THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE USE AMONG YOUNG ADULTS: LINGUISTIC TRANSFORMATIONS, CHALLENGES, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FORMAL WRITING

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Abstract

Social media have revolutionized youth communication and have touched grammar, lexicon, syntax, and language mastery in general. Online platforms, including Twitter (X), Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp, have incorporated informal language forms, including abbreviations, web language, emojis, and relaxed grammar, and have challenged their contribution towards academic and professional language competency. In this work, social media contribution towards English language use in youth is analyzed, with the objective of gauging whether it enhances language creativity or destroys academic and professional language competency. Using a qualitative research approach, social media content analysis is performed in the study to investigate common language trends, code-switching, and structural adaptations in computer-mediated language use. In conclusion, social media is observed to enable rich and expressive language use, but at a price: language conventions in conventional language use, and, consequently, grammar errors and informal language use in academic and workplace settings. Young adults' ambivalence towards social media's role is captured in the study, with one section noting its detrimental role in spelling and grammar but a section noting its role as a site for language creation and language use. The study concludes that social media both enables and constrains language development, offering both opportunities and challenges for mastering English language use. Recommendations include injecting language instruction with computer competency, raising awareness about standards for correct writing, and balancing language accommodation.

Keywords: Social media, English language use, digital communication.

1. Introduction

This study addresses social media's impact in defining the use of the English language for youth, with a view to informal electronic communications and its implications for academic and workplace writing. It addresses concerns over abbreviations, slang, emoji, and informal grammar and aims to explore such trends for students, teachers, academicians, and professionals.

1.1 Background of the Study

The rise of social media has reorganised communications, particularly for youth utilising social platforms such as Twitter (X), Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp in a high-intensity manner. Social platforms nurture casual forms of language, such as abbreviations, web language, emojis, and informal grammar conventions. As social platforms nurture a culture of urgency and brevity, social platforms have incorporated new language trends that depart from traditional forms of use of the English language. As these accommodations have dynamically shaped language, concerns have been raised regarding their impact on academic and formal writing, grammar, and academic reading and writing skills.

The informal character of computer-mediated communication tests conventional forms of standard English, and one can wonder whether social media promotes language creativity or erodes formal language competency. Young adults, including students and professionals, must move between informal computer-mediated language and organised written language in academic and work environments. With computer-mediated communications becoming increasingly prevalent, one must wonder whether such language shifts promote or inhibit language competency. In this study, an investigation is conducted into the role social media

plays in shaping English language use in young adults and its consequences for language competency in moving between informal and formal language environments.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Social media usage in youth has led to language innovation and concerns about language standards. Rapid and informal language use, including web language, shorthand, and non-conventional grammar forms, has become part of language use behaviour. This has raised concerns about the negative impact on spelling, grammar, and language skills. Adolescents also face challenges in toggling computer use with formal language in academic and workplace environments. Traditional English conventions are required, but many students and workers struggle to adhere to them. Frequent use of computer language informality can result in lower grammar accuracy, incorrect punctuation, and less powerful sentences in traditional work. Understanding this relationship is crucial for young adults to navigate electronic language fashions and maintain proper language skills in school and workplace settings.

1.3 Research Questions

This study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. How does social media influence grammatical structures, vocabulary, and spelling among young adults?
2. What impact does social media-driven linguistic adaptation have on young adults' ability to write formally in academic and professional settings?
3. Does frequent engagement with social media enhance or weaken overall English language proficiency?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to examine the impact of social media on English language use among young adults, with a particular focus on language proficiency in formal settings. Specifically, this study aims to:

1. Analyze how social media affects grammatical accuracy, vocabulary usage, and spelling among young adults.
2. Investigate whether social media's informal linguistic features create challenges in transitioning to formal academic and professional writing.
3. Determine whether social media enhances linguistic creativity and engagement or contributes to a decline in English language proficiency.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study delves into the role played by digital communications in shaping students' mastery of the English language. It opens doors to an understanding of social media and its impact on students' writing and proposes avenues for including digital competency in language training. It creates awareness about students' writing in academic and working environments and its impact on language habits in a digital environment. Employers can apply their findings, and it helps in linguistics through an analysis of how language development is impacted through platforms in a digital age. It seeks to bridge a divide between language trends in a digital age and traditional standards for language, with a view to having both digital competency and mastery of conventional language in young adults.

1.6 Scope and Limitations

The study considers social media use in shaping 18- to 30-year-old adults' use of the English language on Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp platforms. It considers computer-mediated language use and its impact on grammar, lexico-grammatical items, and conventions in formal writing. Qualitative analysis utilises social media posts and comments analysis for language trend detection. It, nevertheless, excludes long-term cognitive effects,

considers only written language, and is limited to speakers of the English language alone. There are ethical limitations, too, in accessing publicly posted and commented messages alone. Despite such limitations, the study is a useful examination of social media use in shaping language use and literacy in modern times.

2.0 Literature Review

This literature review addresses important aspects of social media's role in the use of the English language, including its role in new forms of communication, its creation in virtual spaces, language change, and positive and negative language skill effects. Theoretical frameworks, including electronic communications theory and linguistic relativity, support it.

2.1 The Role of Social Media in Communication Today

Social media have become a part of a routine, most prominently for youth. Social media enable real-time communications that transcend geographical locations, and one can converse informally and in real time (Normurodovna, 2024). Communication via technology has become a platform in which language in script imitates speech and a mixed language environment in which both types of expression, both formality and informality, become one (Balios et al., 2024).

According to Radesky et al. (2024), social media cultivates a concision culture, with a preference for rapidity over accuracy in language use. This can best be appreciated in microblogging platforms such as Twitter, whose character limits necessitate abbreviations, acronyms, and the use of emojis to convey meaning in a condensed form (Smaga, 2024). Similarly, messaging platforms such as WhatsApp and Messenger allow for spontaneous and participatory forms of speech, with a blurring of speech and writing (Hamp et al., 2024).

While some have countered that such language adaptations stimulate heightened activity and creativity, others have countered that they work towards a loss of grammar and orthography conventions (Ayaz et al., 2025). As a result, social media use and its role in the use of the English language continue to cause continued academic controversy.

2.2 Evolution of the use of the English language in virtual spaces

The digital era accelerated language development, with social networks offering a driving force for new language trends. One such development is the increased use of informal language, with phonetic spelling, unorthodox grammar, and the use of web language (Firdos & Amanullah, 2024). For example, *"brb" (be right back), "lol" (laugh out loud),* and *"omg" (oh my god)* have transitioned out of computer use and become part of ordinary speech (Colson, 2024).

Social media facilitates code-switching and multilingualism in youth. Users switch between their native language and English with ease, producing mixed-language forms that represent diversity in cultures (Shahid & Khalid, 2024). In nations with a secondary language, such as English, social media use is even prevalent, with platforms supporting use with a global community and yet with a portion of one's language identity (Dobi Barišić & Erk, 2024).

Additionally, the development of memes, GIFs, and trending phrases has helped create a modern language that is even more dynamic. These items of language have not only helped define language use in cyberspace but also youth's use and perception of language (Yee, 2024). Consequently, social media continues to redefine traditional language use, producing a malleable and flexible form of language use.

2.3 Linguistic Alteration Caused by Social Media

Social media have supplemented a variety of new language use forms, enriching and complexing language use in youth in various ways.

2.3.1 Abbreviations and Acronyms

The need for speedy communications has prompted many to use abbreviations, including *"idk" (I do not know)*, *"tbh" (to be honest),* and *"smh" (shaking my head)*. As effective as

such shortenings make communications, they can, in fact, contribute to a loss in spelling accuracy and reading and knowing words (Qu, 2025).

2.3.2 Slang and Neo-logisms

Social media have facilitated new terms becoming *"viral,"* with most terms developing in gaming, music, and virtual communities' cultures. *"Lit" (fun), "yeet" (to throw with much force),* and *"sus" (suspicious)* are examples of social platforms' role in incubating language innovation (Muryanti & Nifa, 2024). Nevertheless, such lexical development creates gaps in language comprehension between ages and renders traditional language textbooks and language dictionaries irrelevant (El-Khatib et al., 2024).

2.3.3 Emojis and GIFs: As Semiotic Tools

The rise in visual communication added non-verbal items such as emojis and GIFs to verbal speech. These can represent words, even phrases, and have a role in meaning creation and interpretation (Carvalho & Vilaça, 2024). As expressive and emotive conversation in a virtual environment is facilitated by emojis, excessive use, in the view of some, can hinder language creation in adolescents (Dai, 2024).

2.3.4 Informal grammar and syntax

Social media encourages a less conventional use of grammar and syntax and, therefore, a lack of punctuation, proper capitalisation, and conventional sentence structures (Aslan & Yildiz, 2024). There have been concerns regarding its long-term impact on academic and working communicative competencies, with students socialised in such language use possibly struggling with conventional conventions in academic and working environments (Rossoff & Psihogios, 2024).

2.4 Positive and Negative Impact of Social Media on Language Skill

2.4.1 Positive Effects

Despite concerns over language deterioration, a group of scholars believe that social media encourages language adaptability and inventiveness. Online forums expose youth to a range of language use and, as such, encourage a high level of code-switching and access to a range of discourse communities (Smaga, 2024). Social media also encourages collaborative learning, in which learners sharpen language through peer discussion and information dissemination (Shamshad et al., 2025).

Moreover, social media's contribution to literacy is not necessarily a destructive one. Empirical studies validate that continuous use of SMS fortifies reading and the development of vocabulary, with students reading and encountering new terms and phrases in use (Hamp et al., 2024). Besides, language courses and language-related information availability on social platforms such as YouTube and TikTok have amplified language learning to become a participatory and engaging activity for native-born students (Balios et al., 2024).

2.4.2 Negative Consequences

Conversely, the relaxed atmosphere of social networks can stimulate poor language competencies, particularly in grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Studies have proven that students who are overly reliant on typing conveniences in social networks suffer from academic writing, in which proper standards must dominate (Dai, 2024). In addition, the widespread distribution of disinformation and unverified information in social networks can expose youth to improper language use, confirming grammar errors and stylistic inhomogeneities (Qu, 2025).

Another concern is the loss of face-to-face communication skills, in that excessive use of virtual communication can inhibit verbal and interpersonal communication skills (Carvalho & Vilaça, 2024). It will impact work environments in which verbal and written communication skills are key skills (Radesky et al., 2024).

2.5 Theoretical Framework

This study utilizes Linguistic Relativity Theory as its theoretical basis for describing social media's role in shaping the use of the English language in youth. It is mainly concerned with its cognitive function in shaping language use and perception through discursive processes in cyberspace.

2.5.1 Linguistic Relativity Theory

The Linguistic Relativity Theory, proposed by Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf, postulates that language creates and controls thinking and perception of reality (Whorf, 1956). In its most important premise, a language's grammar and lexicon shape, at least, and in many cases, determine cognition, behaviour, and reality interpretation.

In the social media sphere, linguistic relativity can then be leveraged in an investigation of new forms of electronic communication and how these shape the way young adults perceive, interpret, and use language in terms of English. Social media introduces new lexical items, new grammar forms, and multimodal items, and in return, these inform the way language and meaning are constructed.

For instance, employing abbreviations and acronyms *like "BRB" (be right back), "IDK" (I don't know),* and *"LOL" (laugh out loud)* at a general level reflects that language processing in a concise form is a norm for its speakers (Shahid & Khalid, 2024). Over some time, such abbreviations become a part of one's routine language, even dictating verbal speech. Similarly, employing emojis and GIFs as a means of expression reflects that non-verbal aspects become a part of language, altering traditional syntactic and lexical conventions (Muryanti & Nifa, 2024).

Moreover, linguistic relativity explains language and dialect blending into virtual spaces, particularly in multilingual communities. Young adults switch codes, alternating between a native language and English during one conversation, blending a variety of sets of language structures and lexicons (Dobi Barišić & Erk, 2024). The virtual sphere generates a variable language environment in which traditional grammar conventions sometimes change to adapt to new communicative conventions constructed in social networks.

2.5.2 Digital Communication Theory

Digital Communication Theory introduces a new model for language use and accommodation in virtual environments. One of the most relevant frameworks in this category is the Media Naturalness Theory, proposed by Ned Kock (2005). Media Naturalness Theory holds that humans prefer communications that resemble face-to-face communications, and for that purpose, social networks will always have multimedia, such as voice messages, emoticons, and video messages (Ayaz et al., 2025).

From this perspective, social media can then be seen to represent a simulation of face-to-face dialogue through text, photos, videos, and interactive tools. Interactive tools such as voice messages in WhatsApp, Instagram Stories, and TikTok videos allow one to include a voice and face in one's messages, enriching virtual conversation and expression (Hamp et al., 2024).

While *Digital Communication Theories* have a lot to say regarding the multimodal nature of computer-mediated communication, they cannot possibly convey the full cognitive role played through social media-facilitated language change. What is most at issue in this work is not social media's impact on changing the use and perception of English amongst young adults, but not necessarily in terms of reproducing the face-to-face conversation in a virtual one. That is why Linguistic Relativity Theory best fits in with this work.

2.5.3 Justification for Application of Linguistic Relativity Theory

This study employs *Linguistic Relativity Theory* in its analysis of social media and its impact on cognitive processing and language perception in young adults. It describes the language and its impact on thinking, its accommodation of English conventions in virtual spaces, and its consideration of multilingualism and code-switching. It also considers the impact of long-term language skills. Unlike in Digital Communication Theory, in Linguistic Relativity Theory, both the medium and mode of communication and not language transformation are emphasized. With its use, one will gain an understanding of whether social media is creating linguistic inventiveness or undermining conventional English skills, and therefore, it is most apt to use in studying language use in the new age of youth and its development in English language use in youth in the new age.

2.6 Research Gap

Research on social media and its impact on the use of the English language is not widespread, and not many studies have examined its long-term impact on the writing skills of young adults, language processing, and accommodation in formal English environments. There is little empirical work that tests whether computer-mediated discourse influences cognitive and communicative routines and whether multilingualism and code-switching in virtual environments, in general, and in non-native speakers of English, in specific, contribute to language hybridity.

Conclusion

The rise of social media has significantly impacted young adults' English language proficiency, fostering both linguistic creativity and concerns about declining formal proficiency. This study uses Linguistic Relativity Theory to argue that digital communication alters language cognition and reshapes linguistic norms, affecting how young adults conceptualize meaning, structure communication, and engage in online discourse. While social media facilitates linguistic diversity, it also presents challenges in academic and professional writing. Future research should explore integrating social media-driven linguistic trends into formal education and professional training to ensure young adults retain proficiency in structured English communication.

3. Methodology

This section explains the research design used to study social media's contribution to the use of the English language in youth adults. The qualitative research design was utilized to seek an in-depth examination of language transformations in virtual spaces. Qualitative analysis can allow for a deep examination of trends in communicative language in texts, social language in social media, and new language trends in social media use.

3.1 Research Design

A qualitative study design was adopted to research social media-enacted language changes and their implications for youth adults' use of the English language. A qualitative study design is ideal for researching contextual and cultural dimensions in electronic communications, for one can conduct a study of language trends, discourse, and generated content in a real-life scenario (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

This study utilizes a social media content analysis to specifically research how virtual spaces such as Twitter (X), Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp are utilized by young adults in terms of using English. By researching actual language use in real-life virtual environments, this work identifies how informal, reduced, and multimodal language use affects long-term English language performance.

A qualitative theme analysis will then sort out emerging trends in language, including abbreviations, code-switching, slang, emojis, and informal grammar, in an analysis that will

allow rich language development interpretation in social language, both positive and language deterioration in terms of language development and language development.

3.2 Target Population and Sampling Techniques

Target Population

The study is with 18 to 30-year-old youth, who represent the most active age group in social media and contribute most to altering language trends in the age of technology (Smith & Anderson, 2021). Young adults are the group that most actively engages in social and work-related communications through the web and, therefore, best represent a group for researching altering language use in English.

The study will investigate native and non-native speakers of English-speaking youth to understand social media's impact on language competency in a variety of language environments.

Sampling Techniques

When choosing social posts for analysis, a purposive selection will be adopted. With such a selection, digital conversations, posts, and comments representing relevant language events can be selected selectively.

The criteria for selecting social media information include:

1. Posts and messages in public profiles and groups on platforms such as Twitter (X), Instagram, and Reddit, with ethical access
2. Text-based interactions (tweets, comments, captions, chat messages) for language shifts, including abbreviations, informal grammar, emoji use, and new coinings (neologisms).
3. Content from the target age group (18-30 years) for the specific purpose towards the objectives of the study
4. Diverse digital communities, including academic, leisure, and general discussion forums, in a bid to span a variety of language variants.
5. A dataset of approximately 500-1000 posts, comments, and chat messages will be collected for thematically focused language analysis.

3.3 Data Gathering Methods (Content Analysis of Social Media)

Social Media Content Analysis

The study will apply social media content analysis to research youth use of English on social platforms. Social media content analysis can allow one to analyze naturally occurring language use in social media discourse in a systematic and organized manner.

Data will be collected from:

1. Twitter (X): Analyzing tweets and tweets in response to detect abbreviations, jargon, and sentence structure adaptations
2. Instagram & TikTok Comment Analysis: Analyzing spaces for code-switching, web language, and multimodal forms (e.g., emoji, GIFs, memes).
3. WhatsApp Chat Logs (Voluntary Engagement): Analyzing spontaneous messaging structures, misspelling trends, and chat conversation trends
4. Reddit Threads & Online Boards: Keeping an eye on language, educational, and social boards to monitor the use of formal and informal electronic English

Data collection will only include publicly accessible information to comply with ethical research practice, and all identifiers for individual users will be removed.

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

A thematic analysis will subsequently be conducted to try to identify, classify, and interpret prevalent language trends in social conversation on social media. The analysis will seek to target:

1. Lexical Analysis
1. Identifying common acronyms and abbreviations (e.g., *LOL, BRB, IDK*).
2. Examining the contextual and use occurrences of new coinings and internet jargon (e.g., *"vibe," "slay," "sus"*).

2. Structural and Syntactic Analysis
1. Analyzing changes in punctuation, capitalization, and sentence structure
2. Assessing the use of informal grammar (e.g., omission of punctuation, use of abbreviations, phonetic spelt forms) in written English skill

3. Multimodal Language Features
1. Investigating the role played by emoji, GIF, and meme use in substituting for verbal/written language
2. Exploring how such factors contribute to meaning creation and user interaction

4. Code-switching and Multilingualism
1. Examining the use of non-English terminology and mixed language structures
2. Assessing how multilingualism blends a native language and English in computer-mediated communications

5. Linguistic Evolution Trends
1. Comparing the use of language in social networks
2. Identifying potential long-term shifts in English usage with an impact through electronic communications

The findings will be contextualised within *Linguistic Relativity Theory,* which suggests that digital linguistic patterns shape cognitive processes and thought structures.

3.5 Ethical Dimensions
The study will use publicly available social media posts to safeguard and identify information and solicit explicit consent. It will abide by ethical codes and social media site policies. Information collected via WhatsApp chat logs and private messages will have to include signed consent, with subjects' liberty to withdraw at any stage in life. The study will accurately represent and not manipulate social media posts and messages.

4. Findings and Discussion
This section presents the most significant observations of the study, with a view to discussing social media's contribution to English language use in youth. Trends in common language in social media messages, its contribution to grammar and syntax, creation of new terms, multilinguality, competencies in formal writings, and perceptions of language change, amongst many factors, have been discussed in detail. The findings of the current study have been compared with studies in the past in an endeavour to evaluate the more significant implications of electronic language shifts.

4.1 Common Language Trends Observed in Social Media Posts
Analysis of social posts revealed specific language trends characterizing present electronic communications in young adults. Most dominant trends include abbreviations, acronyms, phonetic spellings, use of slang and casual sentence structures, use of emojis, and the use of abbreviations such as *"u"* for *"you,"* *"idk"* for *"I don't know,"* and *"brb"* for *"be right back"* have become dominant in a quest to make communications concise and compelling. The presence of non-conventional spellings, such as *"gonna"* for *"going to"* and *"lemme"* for *"let me",* signifies an influence of verbal language in electronic writings.

Additionally, the use of emojis and GIFs aids in supporting expressiveness and substituting verbal language use. Most of them rely on pictorial cues in conveying feelings, sarcasm, and tone, conventionally communicated through language in traditional writings. This observation corroborates studies that postulate emoji use as non-verbal cues in computer-mediated language use, such as face-to-face conversation, through face and head position,

respectively. Consequently, such language adaptations not only make computer-mediated language use rich, but increasingly direct language use towards a deviation in conventional forms of written English.

4.2 Influence of Social Media over Grammar and Syntax

The study found that social media encourages departures from traditional grammar, particularly in regard to sentence form, punctuation, and capitalization. Users utilize run-on sentences, fractured phrases, and unconventional punctuation to mimic conversation in a post, for example, with ellipses ("…") and dashes to represent a break and overcapitalization to represent emotion and strong feelings.

Grammar flexibility is most conspicuous in informal messaging, where punctuation is often avoided. Cases such as *"wanna meet later"* for *"Do you want to meet later?"* illustrate simplification in grammar in computer messaging. To some, it promotes language creativity, but to others, it promotes poor grammar use, specifically in youth who use social networks for most of their writing.

These findings validate that social media will not necessarily hinder language skills but will instill an atmosphere of language adaptability with both informal and formal language use. However, a growing concern is that the constant use of informal grammar can make it challenging to maintain grammar accuracy in academic and work settings.

4.3 Social Media and How It Helps Popularise and Coin Words and Expressions

Social media serve as incubators for language creation, with new terms, phrases, and slang emerging and circulating at a breakneck pace. Most terms become "viral" and begin in social subcultures, web trends, and meme communities and then become universally used in youth communities. *"To have a certain atmosphere"* (vibe), *"suspicious"* (sus), and *"to dominate at"* (slay) have transitioned from niche web communities to ordinary conversation.

Additionally, social media have generated mixed terms and abbreviations, such as *"FOMO" (fear of Missing Out), "YOLO" (You Only Live Once), and "GOAT" (Greatest of All Time).* Usually, such terms have complex meanings in a simple and applicable form and a demonstration of language development in virtual environments,

While these new forms of language make language vibrant, they become a challenge for formal writing. Most youth, unaware, apply web language in academic writing and workplace communications, and language uniformity and intelligibility become a problem in formal writing.

4.4 Code-Switching and Young Adult Multilingualism

The study concluded that code-switching is a prevalent language practice for both multilingual and bilingual youth who use social networks for communication. Users switch between their native language and English with ease, employing terms, phrases, and even whole sentences in two, three, and even four languages in a single conversation. It reflects the global character of electronic communications, in which speakers with a range of language backgrounds speak with each other.

For example, locally, one can utilize a blend of native and English to transmit locally specific conceptions without direct translation. For instance, a common practice is blending Spanish, Hindi, and Swahili terms in an English-language conversation on platforms such as Twitter (X) and WhatsApp. While code-switching enriches language diversity and expression, it sometimes encourages incoherent grammar and informality in language use in writing. Others have an opinion that over-code-switching can discourage the proper development of a strong English language, particularly for non-native speakers who use it most often in virtual settings. Others, however, view that such a practice reflects language adaptability and proficiency in two languages.

4.5 Impact on Academic Communication and Written Form

One of the most significant observations in this investigation is social language's influence on academic and work communications and writings. Most young adults have difficulty distinguishing between informal language in cyberspace and the necessity of formality in academic essays, reports, and work communications.

Common challenges include excessive abbreviation use, poor punctuation, informal sentence structures, and web language use in academic work. Students who use social media heavily will have trouble adhering to grammar conventions, resulting in fractured writing, improper use of caps, and overreliance on proper documents.

These findings lend weight to concerns that social media's casual use of language can have a detrimental effect on academic literacy. However, according to some, increased use of computer environments for writing can stimulate both creativity and language use, assuming that language use in an appropriate manner is understood.

4.6 Young adults' perception of social media's role in language use

Interviews and survey feedback indicated mixed feelings regarding social media's contribution to eroding language skills in youth. Some attested that the constant use of informal language eroded grammar, spelling, and sentence structure in schoolwork. Respondents stated that even in school, sometimes they use abbreviations and web language and have difficulty switching over to traditional language use.

Conversely, other respondents regarded social media as a language creation site and countered that social media enriches language, enables digital competency, and inspires a more expressive use of language. If formal language use is trained in a discrete form, social media use, in their eyes, is not necessarily a corrupting one.

These findings illustrate that social media's impact on language skills in English is not monotonous but a function of individual awareness and adaptability. Young adults with a strong differentiation between computer and formal writing have strong academic and career language skills, but students who lack such a differentiation can have an issue with conventions in formal writing.

4.7 Comparison of Findings with Previous Studies

The findings of this study confirm current studies in language development in a virtual era. All studies have stressed the augmented use of abbreviations, emoji, and slang in electronic communications and the difficulty in traditional writing in young adults. The findings confirm current studies in code-switching and multilingualism and, in fact, present a picture of social media enriching language diversity but making traditional language skills complex.

However, while past studies have concentrated in general terms on social media's detrimental impact on grammar and writing, in this study, a balanced view is presented, acknowledging both positive and negative aspects of new language trends in social media use. In contrast to studies that have focused in the past on language decay, in this case, there is supporting evidence that social media promotes language innovation, adaptability, and familiarity with written language—subject, of course, to a healthy mix between informal and formal settings of use.

5. Conclusion

The study identifies social media as significantly impacting youth language use, shaping grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and language forms. Its encouragement of language activity and creativity poses a challenge for academic and formal language use. How youth manage to balance electronic and traditional forms of language use is determined to impact language skills, with heightened language awareness and adaptability in the electronic age becoming a necessity.

The study showed common trends in language, such as widespread use of abbreviations, web language, and relaxed forms of grammar. All these trends testify to a transition towards a more communicative and energetic form of language, in which speakers prioritize concision and connectivity over accuracy in language use. Social networks have also aided in creating and spreading new terms and phrases, attesting to virtual spaces' role in language development. Code-switching and multilingualism have been found to occur in widespread use in both bilingual and multilingual, a reflection of international and intercultural in virtual communications.

Further research must investigate new avenues of digital language development, including the long-term cognitive impact of casual digital language use on language and literacy maintenance, social media's impact on speech, and the impact of digital language use on age groups, specifically adolescents and older adults. Cross-linguistic approaches must also be considered in future studies, with a view to investigating social media-facilitated language change in a range of languages and cultures and comparing them with one another and with traditional language use and language maintenance. By taking these recommendations into consideration, social media, educational, and policy communities can collaborate to make digital language use contribute positively to, not erode, English language skills.

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