



## Exploring Language Learners' Engagement with Influencer Content for English Language Learning on Social Media Platforms

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**Abstract :** The growing popularity of social media has made them favored platforms for language learners seeking engaging and authentic language learning content. This study explores how language learners utilize influencer content on social media platforms to learn English. The researchers used questionnaires to find out why learners like this content, what challenges they face, and how it affects their language learning strategies. The study's findings show that language learners actively enjoy using influencer content for learning English on social media. One important finding is that authenticity in language learning content is crucial. Influencers' natural way of communicating immerses learners in the language, boosting their motivation and proficiency. The research used different types of questions and found that learners are highly motivated to access influencer content that is engaging, relatable, and authentic. Learners find influencer language learning to be a refreshing and interactive option compared to traditional classroom methods. The content analysis demonstrates the vital role played by influencers in providing diverse language learning materials. These materials include grammar explanations, vocabulary exercises, and conversational practice, speaking tips, listening comprehension, reading comprehension, and writing skills. Participants appreciate how accessible and flexible influencer content allows them to personalize their learning based on their language skills and interests. In conclusion, this study emphasizes the significant impact of influencers in making language learning on social media platforms more effective. The engaging and authentic content from influencers offers promising opportunities to improve language learners' experiences and skills.

**Keywords :** Social Media, Influencer Content, English Language Learning, Language Learners.

### INTRODUCTION

In today's modern era, social media has had an undeniable impact on our lives, influencing how we communicate, access information, and interact with the world. These platforms serve multiple purposes, from staying connected with friends to keeping up with trends in sharing personal stories and aiding in language learning. What makes social media truly remarkable is its ability to break down geographical barriers and make language learning

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resources accessible to people worldwide. Popular platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok provide a vast array of materials, including text, images, videos, and quizzes, as well as live streams, podcasts, and interactive language challenges. This diversity accommodates different learning styles and preferences, allowing learners to choose the content that resonates with them. Social media, which can be accessed by a range of electronic devices including cell phones, computers, tablets, and other modern gadgets, has had a tremendous impact on how knowledge is exchanged in the field of education. It serves as a platform for users to systematically share their thoughts and provides a variety of communication methods, including text, photographs, audio, video, and interactive content (Anwas et al., 2020). Slim & Hafedh (2019) highlight social media's rapid global event updates and its significant role in English language development, making it accessible and free for all ages.

Al Arif (2019) claims that social media's interactive nature encourages active participation, enhancing language skills through comments, conversations, and challenges, boosting confidence and critical thinking, and facilitating global interactions. Additionally, Wulan & Kurnia (2021) point out that Facebook and Twitter are critical components of the social media revolution, promoting communication, particularly among young people, and facilitating global knowledge exchange. Social media offers learners real-life language use, cultural expressions, and interactions, making it a practical platform for studying English, overcoming shyness, and connecting with global users. It has transformed education by facilitating communication and information exchange, enabling non-native English speakers to interact with native speakers and enhance language skills through online education (Alshabeb & Almaqarn, 2018; Amin et al., 2020; Yadav, 2021). Kale (2020) brings out that social media offers learners the opportunity to learn pronunciation, stay updated on global developments, and improve vocabulary and grammar. It also provides interactive sessions in English, aiding in communication and interpersonal skills development.

Most platforms are free, accessible to all societal strata, and provide extensive information for public use. Online videos can be used to prepare study materials for competitive exams, and social media allows connections across national and international boundaries. According to Saini & Abraham (2015), there are specific uses of social media in education as the following: 1) Social media platforms like Facebook and blogs facilitate information sharing among students and teachers, benefiting all abilities and enhancing learning content comprehension, while also providing feedback for teacher assessment. 2) Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, and blogs foster dialogue, enabling students to

initiate conversations and ask questions, a feature not typically found in traditional classrooms. 3) Social media platforms like YouTube, Flickr, and podcasts enhance learning by sharing multimedia content, enhancing the experience with visuals and audio. 4) Blogs and Twitter can encourage students to create reflective journals, promoting critical thinking and self-assessment, and providing valuable data for teachers to evaluate student progress. 5) Social media significantly aids project-based learning, particularly for geographically dispersed teams, by fostering collaboration, idea sharing, and project development, thereby enhancing learners' metacognitive skills.

Social media has changed language learning by enabling students to develop personalized language journeys. They can personalize their learning by following specific influencers or channels that correspond to their interests and language goals, making learning more effective and pleasant. Beyond influencers, social media provides a wide variety of language-learning resources. Language-specific forums, groups, and communities allow students to ask questions, share resources, and collaborate with their peers. The ability to provide quick feedback and correction is a unique characteristic of social media in language acquisition. Learners can upload spoken or written exercises and receive immediate feedback from native speakers or experienced learners, allowing them to improve their skills in real-time. In addition to language acquisition, social media allows for cultural immersion. Learners develop an understanding of cultural nuances, colloquial idioms, and daily living in the target language by following influencers from many nations and backgrounds. The gamification of language learning on social media is also important. Social media networks frequently provide tools for tracking language learning progress. Learners can motivate and encourage one another by sharing milestones, achievements, and language proficiency increases in their online groups.

Social media influencers (SMIs) are influential members of the social media community who interact frequently (Chia et al., 2021). Social media influencers have become influential figures in language education in recent years, especially for English language learners. These influencers mastered the art of making learning entertaining and engaging. They accomplish this through the use of a variety of multimedia resources, including movies, interactive language problems, and live sessions. By doing so, they bridge the gap between typical classroom settings, which can be uninteresting at times, and real-world language use. Influencers on these platforms stay up to date on the latest English trends and terms, ensuring that students learn the language they use today rather than from outdated textbooks. One amazing characteristic of this strategy is how it generates a sense of community among learners. Participants on these sites

actively practice together, make friends online, and generally aim to improve their English skills. Numerous research have shed light on social media's essential significance in language learning.

Desta et al. (2021) reveal that social media enhances English language skills in medical students, positively influences their attitudes toward learning, and is universally effective, regardless of gender, highlighting its universality. In addition, Ariantini et al. (2021) found that Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter are the most commonly used social media platforms for English language learning among medical students. Among these, Facebook was emerging as the most preferred option, mirroring its popularity in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. Furthermore, another study revealed that students found social media, particularly platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook, to be effective instruments for improving their English language skills (Muftah, 2022). In line with this, the digital era has significantly transformed communication, with mobile devices and social media platforms enabling easy connections and information exchange, making social media an effective medium for language acquisition (Erzad & Suciati, 2018).

It's crucial to understand that the combined results of these studies highlight how language learning in the digital age is changing. These researches show that social media not only improves language proficiency but also changes the mechanics of learning. It is a flexible and effective tool for language acquisition in an age characterized by connectivity and accessibility, helping students in a range of educational contexts. In conclusion, social media offers accessibility, inclusivity, and the potential to overcome language learning obstacles. It serves diverse learners, including those with disabilities and remote areas, and facilitates authentic language exchanges. It also benefits professionals for career advancement. This research examines language learners' social media involvement, specifically their interaction with influencer content, in English language acquisition. It explores how learners connect with influencer content, the motivations behind participation, and its impact on language proficiency.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

The purpose of this study is to investigate language learners' engagement with influencer content for English language acquisition on social media platforms using a qualitative research approach. The study's goal is to get an in-depth understanding of participants' motivations, and experiences with influencer content. This study analyzed

responses from 38 participants who engaged with influencer content on social media platforms. To ensure diverse perspectives, the sample included students who are from different hospitality programs in Yayasan Triatma Surya Jaya. While not all influencer accounts explicitly focused on teaching English, many provided indirect learning opportunities. This broader definition of learning content aligns with the study's aim to explore how learners engage with English through social media influencers.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

In this in-depth analysis, we present a comprehensive exploration of the experiences and perspectives of language learners who actively engage with influencer-based language learning content on various social media platforms. Their insights offer valuable information on the efficacy, motivations, challenges, and overall impact of influencer-driven language learning in the Indonesian context. Participants used a wide range of social media sites for language acquisition. While YouTube, Instagram, TikTok were frequently highlighted, it's crucial to note that this variety extends beyond the big networks. This implies that learners have the freedom to select platforms that closely match their learning interests and lifestyles. As depicted in Graph 1, the majority of participants accessed influencer content daily or several times a week, demonstrating its integral role in their language learning routines. The participants gave a lengthy list of English language influencers they follow for language-learning purposes.

This included well-known people such as Naila Farhana, Miss Katty, English Speaking Course, English with Lucy, English Addict with Mr. Duncan, Englishnesia, Cetta English, Kampung Inggris LC, Englishwithrhys, Nawid Yosufi, Kampung Inggris Choice, Kadang.sokinggris. English with Lucy, Aarons.English, Emma Chamberlain, Mr. Beast, PewDiePie, Outdoor Boys, Indah Asmigianti, Mr. Zhou, Zoella, English With Nab , Englishmedia, Black Screen English, Bahasa Inggris. This varied content allows learners to personalize their learning based on individual needs, as shown in Graph 5, where everyday conversations, practical speaking tips, listening comprehension, grammar explanations emerged as the most utilized resources. The diversity of content makers catering to varied learning demands is shown by the richness of this influencer environment. Influencers can provide structured lessons and grammar explanations as well as immersion experiences through travel vlogs and cultural insights. This varied range of influences enables learners to find content that connects with their individual learning style. The motivations for adopting

influencer content for language learning were diverse and interesting as shown in Graph 2. When learning from influencers was compared to traditional techniques, participants reported feeling more driven.

A strong motivator for them was a sense of connection and belonging to a worldwide language-learning community. Influencers' engaging and relevant style was constantly mentioned as a major component. Participants frequently described learning from influencers as similar to having a casual discussion, making the learning experience more pleasurable and less daunting. Emotional responses further reinforce this appeal, with Graph 3 illustrating how learners felt motivated, confident, and supported while engaging with influencer content. When employing influencer content for language acquisition, participants' feelings were overwhelmingly favorable. They found the experience enjoyable, effective, and, most importantly, relatable. Influencers' bright and engaging personalities contributed considerably to this good sentiment. It made the learning experience feel less like a formal educational endeavor and more like an enjoyable chat with a buddy who happens to be a language expert, according to participants. While participants praised influencer-based language learning, they did highlight certain challenges.

Additionally, some participants expressed a desire for a more direct means of interaction with influencers. They yearned for opportunities to ask questions, seek clarification, and engage in real-time discussions to enrich their learning experiences further. Participants consistently rated their experiences with influencer content as superior to traditional classroom methods. They appreciated the practicality and real-world relevance of influencer content, which often focuses on conversational language and current topics. The flexibility of accessing content at their own pace and convenience was seen as a significant advantage over traditional classroom settings as shown in Graph 3. In addition to their positive feedback, participants provided insightful suggestions for further improving influencer-based language learning. Some participants recommended that influencers incorporate more interactive elements in their content, such as quizzes, live sessions, and Q&A sessions. They believed that these additions would enhance engagement and foster a stronger sense of community among learners.

Moreover, creating dedicated spaces, such as forums or discussion groups, where learners can ask questions and receive quick responses from influencers was a common suggestion. Participants expressed a wide range of preferences regarding the types of content they found most useful. Everyday conversations, practical speaking tips, listening comprehension, grammar explanations were among the most frequently mentioned topics. This

diversity highlights how influencers effectively cater to various learning needs, ensuring that learners can access content that aligns with their specific goals and areas of improvement. Interactivity with influencer content varied among participants. Some engaged frequently by commenting, sharing, or asking questions, while others did so less often. Interactions were primarily driven by a desire for clarification, the need for a sense of community and connection with fellow learners, and the intention to provide feedback to influencers. These interactions not only enrich the learning experience but also contribute to the growth of the language-learning community.

The majority of participants admitted to using translations in their native language to understand English-language influencer content. The extent of reliance on translations varied, with some learners using them primarily for context and others relying on translations to comprehend the content fully. Participants viewed translations as valuable tools to bridge language gaps and enhance their understanding, emphasizing their role in facilitating language learning. Participants reported various improvements in their English language skills since they began using influencer content. These improvements included an expanded vocabulary, enhanced listening comprehension, increased confidence in speaking, and a heightened ability to understand diverse accents and dialects. The consensus was that influencer-based language learning had a positive and tangible impact on their language proficiency. Formal language skill testing was not a common practice among the participants, and significant changes in test results or assessments were not reported. Participants generally relied on self-assessment and their interactions with the online language learning community to gauge their language skill development. This reflects the informal yet highly effective nature of influencer-based language learning, which places a premium on practical language use and real-world communication.

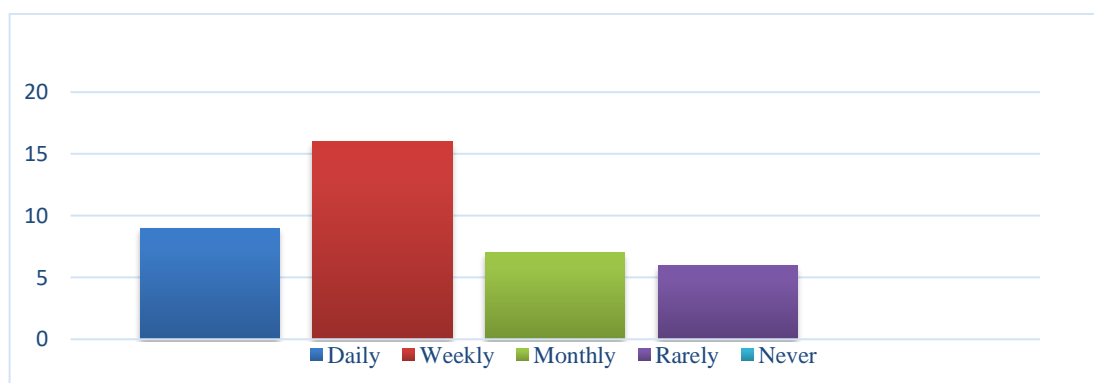


Figure 1. Frequency of Accessing Influencer Content

This graph illustrates how often participants engaged with influencer content for English language learning. The majority of learners accessed such content daily or several times a week,

highlighting the consistent role of influencers in their language learning routines. This frequent engagement reflects the accessibility and convenience of social media platforms, making them an integral part of modern language acquisition strategies.

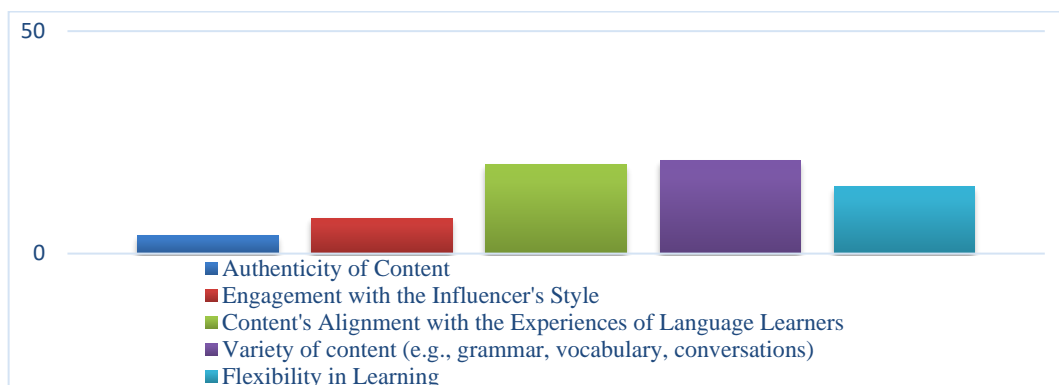


Figure 2. Motivations for Using Influencer Content to Learn English

The graph showcases the primary motivations for utilizing influencer content. Key drivers included authenticity, engaging delivery, relatable content and flexibility in learning. These factors not only made learning enjoyable but also encouraged learners to practice regularly. Additionally, the sense of community fostered by influencers was a significant motivator, as it allowed learners to feel connected to a global audience.

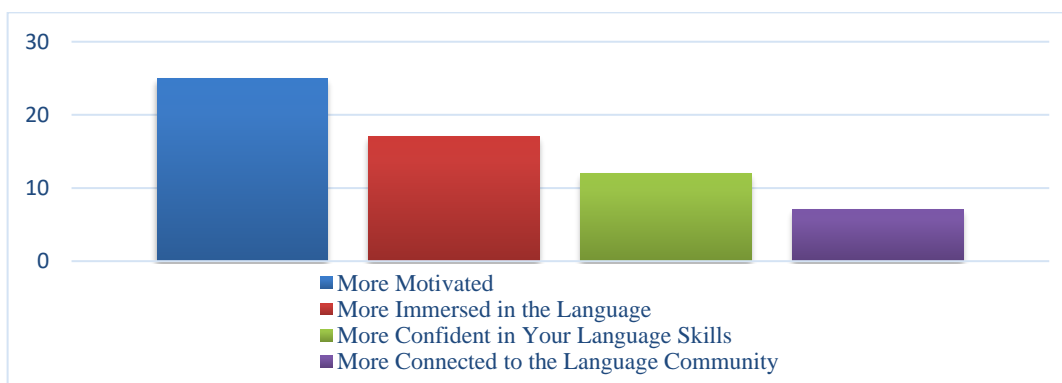


Figure 3. How Influencer Content Makes the Students Feel While Learning a New Language

This graph explores participants' emotional responses to influencer-based learning. Most learners reported feeling motivated, confident, and less intimidated by language learning challenges. The informal and friendly approach of influencers contributed to a positive learning environment, contrasting with traditional classroom methods.



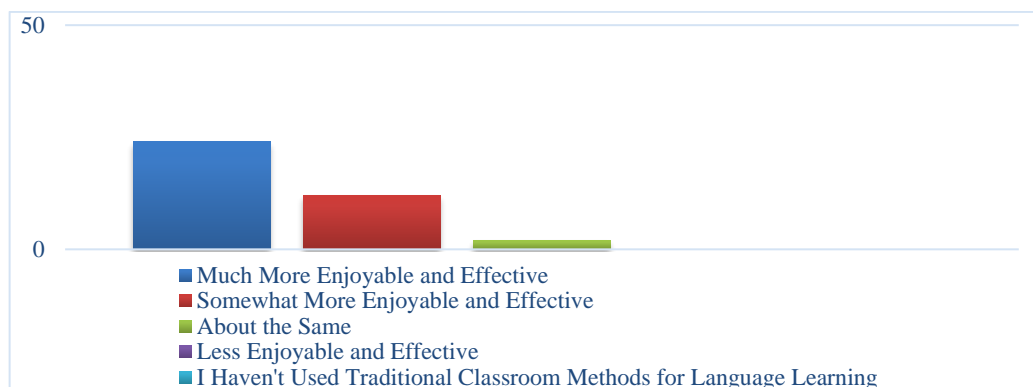


Figure 4. Influencer Content vs. Traditional Classroom Method for English Learning

This comparison highlights the perceived advantages of influencer content over traditional teaching methods. Participants valued the flexibility, real-world relevance, and practical application of social media content. While traditional methods were seen as rigid and theoretical, influencer content was praised for its adaptability to individual learning styles.

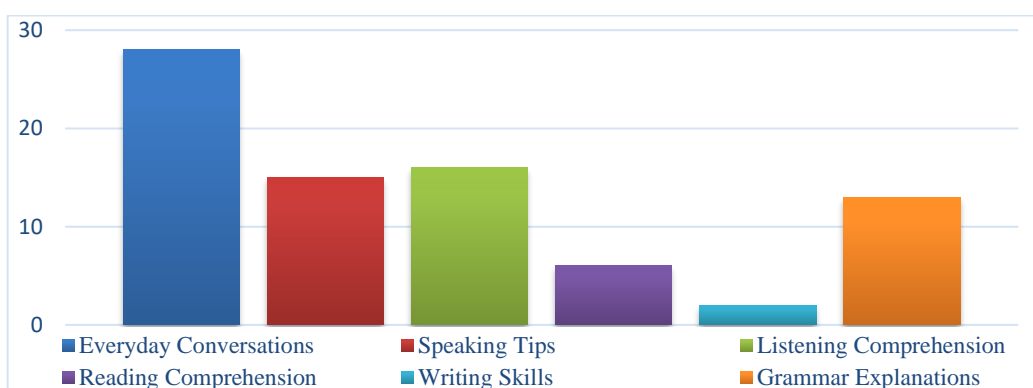


Figure 5. Types of Content Watched by the Students

The graph categorizes the types of content learners accessed, including grammar lessons, vocabulary exercises, and conversational practice. Grammar explanations and practical speaking tips were the most popular, indicating a strong preference for structured yet engaging materials. This diversity of content allows learners to tailor their experiences to their unique needs and goals.

## CONCLUSIONS

Finally, this research looked into the world of Indonesian language learners who actively engage with influencer-based language learning content on various social media platforms. Participants in this study came from a wide range of age groups, language learning preferences, and socio-cultural backgrounds. Their insightful observations give light on the efficacy, motivations, obstacles, and overall impact of influencer-driven language learning in Indonesia. One important finding was the wide range of social media platforms utilized by participants for

language acquisition, spanning from YouTube and Instagram to TikTok and beyond. This variety highlighted the flexibility that learners have in selecting platforms that correspond to their learning interests and lives. The analysis also uncovered a long list of English language influencers who play an important impact. These influencers provide a rich tapestry of information, including structured lessons, grammar explanations, immersion experiences via travel vlogs, and cultural insights, allowing learners to interact with content that is appropriate for their specific learning styles. Participants reported a heightened sense of motivation and connection to a global language-learning community as reasons for using influencer content for language learning. Influencers' engaging and relevant manner was crucial in making the learning process fun and less daunting, like a friendly talk with a language master. Despite the overwhelming positive response, participants identified certain problems, such as a need for a more direct connection with influencers. They indicated a desire to engage in real-time dialogues and seek explanations. Nonetheless, participants consistently evaluated their experiences as positive. Participants, however, consistently assessed their encounters with influencer content as superior to traditional classroom approaches, praising its practicality and real-world relevance. Furthermore, participants made insightful suggestions for improving influencer-based language learning, such as the inclusion of interactive features like quizzes, live sessions, and Q&A sessions. A common proposal was to provide dedicated venues for learners to express questions and receive timely responses from influencers. In conclusion, this study emphasizes the essential role of influencers in increasing the effectiveness of language learning on social media platforms by providing interesting and authentic content that increases language learners' experiences and skills. The findings highlight the transformative potential of influencer-driven language learning, demonstrating its accessibility, inclusivity, and ability to overcome traditional language learning barriers. Through influencers, social media has opened new doors.

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