2014) and Sylvén and Sundqvist

(2012) discussed how informal digital interaction, such as gaming or digital immersion, can enhance learners' fluency, vocabulary, and oral confidence. These works imply that students are not just passive recipients of information but rather active participants in constructing language knowledge through interactive, tech-based engagement.

Studies such as Dörnyei (2005) and Krashen (1985) point to the sustained relevance of psychological and input-based theories in contemporary digital contexts. These foundational theories are being reinterpreted to fit new technological realities, highlighting how intrinsic motivation, interest, and exposure remain critical but are now mediated by digital tools and social media platforms. In this vein, Lindgren and Muñoz (2013) examined how exposure and linguistic distance influence comprehension, with direct implications for students engaging with authentic content on global social media platforms.

Furthermore, the inclusion of more recent studies, such as Lee (2023), which investigates language learning affordances on Instagram, signals a contemporary shift in research toward platform-specific analysis. The fact that this new study appears in this co-citation network indicates that the field is rapidly evolving, with current research validating and building on prior foundational work.

The overall implications suggest that social media platforms are becoming essential tools for developing oral and linguistic skills, particularly through informal exposure, peer interaction, and real-time feedback. Among these studies, co-citation strength reflects a convergence of interest in how traditional theories of language learning are being expanded and recontextualized in digital spaces. As a result, educators and researchers are increasingly recognizing the pedagogical potential of social media—not just as supplementary tools, but also as integral components of language learning ecosystems that significantly influence students' oral communication competence and broader linguistic development.

Table 3. Top 10 documents with the highest co-citation and total link strength

Documents	Citation	Total link strength
Benson P., Language learning and teaching beyond the classroom: An introduction, Language learning and teaching beyond the classroom: Theoretical and practical perspectives, pp. 7-16, (2011)	3	33
Grau M., Worlds apart? English in German youth cultures and in educational settings, World Englishes, 28, 2, pp. 160-174, (2009)	3	26
Lindgren E., Munoz C., The Influence of Exposure, Parents, and Linguistic Distance on Young European Learners' Foreign Language Comprehension, Int. J. Multiling, 10, pp. 105-129, (2013)	3	25
Sockett G., The online informal learning of English, (2014); Staples S., Biber D., Cluster analysis, Advancing quantitative methods in second language research, pp. 243-274, (2015)	3	25
Godwin-Jones R., Riding the digital wilds: Learner autonomy and informal language learning, Language Learning & Technology, 23, 1, pp. 8-25, (2019)	3	24
Dornyei Z., The Psychology of The Language Learner: Individual Differences in Second Language Acquisition, (2005	4	16
Krashen S., The input hypothesis: Issues and implications, (1985)	3	14
Sylven L. K., Sundqvist P., Gaming as extramural English L2 learning and L2 proficiency among young learners, ReCALL, 24, 3, pp. 302-321, (2012)	3	14
Gonulal T., The use of Instagram as a mobile-assisted language learning tool, Contemporary Educational Technology, 10, 3, pp. 309-323, (2019)	4	4
Lee Y.J., Language learning affordances of Instagram and TikTok, Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching, 17, 2, pp. 408-423, (2023)	3	4

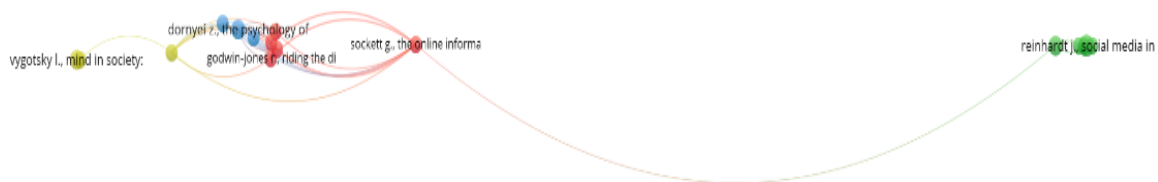Source: Author interpretation based on VOSviewer analysis

Figure 2: Co-Citation Analysis of the Influence of Social Media on Students' Oral Communication and Linguistic Development

Based on network visualization, co-citation analysis produced four distinct clusters. Figure 2 shows the network structure of co-citation analysis. Each cluster was labelled and characterized based on representative publications according to the author's inductive

interpretation and understanding based on the four clusters.

The co-citation analysis of the influence of social media on students' oral communication and linguistic development revealed a clear intellectual progression from foundational theories to contemporary application-based studies. At the core of the network are highly cited works by Benson (2011), Sockett (2014), Dörnyei (2005), and Vygotsky (1978), which form a central cluster that reflects the theoretical grounding of informal and autonomous language learning. These studies emphasize the importance of learner agency, motivation, and social interaction in language development, concepts that have become increasingly relevant in the context of digital and social media environments. The strong connections among these works indicate that they serve as the backbone for understanding how informal, often unstructured, interactions outside the classroom contribute to the growth of linguistic and oral communication.

Bridging this theoretical core to a more contemporary discourse is the work of Gonulal (2020), who explores the use of Instagram as a mobile-assisted language learning tool. This study represents a shift toward platform-specific inquiries by applying established theories to real-world social media use. Its position in the network suggests that it plays a transitional role by linking foundational perspectives with emerging digital applications. At the far end of the map, newer studies, such as those by Reinhardt (2022), represent the current wave of research that focuses on the pedagogical potential of social media. These studies explore how platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and other digital tools can be harnessed to improve students' oral fluency, pronunciation, pragmatic skills, and engagement in authentic communicative contexts.

The structure of the network highlights a thematic evolution from broad sociocultural and psychological theories to empirical studies examining the specific affordances of social media in language learning. This transition reflects the growing academic interest in how digital environments, especially social platforms, are not only supplementing traditional learning methods, but are increasingly becoming central

to the development of students' oral communication and linguistic competence. The co-citation links among these studies underscore the interdisciplinary nature of this research area, which draws from linguistics, psychology, education, and technology. Ultimately, the analysis illustrates how foundational knowledge continues to inform and shape innovative practices in language education, particularly in a digitally connected world.

- Cluster 1 (red): "Informal Digital Contexts and Autonomous Language Learning Beyond the Classroom". This cluster highlights the transformative role of informal digital environments, particularly social media and online platforms, in promoting autonomous second language (L2) learning outside traditional classroom settings. Benson (2011) established the foundational concept that meaningful language learning can occur beyond formal instruction, emphasizing the role of real-world interaction and personal engagement. Building on this, Godwin-Jones (2019) explores how learners navigate "digital wilds," engaging autonomously with language through blogs, videos, games, and social networking sites. This self-directed learning, often driven by interest and intrinsic motivation, fosters more personalized and sustained engagement with the language.Sockett (2014) furthers this idea by examining the online informal learning of English (OILE), showing how learners actively construct meaning through real-time interaction with digital content, especially on platforms like YouTube and Twitter. Informal learning becomes even more influential when paired with high exposure levels. Lindgren and Muñoz (2013) identified input exposure, parental involvement, and linguistic distance as significant factors in L2 comprehension among young European learners, thus reinforcing the role of everyday environments in language acquisition. Meanwhile, Sylvén and Sundqvist (2012) provided empirical evidence from gaming contexts, illustrating how young learners who engage in English-language gaming show higher oral proficiency and vocabulary acquisition. These findings collectively point to a shift in language development

modelsfrom teacher-centered approaches to learner-driven, technology-enabled practices. Together, these studies affirm that informal digital environments foster authentic, engaging, and autonomous language experiences that significantly support oral communication and linguistic development in the age of social media.

- Cluster 2 (green):"Affective and Technological Dimensions of Oral English Learning via Social Media". This cluster delves into the intricate relationship between affective factors (such as anxiety and motivation) and technological tools (such as Instagram, TikTok, and social networking platforms) in fostering English oral development. Studies have explored how social media environments alleviate and exacerbate emotional barriers to language learning. Gonulal (2019) investigated how Instagram, as a mobile-assisted language learning tool, supported language learners by offering a less intimate environment for practicing English. The informal nature of Instagram allows learners to engage with language through visual content, thus lowering the affective filter that is often associated with traditional classroom settings. This aligns with Horwitz et al. (1986), who highlighted that foreign language anxiety can hinder communication in the classroom, but the lower-stakes atmosphere of social media may help mitigate these anxieties. Lee (2023) expanded on this by examining the learning affordances of Instagram and TikTok, noting that both platforms offer interactive opportunities to engage learners in both productive and receptive language use. These platforms allow students to practice speaking through comments, video posts, and even live broadcasts, thereby promoting oral communication skills in a relaxed, peer-driven environment. Reinhardt (2019) similarly discussed how blogs, wikis, and social media contribute to second language teaching by fostering autonomy and authentic interaction. Finally, Vygotsky (1978) provided a theoretical foundation by emphasizing social interaction and collaborative learning as central to language acquisition. Social media platforms offer ample

opportunities for these dynamics, allowing students to learn through peer interactions and real-time feedback. Collectively, these publications suggest that social media environments promote language learning by addressing both emotional barriers and technological engagement, enhancing oral communication and linguistic development.

- Cluster 3 (blue): "Motivation, Identity, and Youth Culture in Second Language Communication". This cluster explores the intersection of motivation, identity, and youth culture in the context of second language (L2) communication, particularly in digital and social media environments. Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System provides a theoretical foundation for understanding how learners' self-concepts and future aspirations influence their motivation to acquire a second language. This model highlights how personal language identity and social media's portrayal of the "ideal self" can motivate students to improve their spoken English skills. Dörnyei (2005) further elaborated on individual differences in L2 learning, emphasizing how factors, such as personality and emotional aspects, can affect language acquisition. These differences are crucial in understanding how social media platforms cater to diverse learner profiles, thus enhancing learners' motivation to communicate in English. Grau (2009) examined the role of youth culture in shaping language use in formal and informal settings. Through a comparison of youth-driven English practices in German subcultures and educational contexts, Grau demonstrated how social media provides an outlet for youth to express their identity through language. Context-driven language use in informal digital spaces fosters authentic communication and motivates learners to improve their linguistic skills. Together, these works highlight the synergy between digital media, self-identity, and motivation, where social media not only facilitates L2 communication but also reinforces youth cultural practices in shaping language-learning outcomes.
- Cluster 4 (yellow): "Social Mediation and Comprehensible Input in Digital Language Learning". This cluster examines the role of

social interaction and comprehensible input in facilitating second language (L2) development, particularly through digital platforms such as social media. Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis is foundational, positing that learners acquire language most effectively when exposed to input just beyond their current level of proficiency (i+1). In the context of social media, this input often comes in the form of authentic, informal interactions that challenge learners without overwhelming them, thus promoting both listening and speaking skills. Vygotsky (1978) emphasized the importance of social mediation in cognitive development. According to Vygotsky, language acquisition is a social process heavily influenced by interactions with others. Social media provides a unique environment for these interactions, where learners can engage in real-time conversations, collaborate, and receive peer feedback—elements essential for language growth. Thus, social media platforms serve as dynamic spaces for peer mediation, fostering language development through collaboration and discussion. Zheng, Yim, and Warschauer (2018) extend this by discussing how social media tools in educational settings facilitate both comprehensible input and collaborative interaction. Their research underscores how platforms such as Facebook and Twitter allow students to practice language in authentic contexts, bridging the gap between formal learning and real-world communication. These studies collectively demonstrate how digital platforms enhance language learning beyond traditional classroom boundaries by providing both comprehensible input and social interaction.

See Table 4 for a summary of the co-citation analysis, including cluster labels, article counts, and representative publications.

Table 4 Co-citation clusters of the Influence of Social Media on Students' Oral Communication and Linguistic Development

Cluster	Cluster label	Number of articles	Representative publications
1 (red)	Informal Digital Contexts and Autonomous Language Learning Beyond the Classroom	5	benson p., language learning and teaching beyond the classroom: an introduction to the field, beyond the language classroom, pp. 7-16, (2011): godwin-jones r., riding the digital wilds: learner autonomy and informal language learning, language learning & technology, 23, 1, pp. 8-25, (2019): lindgren e., munoz c., the influence of exposure, parents, and linguistic distance on young european learners' foreign language comprehension, international journal of multilingualism, 10, 1, pp. 105-129, (2013): sockett g., the online informal learning of english, (2014): sylven l.k., sundqvist p., gaming as extramural english l2 learning and l2 proficiency among young learners, recall, 24, 3, pp. 302-321, (2012)
2 (Green)	Affective and Technological Dimensions of Oral English Learning via Social Media	5	gonulal t., the use of instagram as a mobile-assisted language learning tool, contemporary educational technology, 10, 3, pp. 309-323, (2019) :horwitz e.k., horwitz m.b., cope j., foreign language classroom anxiety, the modern

Cluster	Cluster label	Number of articles	Representative publications
			language journal, 70, 2, pp. 125-132, (1986) :lee y.j., language learning affordances of instagram and tiktok, innovation in language learning and teaching, 17, 2, pp. 408-423, (2023) :reinhardt j., social media in second and foreign language teaching and learning: blogs, wikis, and social networking, language teaching, 52, 1, pp. 1-39, (2019) :vygotsky l.s., mind in society, (1978)
3 (Blue)	Motivation, Identity, and Youth Culture in Second Language Communication	3	dornyei z., the l2 motivational self system, motivation, language identity and the l2 self, pp. 9-42, (2009) :dornyei z., the psychology of the language learner: individual differences in second language acquisition, (2005) :grau m., worlds apart? english in german youth cultures and in educational settings, world englishes, 28, 2, pp. 160-174, (2009)
4 (Yellow)	Social Mediation and Comprehensible Input in Digital Language Learning	3	krashen s., the input hypothesis: issues and implications, (1985) :vygotsky l., mind in society: the development of higher psychological processes, (1978):zheng b., yim s., warschauer m., social media in the writing classroom and beyond, the tesol encyclopedia of english language teaching, pp. 1-5, (2018)

This table presents a thematic cluster analysis of scholarly literature concerning the influence of social media on students' oral communication and linguistic development. It categorizes related studies into four distinct clusters based on shared focus areas and conceptual similarities, offering insight into the prevailing research trends in this evolving field.

The red cluster, comprising five key articles, centers on how informal digital settings such as social media platforms support autonomous learning beyond formal classroom contexts. Key publications by Benson, Godwin-Jones, and Sockett emphasize learner agency and digital autonomy, showcasing how learners engage with language in unstructured online environments. Themes such as learner motivation, informal English learning, and mobile-assisted practices were prominent. For instance, Sockett (2014) and Lindgren and Muñoz (2013) investigated how online spaces facilitate language practice and exposure, while Sylvén and Sundqvist (2012) highlighted gaming as a form of extramural learning that improves oral fluency. This cluster underscores the increasing relevance of self-directed technology-mediated language learning.

Green cluster shifts focus on the emotional and technological aspects of oral language acquisition in digital contexts. Gonulal (2020) and Reinhardt (2022) examine how platforms such as Instagram foster language learning through affective engagement and identity formation. Themes include learner enjoyment, technological comfort, and personal connections to the content. Other works in this cluster delve into platform-specific behaviors as well as the psychological factors influencing students' oral participation and comfort levels. The inclusion of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory reinforces the role of interactive and collaborative learning in digital social settings. This

cluster highlights how technology not only facilitates communication, but also motivates learners emotionally and socially.

The blue cluster highlights how youth culture, identity, and motivation shape students' engagement in oral communication via social media. Key works by Dörnyei, Norton, and Brevik explore the role of identity formation, learner investment, and social belonging in the digital discourse. This research emphasizes the interplay between personal identity and language performance, particularly in informal, peer-driven environments such as social media. These studies suggest that students' oral communication is heavily influenced by their desire to connect with, express themselves, and participate in culturally relevant online communities.

The yellow cluster emphasized the input-driven aspect of language acquisition through social media. Central works, such as Krashen's Input Hypothesis, alongside studies by Reinhardt, Sockett, and Tharsis and Poornachandran, explore how social media serves as a source of rich, authentic linguistic input. These texts argue that learners can develop comprehension and oral skills through exposure to real-world digital content such as videos, comments, and interactive dialogues. The cluster reflects how social interaction and media consumption converge to promote language development, even when learners do not actively produce the language themselves.

Together, these four clusters illustrate a multidimensional landscape of research on how social media shapes students' oral communication and linguistic growth. The field is characterized by a blending of theory and practice, where autonomy, emotional engagement, identity, and input converge in the digital sphere. Social media is portrayed not just as a technological tool, but also as a social, emotional, and cognitive environment that supports dynamic language learning. This cluster analysis reveals that future research should continue exploring integrated approaches combining psychological, sociocultural, and technological perspectives to better understand how digital spaces can be optimized for oral and linguistic development.

Co-word analysis

Co-word analysis was applied to the same dataset. Of the 1,397 keywords extracted, 65 met the minimum threshold of five occurrences, resulting in five thematic clusters. The keywords with the highest co-occurrence frequencies were "social media" (404), "human" (370), and "article" (263). See Table 5 for the top 15 co-occurring keywords, including their occurrence counts and total link strengths.

Notably, keywords like "female," "male," and "humans" appeared frequently. These likely reflect participant demographics commonly reported in the included studies. While not central to the research problem, their presence indicates the human-centered nature of language learning research and the frequent use of social media in diverse population studies.

Table 5. Top 15 keywords in the co-occurrence of keywords analysis

Ranking	Keyword	Occurrences	Total link strength
1	Social Media	87	404
2	Human	37	370
3	Article	24	263
4	Adult	21	255
5	Female	21	254
6	Humans	25	254
7	Male	18	228
8	Language	17	169
9	Questionnaire	14	162
10	Cross-sectional study	13	160
11	Major Clinical Study	12	147

Ranking	Keyword	Occurrences	Total link strength
12	Cross-sectional Studies	11	134
13	Young Adult	9	126
14	Middle aged	10	116
15	Surveys and Questionnaires	9	107

See Figure 3 for the network map generated from the co-word analysis. The map reveals five clusters, which were classified and labeled based on the authors' inductive interpretation of the recurring keywords. These clusters are closely related and exhibit partial thematic integration.

- Cluster 1 (red): This cluster revolves around educational applications of social media with central terms such as students, language learning, language proficiency, and e-learning. It highlights how platforms, such as Facebook and other digital tools, enhance language learning. Reinhardt (2019) emphasized how blogs, wikis, and social networking support oral practice and interactive learning. Lee (2023) and Gonulal (2019) demonstrated that tools such as Instagram and TikTok promote informal learning experiences that improve fluency and communication.
- Cluster 2 (green): This cluster features terms such as machine learning, natural language processing, and sentiment analysis, indicating AI-driven analyses of language on social media. These tools aid in assessing language patterns, oral fluency, and sentiments in the digital discourse. Zheng, Yim, & Warschauer (2018) highlight how AI and computational tools can analyze student writing and speech, offering real-time feedback to support linguistic growth in digital spaces.
- Cluster 3 (blue): Terms such as adult, adolescent, questionnaire, interpersonal communication, and health literacy focus on age, gender, and behavioral factors. This cluster may represent research analyzing how demographics and communication styles affect language development through social media. Horwitz et al. (1986) also noted that learner anxiety, which is often linked to demographics, influences oral performance, making social media a potentially less threatening environment for practice.
- Cluster 4 (yellow): This cluster explores affective variables in social media language learning using key terms such as motivation, engagement, multilingualism, and anxiety. Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2 Motivational Self System highlights the importance of learner identity and self-image in language acquisition. Informal social media environments may enhance motivation by offering autonomy and relevance to students' lives (Godwin-Jones, 2019).
- Cluster 5 (violet): This smaller but critical cluster includes language ability, controlled study, and humans, pointing toward empirical and theoretical approaches, such as Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985) and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978). These frameworks emphasize the role of comprehensible input and mediated learning, which are facilitated through peer interactions on social media platforms (Zheng et al., 2018).

See Table 6 for a summary of the co-word analysis, including cluster labels, the number of keywords, and representative keywords for each cluster.
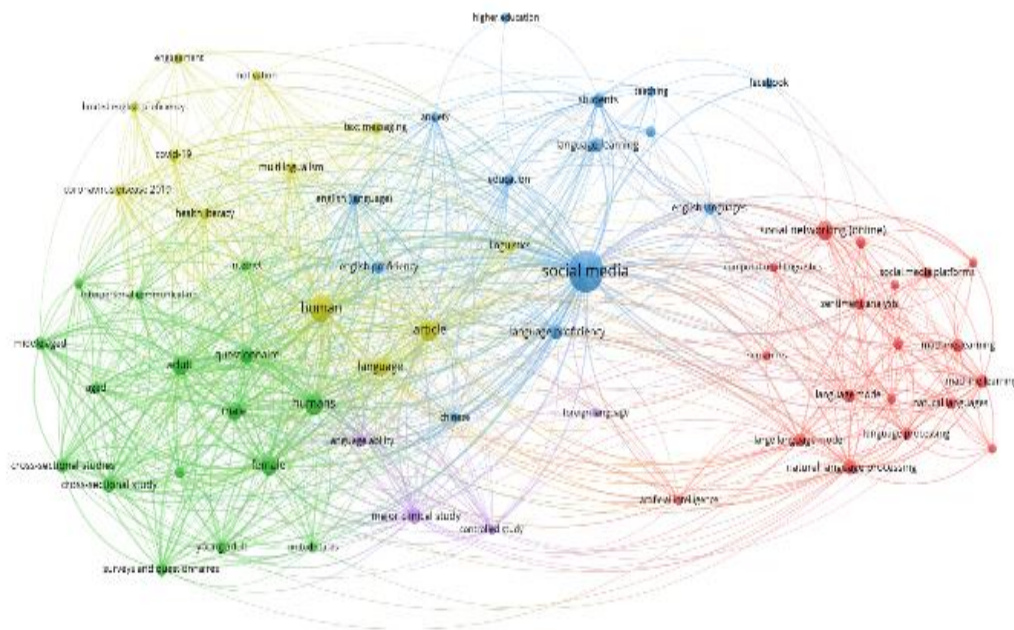
Figure 3 Co-word analysis on the Influence of Social Media on Students' Oral Communication and Linguistic Development

Table 6: Co-word analysis on the Influence of Social Media on Students' Oral Communication and Linguistic Development

Cluster No and color	Cluster label	Number of keywords	Representative Keywords
1 (red)	AI-Driven Language Technologies in Social Media Environments	19	adversarial machine learning ,artificial intelligence ,classification (of information) ,computational linguistics, deep learning ,language model ,language processing ,large language model, learning algorithms ,learning systems, machine learning ,machine-learning, natural language processing ,natural language processing systems ,natural languages ,semantics ,sentiment analysis,social media platforms ,social networking (online)
2 (green)	Demographic and Behavioral Patterns in Digital Communication Research	16	adolescent ,adult ,aged ,cross-sectional studies ,cross-sectional study ,female, humans ,internet ,interpersonal communication ,male ,medical information ,middle aged ,questionnaire,surveys and questionnaires ,united states, young adult
3 (blue)	Digital Language Learning Experiences: Social Media, Proficiency, and Pedagogy	14	Anxiety, Chinese, E-learning, Education, English (language), English languages,

Cluster No and color	Cluster label	Number of keywords	Representative Keywords
			English proficiency, Facebook, Higher education, Language learning, Language proficiency, Social media, Students, Teaching
4 (yellow)	Health Communication and Multilingual Engagement in the COVID-19 Era	12	article ,coronavirus disease 2019, covid-19, engagement , health literacy, human ,language ,limited english proficiency ,linguistics ,motivation, multilingualism ,text messaging
5 (violet)	Experimental Approaches to Foreign Language Acquisition and Language Proficiency	4	controlled study ,foreign language, language ability ,major clinical study

Implications of the Study
Theoretical Implications
This study draws on foundational and emerging theoretical frameworks to guide the interpretation of trends in the literature. Core theories such as Krashen's Input Hypothesis, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, and Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System not only appeared frequently in citations but also framed the thematic patterns observed through co-citation and co-word analysis.

Krashen's Input Hypothesis remains influential in explaining how exposure to authentic, comprehensible input supports language development. In the context of social media, platforms like YouTube and TikTok provide informal yet rich linguistic input aligned with Krashen's i+1 model, particularly benefiting listening and speaking practice.

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory was evident in studies highlighting the value of peer interaction, real-time feedback, and collaborative learning on digital platforms. These social processes mirror Vygotsky's emphasis on mediated learning and the centrality of context in cognitive and linguistic development.

Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System also featured prominently, especially in relation to learner identity and motivation. Social media enables learners to construct and express their ideal L2 selves, fostering a sense of belonging and increasing engagement in oral language practice.

In addition to these established frameworks, the analysis revealed a shift toward technology-enhanced learning theories, such as Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) and AI-supported instruction. These models reflect the growing role of personalization, autonomy, and digital interactivity in language education, further enriching traditional perspectives.

Overall, the findings suggest a movement toward a multidimensional and interdisciplinary theoretical model—one that integrates cognitive, emotional, technological, and social dimensions of language learning.

This theoretical shift carries significant implications for both research and pedagogy. In particular, future studies should consider how these frameworks apply across multilingual and cross-cultural settings, where social media use and linguistic contexts vary widely. Investigating how learners from diverse backgrounds engage with digital tools can illuminate new dynamics in language acquisition and inform more inclusive, culturally responsive approaches to oral communication development.

Educators are also encouraged to explore how social media can be strategically integrated into language curricula, not only as a motivational tool but also as a platform for authentic, cross-cultural interaction. Such integration can bridge classroom learning with real-world language use, ultimately supporting more equitable and dynamic language learning experiences.

Practical Implications

This study highlights the increasing effectiveness of social media platforms, such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook, as informal learning environments that support oral communication skills. Educators can harness these tools in the classroom by integrating digital tasks, such as video blogs, discussion threads, and interactive storytelling into language instruction. This aligns learning with students' existing digital practices and promotes real-world language use.

Given the strong influence of informal and autonomous learning outside the classroom, schools and institutions should encourage students to engage in self-directed language activities through social media platforms. Providing structured guidance for extracurricular digital interactions, such as reflective language journals or peer content reviews, can enhance students' oral proficiency and motivation.

The findings underscore the need for teachers to be trained in using digital tools not just as supplements, but also as integral components of pedagogy. Educators must develop competencies in designing, facilitating, and assessing technology-enhanced language-learning activities that improve oral communication and fluency.

As social media can reduce language anxiety and support identity expression, learning environments should be designed to promote emotional safety and cultural relevance. Allowing students to participate in language tasks that reflect their personal interests, peer interactions, and community engagement fosters motivation and communication confidence.

For institutions, the study recommends investing in robust digital infrastructure, including access to mobile devices, Internet connectivity, and multimedia resources. Ensuring equitable access enables more students to benefit from technology-enhanced oral language practices.

The emergence of health literacy and multilingual engagement themes during the COVID-19 era highlights the growing importance of digital communication across languages and cultures. Language programs should incorporate cross-cultural communication tasks to prepare students for the diverse real-world interactions facilitated by social media.

With the rise of AI-driven tools in language education, institutions should explore how machine learning, natural language processing, and sentiment analysis can support real-time feedback and personalized learning. These tools can be incorporated into language applications, chatbots, and assessment platforms to monitor and improve spoken language skills.

These practical implications suggest that to remain effective and relevant, language education must adapt to the digital habits of learners, leveraging social media not as a distraction but as a powerful space for authentic communication, collaboration, and linguistic growt.

Conclusion, Limitations, and Future Recommendations

Conclusion

This bibliometric analysis provides a comprehensive and data-driven overview of the evolving scholarly discourse on the role of social media in students' oral communication and linguistic development. The findings reveal a marked increase in academic attention to digital, informal, and AI-supported learning environments, particularly from 2018 onwards. Core thematic areas include learner autonomy, the integration of mobile-assisted and AI-driven tools, affective and motivational influences, and informal learning practices on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube.

This study underscores that social media is no longer a peripheral supplement in language education but a central, multifaceted space where learners engage in authentic communication, cultural exchange, and skill development. Foundational theories—Krashen's Input Hypothesis, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, and Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System—continue to inform much of this work, while newer frameworks adapt to the dynamic nature of digital platforms. By visualizing keyword networks, co-citation patterns, and research clusters, this analysis contributes to a clearer understanding of how language education is evolving in response to technological and social change.

Limitations

Despite the breadth of this bibliometric review, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the dataset was limited to documents indexed in the Scopus database, potentially excluding relevant literature from other academic repositories such as Web of Science, ERIC, or Google Scholar. Second, the analysis included only English-language, peer-reviewed journal articles, omitting studies published in other languages and formats such as conference proceedings or book chapters.

Furthermore, the time frame of 2010 to 2025, while comprehensive, means that recent publications from 2025 may not have had sufficient time to accrue citations, which could impact their visibility in the analysis. There is also a degree of platform-specific bias, with dominant attention given to widely used platforms like TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram—possibly overlooking emerging or localized platforms. Finally, many of the studies reviewed are context-specific, limiting the generalizability of findings across diverse cultural and educational settings.

Future Research and Implications

To build on the contributions of this study, future research should adopt a more inclusive bibliometric approach, incorporating multiple databases, multilingual sources, and varied document types. Cross-cultural comparative analyses are especially needed to understand how local linguistic and cultural norms influence the use and effectiveness of social media in language education.

Researchers are also encouraged to explore underrepresented platforms such as Reddit, Discord, or region-specific apps, and to adopt longitudinal and mixed-methods designs that can better capture the long-term impact of social media on oral language development. Moreover, future studies should consider the experiences of learners with limited digital access, ensuring that technology-enhanced education supports equitable learning opportunities. Finally, further exploration of AI integration, such as the use of chatbots, automated feedback systems, and learning analytics, may offer new pathways for personalized, data-informed language instruction in digital environments.

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