# Assessing Social Media as a Pedagogical Tool for French Language Learning in International Studies

**By**

**Douglas Omenohia, PhD**
**Department of French and International Studies**
**Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni**
**Port Harcourt, Nigeria**
**barr.douglasomenohia@iaue.edu.ng**

## Abstract

Researchers have investigated various approaches to foreign language acquisition that enhances linguistic skills and cultural immersion such as the communicative language teaching (CLT) method, task-based language learning (TBL) and the use of immersive environments. Yet, the integration of social media as a pedagogical impact of social media platforms for French language learning in context-specific, remains a relatively underexplored domain in academic discourse. The study aim to fill this existing gap in scholarship by assessing the efficacy of these tools in facilitating language acquisition, engagement and intercultural competence among learners, focusing on how platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, Facebook and TikTok. Adopting a qualitative research methodology, the study employs a case study approach that incorporates online surveys with students and educators in international studies programs. The theoretical framework is informed by Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982), which emphasizes the role of comprehensible input in language acquisition and Siemens' Connectivist Learning Theory (2005), which highlights the significance of digital networks in modern education. Findings reveal that social media fosters a dynamic and interactive learning environment that projects authentic language exposure, real-time communication and access to diverse Francophone cultures. Learners benefit from increased engagement through multimedia content, interactive discussions and real-world language applications which improves both linguistic proficiency and cultural awareness.

**Keywords:** Social Media in Education, Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL), Multimedia-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), Online Language Acquisition

## 1. Introduction

In the field of international studies, foreign language proficiency plays a crucial role in fostering effective communication, diplomacy, and cross-cultural exchange. French, in particular, occupies a central position as a global language, spoken by over 321 million people across multiple continents and serving as an official language in prominent international organizations such as the United Nations, the European Union and the African Union (Crystal, 2020). The promotion of French through initiatives like the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) underscores its strategic significance in global affairs (Weber & Horner, 2012).

The rapid advancement of digital technology has led to a paradigm shift in educational methodologies, significantly impacting language acquisition. The integration of digital tools in French language education has been linked to increased learner engagement, autonomy, and access to diverse linguistic resources (Godwin-Jones, 2018). More so, studies suggest that bilingualism enhances cognitive flexibility, problem-solving abilities and cultural adaptability, reinforcing the necessity of foreign language education in international studies (Bialystok, 2017). As a language of diplomacy, economics and academia, French provides students with direct access to primary sources, policy debates and intercultural networks, enriching their analytical and communicative competencies in a globalized world (Dearden, 2015).

Social media platforms have further revolutionized language learning by offering interactive and immersive experiences. These platforms facilitate real-time communication, expose learners to authentic linguistic content, and create dynamic spaces for cultural exchange (Thorne, 2016). Educational research has highlighted the role of social media in fostering collaborative learning, enabling students to engage in discussions beyond traditional classroom settings (Greenhow & Lewin, 2016). However, the increasing reliance on social media for language acquisition presents challenges, particularly in the proliferation of misinformation and the

decline in critical engagement with credible sources (Boyd, 2017). Studies indicate that unchecked exposure to unverified digital content can shape speech patterns, influence linguistic behaviors, and, in some cases, contribute to cognitive disengagement (Carr, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic further amplified these concerns, as prolonged digital immersion led to notable shifts in language use and media consumption habits among younger demographics (Livingstone & Helsper, 2021).

Given these developments, the incorporation of media literacy into language curricula has become imperative. Equipping learners with critical digital literacy skills enables them to navigate online resources effectively, discern reliable information, and maximize the benefits of digital language learning tools. As technological innovations continue to redefine pedagogical landscapes, adapting language education to the digital era remains essential for fostering linguistic proficiency and intercultural competence in international studies.

**1.1 Statement of the Problem**

The increasing integration of digital tools in education has transformed language learning, with social media platforms emerging as potential pedagogical tools. However, despite the growing recognition of social media's role in facilitating interactive and immersive learning experiences, limited research exists on its effectiveness in French language acquisition, particularly within the context of international studies.

French remains a critical language in diplomacy, global commerce, and international relations, making its mastery essential for students in international studies. While traditional methods of language instruction emphasize classroom-based learning, textbooks and structured curricula, digital platforms that promote engagement through informal learning. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these tools in achieving linguistic proficiency and cultural competency remains underexplored. Without a clear pedagogical approach, the incorporation of social media into French language education risks being inconsistent and unstructured, potentially limiting its impact on learners' proficiency and cultural understanding. Addressing these gaps necessitates a comprehensive assessment of the

effectiveness of social media as a pedagogical tool for French language learning in international studies.

### 1.2. Research Objectives

This work is drawing on the following objectives

1. To examine the role of social media in promoting French language learning by analyzing its impact on language acquisition, engagement and cultural exposure.
2. To identify the benefits and challenges associated with the use of social media as a pedagogical tool in French language education within the context of international studies.
3. To propose structured recommendations for effectively integrating social media into language curricula to optimize learning outcomes.

### 1.3. Research Questions

This study is rooted on the following interrogations:

1. How does social media contribute to French language acquisition in terms of vocabulary development, listening comprehension and interactive learning?
2. What are the primary challenges faced by students and educators when utilizing social media for language learning, including issues related to content reliability, digital distractions and pedagogical structure?
3. What strategies can be implemented to enhance the pedagogical effectiveness of social media in international studies, ensuring structured, meaningful and outcome-driven language learning experiences?

## 2. Thematic Review of Related Literature

In recent years, the integration of social media into language learning has gained significant attention among scholars and educators. With its interactive and immersive nature, social media presents new opportunities for vocabulary acquisition, engagement, and exposure to authentic language use. However, its impact on language proficiency remains a subject of debate, as concerns about writing quality and academic language standards persist. This thematic review explores the dual role of social media in English language learning, drawing on

existing research to assess its benefits and challenges in fostering effective language acquisition.

(Fauziah and Sutrisno's 2025) study discusses the role of social media in English language learning among secondary school students. Using a quantitative research design, the study collected data from 31 students at SMKN 1 Bantul, Yogyakarta through closed surveys assessing their perceptions of social media's usefulness. The study evaluates social media's impact across three dimensions—cognitive, affective and conative—highlighting students' positive attitudes toward using social media for English learning. The study emphasize on how specific platforms like YouTube, Instagram and TikTok aid in listening and reading skills development. the authors maintains that by providing engaging, readily accessible content, these platforms offer authentic exposure to English, which aligns with modern trends in language acquisition that emphasize multimodal learning and interactive experiences. This supports previous findings that social media serves as an informal learning environment where learners are exposed to real-world language use. But, the study also acknowledges potential challenges such as the risk of exposure to non-standard language varieties and distractions that may hinder focused learning. This aligns with concerns in the field that while social media fosters engagement and motivation, it also requires critical awareness and guidance to ensure that learners benefit from credible sources. No doubt, their study is a significant addition to research on digital learning environments, particularly in the context of secondary education in Indonesia. Its findings reinforce the growing importance of social media as an educational tool, while also cautioning against its unregulated use in formal language learning contexts. Future research could build upon this work by examining longitudinal effects of social media on language proficiency and exploring strategies to mitigate its drawbacks.

(Aldbea's 2025) study provides an in-depth analysis of the impact of social media on English language acquisition among Libyan students. It highlights the advantages of digital platforms in language learning, particularly in enhancing vocabulary, listening comprehension and pronunciation. The study emphasizes the motivational aspects of social media, showcasing how quizzes, multimedia content, and real-time interactions with native speakers contribute to student

engagement and confidence in spoken English. One of the strengths of this study lies in its comparative analysis of social media and traditional learning methods. The research reveals that students prefer digital platforms due to their accessibility, dynamic content and interactive features. However, Aldbea also presents a balanced discussion by acknowledging the limitations of social media as an educational tool. Issues such as distractions, exposure to informal language and the challenge of verifying credible learning resources are noted as potential hindrances to effective language acquisition. These challenges highlight the need for structured guidance when integrating social media into formal education. A particularly significant contribution of the study is its recommendation for a blended learning approach, which merges classroom instruction with social media-based learning. This approach seeks to maximize the benefits of social media while mitigating its disadvantages. The study's conclusion underscores the transformative potential of social media in language learning while advocating for a strategic and structured implementation.

(Fadillah and Gumilar 2023) analyze the intersection of social media, multilingual identity and language learning with emphasize on high school students in Indonesia. The study employs a qualitative research approach, using interviews to understand how students engage with social media in shaping their linguistic and cultural identities. The authors argue that social media serves as a powerful tool for identity construction, particularly for multilingual students navigating dominant cultural and linguistic influences. Key findings highlight three primary motivational factors driving students' engagement with social media: (1) the perceived ideologies embedded in social media platforms, (2) the validation of their linguistic and cultural capital and (3) the representation of their desired identities. These factors play a crucial role in shaping students' investment in learning dominant languages, as they seek social acceptance and cultural integration. The study further reinforces how social media engagement reshapes students' expectations of acculturation, influences their attitudes toward learning foreign languages and enhances their access to linguistic resources. The work posits that engaging with different linguistic communities online, students are exposed to diverse linguistic inputs, which in turn motivates them to refine their foreign language skills. However, the study could benefit from a broader demographic

scope, as the findings are limited to Indonesian high school students. Future research could examine how these findings apply to other multilingual contexts or different age groups. Their study contributes to the growing body of research on digital language learning, demonstrating how social media serves as both a linguistic and cultural bridge for multilingual learners.

(Haque's 2023) work evaluates the role of social media as a pedagogical tool in language acquisition, emphasizing its transformative influence on communication, information sharing, and entertainment. The article highlights how social media platforms, such as Facebook contribute to the development of writing skills and vocabulary among students. By analyzing participants' perspectives, the study finds strong support for integrating social media into language learning, suggesting that these digital tools significantly enhance language acquisition both in formal educational settings and informal learning environments. The study acknowledges social media's ability to engage students in meaningful communication, fostering exposure to authentic language use. More so, the study rearticulate the motivational aspects of social media in language learning, as students are more likely to engage with digital content that is interactive and aligned with their interests. However, while the study provides valuable insights into the benefits of social media in language education, it lacks an in-depth discussion of potential challenges, such as the risk of exposure to informal or incorrect language structures, distractions, or overreliance on digital platforms at the expense of traditional pedagogical methods. A more balanced approach, addressing both the advantages and limitations, would strengthen the study's contribution to the field of language learning research. Overall, Haque presents a compelling argument for the incorporation of social media into language education. Future research could build on these findings by exploring specific pedagogical strategies for maximizing the benefits of social media while mitigating its drawbacks in language learning.

In another study, (Ziaul. 2023) examines the role of social media in language learning, emphasizing its effectiveness as a pedagogical tool. The study highlights how platforms such as Facebook, instant messengers, and social networking sites contribute to language acquisition by enhancing writing skills, vocabulary,

pronunciation, grammar, and critical thinking. Social media is portrayed as an interactive medium that fosters communication and engagement, making language learning more accessible and dynamic both within and outside formal education settings. A key finding of the study is that students generally support the integration of social media into language learning, as it improves motivation and participation. Additionally, the study underscores the importance of social interaction in acquiring language skills, noting that social media platforms provide both synchronous and asynchronous communication tools that expose learners to real-world language use. Haque's study contributes viewpoints to the evolving role of digital platforms in education. Future research could offer a more detailed comparative analysis of different social media platforms and their specific effects on various aspects of language learning. However, while the study presents the positive aspects of social media in education, it could further explore challenges such as distractions, misinformation and the varying language proficiency levels of users.

(Zhou, 2022) investigates the multifaceted impact of social media on language learning, focusing on two key aspects: its role as a tool for developing language skills and its function as a platform for intercultural communication. The study systematically examines how social media facilitates improvements in reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills while also enhancing socio-pragmatic abilities and second-language (L2) motivation through global interactions. One of the study's major contributions is its emphasis on the benefits of social media in language learning, such as providing access to authentic language input, reducing anxiety in language practice that foster intercultural exchanges and promoting learner collaboration. These elements align with contemporary language acquisition theories that highlight the significance of real-world exposure and communicative practice in mastering a second language. However, Zhou also acknowledges the challenges associated with using social media as a learning tool. The study points to potential distractions, the risk of exposure to conflicting or unreliable information, and the need for structured guidance to optimize learning outcomes. These limitations underscore the necessity of incorporating social media thoughtfully into educational frameworks to maximize its advantages while mitigating its drawbacks. The paper concludes by suggesting future research

directions, particularly emphasizing the need for empirical studies to further validate the effectiveness of social media in language learning. Zhou's work provides a balanced perspective on both the opportunities and challenges posed by digital platforms, making it a valuable resource for educators and researchers interested in the intersection of technology and language education.

The study by (Zainal and Rahmati 2020) explores the influence of social media on English vocabulary acquisition and language learning interest among students in Malaysian universities. The research investigates both the positive and negative impacts of social media on language development. Their study provide important perspectives into the dual impact of social media on vocabulary and language learning. To the authors, while social media serves as a powerful tool for enhancing engagement, vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation, it also poses challenges related to writing proficiency and language quality control. The research calls for a balanced approach to digital learning, ensuring that students reap the benefits of social media while maintaining strong academic language skills. The findings of (Zainal and Rahmati 2020) align with prior research indicating that social media positively influences second language acquisition. For example, Bicen, Sadikoglu, and Sadikoglu (2015) emphasized that social media facilitates effective foreign language learning through immersive digital interactions. Alharthy and Alfaki (2014) also found that social media provides more effective exposure to contemporary language use compared to traditional learning methods.

The reviewed literature underscores the significant role of social media in language acquisition, engagement and cultural exposure. Despite the breadth of existing studies, gaps remain in understanding how social media can be systematically integrated into formal French language curricula within international studies programs. While Fauziah and Sutrisno (2025) provide insights into students' perceptions of social media in English language learning, their study does not specifically address French language acquisition or its implications for multilingual learners. Aldbea (2025) examines English language learning in Libya but does not consider how social media facilitates cultural immersion in a second language. Fadillah and Gumilar (2023) explore identity construction through multilingual social media engagement but do not focus on pedagogical structuring. Similarly,

Haque (2023) and Ziaul (2023) discuss social media as a general language-learning tool but do not analyze its effectiveness in discipline-specific contexts such as international studies. Zhou (2022) and Zainal and Rahmati (2020) acknowledge the advantages and limitations of social media for language learning but do not propose concrete frameworks for integrating these tools into structured education. Given these gaps, further research is necessary to evaluate the pedagogical efficacy of social media within French language learning in international studies programs.

**3. Theoretical Framework**

This study draws on Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982) and Siemens' Connectivist Learning Theory (2005) to examine how comprehensible input and digital networks facilitate French language acquisition in international studies**.** Krashen's Input Hypothesis is a fundamental theory in second language acquisition, emphasizing that learners acquire language most effectively when they are exposed to comprehensible input—language that is slightly above their current proficiency level but still understandable with contextual cues. This hypothesis suggests that for learners to progress, they need i+1 input, where "i" represents their current level and "+1" represents slightly more advanced linguistic structures that challenge them without overwhelming them. In the context of French language acquisition for international studies, comprehensible input plays a crucial role in diplomatic, economic and cultural engagement. Exposure to authentic materials such as news articles, policy documents and diplomatic speeches in French allows learners to develop the necessary linguistic skills for global communication. Moreover, digital platforms, including social media and online language resources provide learners with first hand exposure to native speakers, fostering immersion even outside the classroom. Krashen's theory also highlights the affective filter hypothesis, which suggests that factors such as anxiety, motivation and self-confidence influence language acquisition. Digital tools and interactive social media environments can help lower this affective filter by creating engaging and stress-free learning opportunities.

Siemens' Connectivist Learning Theory shifts the focus from traditional knowledge transmission to networked learning, emphasizing that learning occurs through connections within digital environments rather than through passive absorption of

information. This theory is particularly relevant in the digital age where information is constantly evolving and learners must develop skills to navigate, filter and apply knowledge from multiple sources. Siemens' theory underscores the importance of digital literacy, collaborative learning, and real-time engagement with global communities. Language learners today do not solely rely on textbooks or traditional classroom instruction; instead, they engage with YouTube language tutorials, podcasts, online courses and interactive discussion forums to enhance their proficiency. Social media platforms such as Twitter, LinkedIn and specialized discussion groups enable students to engage with native French speakers, diplomats, researchers and professionals, thereby expanding their learning beyond classroom boundaries.

Krashen's theory emphasizes the importance of exposure to meaningful and comprehensible language input which can be facilitated through digital tools, interactive media, and real-world content in French. Siemens' theory highlights the role of digital networks in making this input widely accessible, allowing learners to engage in collaborative, self-directed and technology-enhanced learning environments. This theoretical foundations supports the study's argument that social media and digital technologies play a transformative role in shaping modern language learning, making French more accessible and relevant in international contexts.

**4. Research Design: Qualitative Case Study Approach**

A qualitative case study approach is used to analyze the effectiveness of social media in language learning. This method allows for an in-depth investigation of real-life experiences, perspectives and behaviors of students and educators. Unlike quantitative research, which focuses on numerical data, qualitative research aims to understand subjective experiences, motivations and interpretations. The case study approach is particularly effective in examining how students and educators engage with social media tools for language acquisition, as it provides rich, contextual insights. Also, the study employs online surveys to assess the effectiveness of social media in language learning. Surveys are useful for gathering first-hand information from students and educators about their experiences, challenges and perceived benefits of using platforms like YouTube, Instagram and

TikTok for language acquisition. The surveys include open-ended and closed-ended questions to capture both qualitative and quantitative insights. Open-ended questions allow participants to express their thoughts in detail, while closed-ended questions help identify common trends.

In the context of sampling and study population, it involves students enrolled in international studies programs with a French language component. This group is selected because they are actively engaged in learning French as a second or foreign language, making them suitable participants for assessing the role of social media in language acquisition. These students are likely to use social media for cultural exposure, pronunciation practice and vocabulary development. Thematic analysis is used to identify recurring themes and patterns in responses from students and educators. This involves coding the qualitative survey responses and categorizing them into key themes such as engagement, motivation, challenges and learning outcomes. The study analyzes responses to determine how frequently certain perceptions or behaviors appear among participants.

**5. The Impact of Digital Tools on Student Engagement and Motivation**

The inclusion of digital tools into education has revolutionized the way students learn, making lessons more interactive and engaging. Digital tools such as educational apps, learning management systems, gamification and AI-driven platforms provide learners with diverse resources that enhance their motivation and involvement in the learning process. One of the primary ways digital tools impact student engagement is by fostering interactive and participatory learning environments. Platforms like Google Classroom, Kahoot! and Quizlet allow students to engage with materials in ways that are more dynamic than traditional methods. Gamified learning tools such as Duolingo and Classcraft, leverage competition, rewards, and challenges to maintain student interest, making learning feel less like a chore and more like an engaging activity. These platforms also promote self-paced learning, allowing students to interact with materials at their own speed which is particularly beneficial for students with different learning abilities.

Furthermore, digital tools also contribute significantly to student motivation by providing instant feedback and personalized learning paths. Unlike traditional learning methods, where students must wait for teacher evaluations, digital tools allow learners to receive immediate results on quizzes, writing assignments, and language exercises. This instant feedback mechanism helps students track their progress, identify weaknesses, and stay motivated to improve. AI-powered learning platforms like Khan Academy and adaptive testing systems use data-driven insights to customize learning experiences, ensuring that students receive materials suited to their proficiency levels. Despite these benefits, digital learning tools present some challenges. One major issue is distraction, as students may be tempted to engage in non-educational activities while using digital devices. Additionally, the accessibility gap—often referred to as the digital divide—means that not all students have equal access to high-quality digital resources. Furthermore, excessive screen time can lead to cognitive overload, digital fatigue and reduced attention spans. Overall, digital tools have a profound impact on student engagement and motivation by creating interactive, self-paced, and feedback-driven learning experiences. However, for these tools to be truly effective, educators must implement them strategically, ensuring they complement traditional teaching methods rather than replace them entirely.

**5.1. Pedagogical Approaches to French Language Learning**

The teaching of the French language has evolved over time, adopting different pedagogical approaches to enhance learners' proficiency. These methods range from traditional grammar-based instruction to communicative and technology-driven approaches, each presenting unique advantages depending on the learners' needs and contexts. Historically, the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) was one of the earliest approaches to teaching French. This method focused on translating texts between French and the learners' native language while emphasizing grammar rules and vocabulary memorization. While GTM helped students develop reading and writing skills, it was often criticized for neglecting speaking and listening abilities that lead to passive language learning. In contrast, the Direct Method emphasized oral communication, discouraging translation and promoting immersion in the target language. Teachers using this approach encouraged students to think and speak in French from the beginning, using visual aids and

repetition to reinforce comprehension. This method was particularly effective in building conversational skills, but it required extensive teacher interaction, which could be challenging in large classrooms.

More so, with the rise of communicative language teaching (CLT), the Communicative Approach became a dominant pedagogical method. This approach prioritizes real-life communication, focusing on interaction, dialogue, and role-playing activities to help students develop fluency. CLT promotes functional language use, encouraging students to communicate meaningfully rather than merely memorize vocabulary and grammar rules. A related method, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), involves engaging students in meaningful tasks such as writing emails, ordering food in a restaurant, or debating in French, ensuring that language learning is both practical and contextually relevant. Technology has further transformed French language pedagogy by integrating digital tools such as language learning apps (e.g., Duolingo, Rosetta Stone), virtual exchange programs, and AI-driven chatbots. These digital resources offer learners opportunities to practice pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary in an interactive setting. Online platforms like Tandem and HelloTalk allow students to converse with native speakers, fostering cultural exchange and language immersion. Additionally, the use of French-language films, podcasts and online courses has expanded access to authentic linguistic materials.

More so, immersion-based approaches remain highly effective for mastering French. Study abroad programs, French-speaking communities and classroom simulations help learners engage with the language in real-life contexts. The use of Francophone literature and media also plays a crucial role in exposing students to the cultural aspects of the language. However, language learning presents challenges, including pronunciation difficulties, grammatical complexity and learners' anxiety in speaking French. To address these issues, a blended learning approach that combines traditional instruction with digital tools and communicative methods is often recommended. This approach ensures a well-rounded learning experience that balances theoretical knowledge with practical application. In conclusion, pedagogical approaches to French language learning have evolved from rigid grammar-based methods to interactive and technology-

enhanced models. The most effective teaching strategies prioritize communication, cultural immersion and personalized learning experiences to help students develop fluency and confidence in French.

**5.2. Traditional Methods vs. Technology-Driven Approaches**

Traditional methods of language learning such as rote memorization, grammar drills and translation exercises have long been used in educational settings. These methods often emphasize written exercises, repetition, and direct instruction, focusing on grammar rules and vocabulary lists. While these approaches provide a strong grammatical foundation, they are often criticized for being rigid and lacking in engagement, particularly when it comes to developing speaking and listening skills. For example, in traditional French language classrooms, students might spend considerable time conjugating verbs like avoir and être or translating sentences from French to English. They may complete fill-in-the-blank exercises to practice verb tenses or memorize lists of irregular verbs without necessarily applying them in real-life contexts. While these exercises help reinforce grammatical accuracy, they often fail to develop communicative competence. In contrast, technology-driven approaches incorporate digital tools, multimedia content, and interactive learning environments to make language learning more dynamic. Language learning apps like Duolingo and Babbel use gamification techniques to engage learners through rewards and progress tracking. Online platforms such as Quizlet offer flashcards with audio pronunciation, allowing students to practice vocabulary in a more interactive way. Virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI)-powered chatbots, such as ChatGPT for language learning, provide real-time conversational practice, simulating real-world interactions. An example of a technology-driven approach is the use of virtual language exchanges, where students engage in conversations with native French speakers through platforms like Tandem or HelloTalk. Instead of relying solely on textbook exercises, students can practice real-life communication, improving their fluency and listening comprehension. Additionally, digital storytelling tools such as Book Creator allow learners to create and narrate their own stories in French, making the learning process more creative and immersive.

Despite the advantages of technology-driven approaches, some challenges remain. Digital tools may create distractions, and students without internet access or digital literacy skills may struggle to use them effectively. Moreover, while technology enhances engagement, it should be integrated with structured learning to ensure a balance between interactive activities and formal instruction.

### 5.3. The Role of Multimedia Content in Enhancing Comprehension and Retention

Multimedia content plays a crucial role in language learning by improving comprehension and retention through audio, visual, and interactive elements. According to Mayer's (2009) Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, learners absorb and retain information better when presented with a combination of words and images rather than text alone. This principle is particularly relevant in French language education, where multimedia resources such as videos, podcasts, and interactive exercises can significantly enhance learning outcomes. For instance, French language learners often struggle with listening comprehension due to fast speech patterns and unfamiliar accents. Using French-language podcasts like InnerFrench or Coffee Break French allows students to hear native speakers in authentic contexts, improving their ability to recognize words and phrases in spoken French. Additionally, watching subtitled French films, such as La Haine or Le Petit Nicolas, provides learners with visual context, reinforcing word meanings through gestures and expressions. Research by Vanderplank (2016) supports the use of subtitles in second-language learning, showing that they enhance vocabulary retention and listening skills.

Furthermore, visual storytelling is another powerful multimedia tool. Infographics and animated videos help learners grasp complex grammatical structures. For example, an animated video explaining the difference between passé composé and imparfait with real-life scenarios makes it easier for students to understand and remember these past tenses. Studies by Paivio (1991) on Dual Coding Theory indicate that visual and verbal representations strengthen memory, making language learning more effective. Interactive multimedia content such as language learning games and digital quizzes, further supports retention. Websites like TV5Monde and BBC Languages offer interactive exercises where learners can

practice comprehension through news clips, dialogues, and quizzes. Studies by Plass, Chun, Mayer and Leutner (2003) suggest that interactive multimedia fosters deeper engagement and improves language acquisition. Bref, multimedia content enriches French language learning by making abstract concepts more concrete, enhancing comprehension through visual and auditory reinforcement and fostering long-term retention through engaging and interactive experiences. However, for optimal results, educators should blend multimedia with structured learning to maintain a balanced approach.

**5.4. Benefits of Using Social Media for French Language Learning**

Social media has emerged as a powerful tool for learning French, offering diverse benefits that enhance student engagement, motivation and language proficiency. Unlike traditional learning methods, which often rely on textbooks and structured lessons, social media provides dynamic, interactive and immersive experiences that facilitate language acquisition in a more natural and engaging way. Some key benefits observed include:

I) Increased motivation due to engaging and visually appealing content.
II) Exposure to real-world language use, including informal speech, idioms and cultural dynamics.
III) Greater accessibility, allowing students to practice anytime and anywhere.
IV) Opportunities for personalized learning, where students can follow pages, influencers, or educators that match their interests and learning goals.

One of the most significant advantages of using social media for French language learning is the exposure to authentic native content. Social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok provide an abundance of videos, podcasts and posts created by native French speakers. This exposure allows learners to:

I) Hear natural pronunciation and intonation that may not always be present in classroom recordings or textbooks.
II) Understand regional variations of the language, including accents and slang, making their comprehension skills more adaptable.
III) Absorb cultural contexts such as gestures, humor and social norms which are integral to effective communication.

For instance, following French influencers, news channels and educational pages on social media exposes students to everyday French as it is spoken by native speakers. Additionally, platforms like Duolingo and TV5MONDE offer interactive content that reinforces vocabulary and grammar through real-world contexts. This kind of exposure supports Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982), which suggests that language learners acquire proficiency when they are exposed to comprehensible input slightly beyond their current level.

Another key benefit of social media is the opportunity for real-time interaction with native speakers and fellow learners. Unlike traditional learning environments where communication is often limited to the classroom, social media facilitates immediate conversations through:

I) Comment sections on posts and videos, where students can engage in discussions.
II) Language exchange groups on platforms like Facebook, Discord and Reddit, where learners can practice writing and receive feedback.
III) Live sessions on Instagram, TikTok, and Clubhouse where students can listen to and interact with native speakers in real time.
IV) Messaging apps like WhatsApp and Telegram, where learners can join study groups and communicate with peers in French.

These interactions foster language immersion and communicative competence, as learners practice their skills in meaningful, real-life contexts. According to Swain's Output Hypothesis (1985), language acquisition is strengthened when learners are encouraged to produce the language actively. Engaging in conversations on social media forces students to formulate responses, correct their errors, and improve their fluency over time. Also, interacting with native speakers boosts confidence and reduces language anxiety as learners become accustomed to real-world communication without the pressure of a formal classroom setting. The study indicates that social media plays a transformative role in French language learning by providing authentic exposure, real-time communication, and interactive learning experiences. While traditional methods remain valuable, integrating social media into language instruction can significantly enhance motivation, comprehension, and fluency. However, challenges such as exposure to informal

language, distractions and unreliable sources must be carefully managed to ensure a balanced and structured learning approach.

**6. Discussion: Misinformation and Unreliable Language Content**

One of the key challenges of using social media for French language learning is the prevalence of misinformation and unreliable content. Unlike structured classroom instruction, where certified educators provide accurate materials, social media platforms contain a mix of high-quality educational resources and user-generated content which may lack credibility. Many language-learning influencers or social media users may unknowingly teach incorrect grammar, pronunciation, or colloquial expressions that deviate from standard French. Regional dialects and informal slang found in social media content may mislead learners about proper usage in academic or professional settings. Unlike textbooks and academic resources, social media posts are rarely peer-reviewed, making it difficult to verify the accuracy of language instruction.

**Solution:** Learners should rely on verified educational pages, language apps, and official platforms such as TV5MONDE, BBC Languages, or Duolingo and cross-check information with authoritative sources.

Furthermore, while social media provides access to diverse and engaging learning materials, it lacks structured guidance and formal assessment. Traditional classrooms offer curriculum-based learning, where teachers monitor progress, correct mistakes and provide feedback which is often missing in self-directed social media learning. Unlike a classroom setting where teachers can correct pronunciation and grammar errors, social media-based learning does not always provide direct feedback. Without a structured curriculum, learners may jump between different topics without mastering foundational grammar and vocabulary. Also, the absence of graded assessments or standardized tests makes it difficult for students to measure their progress effectively.

**Solution:** Blended learning approaches—where students use social media as a supplement while following structured coursework—can ensure balanced and guided learning experiences.

### 6.1. Comparison of Traditional Learning and Social Media Learning

Traditional learning methods such as face-to-face classroom instruction, textbooks and language labs, have long been the standard for language acquisition. However, with the rise of social media and digital tools, educators and learners are increasingly exploring new technology-driven approaches.

| Aspect | Traditional Learning | Social Media Learning |
|---|---|---|
| Structure | Follows a syllabus with set learning objectives | Flexible, self-paced, but may lack structure |
| Instructor Feedback | Immediate, personalized correction and evaluation | Limited feedback, mostly self-corrected |
| Engagement | Can be passive (lectures, reading) | Highly interactive with multimedia content |
| Accessibility | Restricted to classroom hours and materials | Available anytime and anywhere |
| Cost | Tuition fees, textbook expenses | Mostly free or low-cost |

While traditional methods provide structured learning and expert feedback, social media fosters engagement, accessibility, and real-world exposure. The most effective approach may be a combination of both.

### 6.2. Strengths and Weaknesses of Social Media vs. Classroom-Based Instruction

Social media offers numerous advantages in language learning, but it also presents several weaknesses when compared to traditional classroom settings.

**Strengths of Social Media Learning:**

- ✓ Engaging visual and interactive content enhances memory retention.
- ✓ Access to real-life conversations, cultural nuances and native speakers.
- ✓ Flexibility and accessibility—learn anytime, anywhere.
- ✓ Encourages peer interaction through discussion forums, comments, and language groups.

**Weaknesses of Social Media Learning:**

- ❖ Risk of misinformation and unreliable resources.
- ❖ Lack of structured curriculum and formal assessments.
- ❖ Distractions and time mismanagement due to non-educational content.
- ❖ Limited one-on-one teacher guidance and instant correction of errors.

**Solution:** Integrating social media tools within structured classroom settings can enhance engagement while maintaining academic rigor.

### 6.3. Recommendations for Effective Social Media Integration in Language Learning

| Recommendation Area | Description |
|---|---|
| Strategies for Effective Integration of Social Media | Encouraging structured implementation of social media in the curriculum for language learning. |
| Guidelines for Educators in Curating High-Quality Digital Content | Teachers should evaluate and select credible online resources for language instruction. |
| Developing Structured Learning Modules Using Social Media Tools | Creating lesson plans that incorporate social media for better engagement. |
| Encouraging Student Engagement Through Interactive Assignments | Using quizzes, live discussions, and collaborative projects on social media platforms. |
| Policy Implications for Language Curriculum Design | Incorporating social media strategies into official language education policies. |
| Incorporating Digital Literacy into Language Education Policies | Teaching students how to critically assess online language resources. |
| Training Educators to Effectively Use Social Media for Language Instruction | Providing workshops and training sessions for teachers on using digital tools effectively. |

## 7. Conclusion

This study has provided a comprehensive analysis of the role of social media in promoting French language learning with focus on its impact on language acquisition, student engagement and cultural exposure. The findings demonstrate that social media platforms offer a dynamic and interactive environment that facilitates vocabulary development, listening comprehension and meaningful linguistic interactions. Through authentic native content and real-time communication with speakers of French, learners gain increased exposure to the target language, which fosters both fluency and cultural competence. These findings address the first research question by illustrating how social media enhances language learning through engagement with multimedia resources, user-generated content and peer interactions. The study has identified both the benefits and challenges associated with social media as a pedagogical tool. While social media offers learners personalized, self-paced learning opportunities and engaging multimedia tools, it also presents notable challenges such as misinformation, digital distractions and unstructured learning experiences. The thematic analysis of qualitative data highlighted the necessity for structured pedagogical frameworks to address these limitations, responding to the second research question on challenges faced by students and educators. The study reinforces the importance of integrating credible, well-curated digital content into the language learning process while ensuring that educators provide structured guidance to optimize learning outcomes.

To achieve the third objective, the study proposed structured recommendations for effectively incorporating social media into language curricula. Strategies such as the development of structured learning modules, the curation of high-quality digital content and the encouragement of interactive assignments were emphasized. Additionally, policy recommendations, including the incorporation of digital literacy into language education frameworks and the training of educators in social media pedagogy, were outlined. These proposals directly address the third research question by offering practical strategies to enhance the effectiveness of social media in language education, ensuring that it serves as a meaningful and structured tool for international studies programs. From a pedagogical standpoint, the study underscores the urgent need for educator

training in digital pedagogy, ensuring that teachers can effectively integrate social media into structured learning. The study posits that institutions should develop clear guidelines on digital literacy and content to help students navigate online language resources critically. This study contributes to the growing body of research on the intersection of digital tools and language learning, with several implications for future research and pedagogical practices. Future studies could analyze longitudinal effects of social media on language proficiency to understand how sustained engagement with digital platforms influences long-term learning outcomes.

**Works Cited**

Aldbea, A. H. *The Role of Social Media in English Language Learning in Libya*. International Journal on Science and Technology, vol. 16, no. 1, 2025, DOI: 10.71097/ijsat.v16.i1.1706.

Bialystok, Ellen. *Bilingualism: The Good, the Bad, and the Indifferent. Bilingualism*: Language and Cognition, vol. 19, no. 1, 2017, pp. 201-205.

Boyd, Danah. *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens*. Yale University Press, 2017.

Carr, Nicholas. *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains*. W. W. Norton & Company, 2020.

Crystal, David. *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language. 3rd ed.,* Cambridge University Press, 2020.

Dearden, Julie. *English as a Medium of Instruction – a Growing Global Phenomenon*. British Council, 2015.

Fadillah, A. A. and Gumilar, G. *The Impact of Social Media on the Identity Construction of Multilingual Students*. Transformational Language Literature and Technology Overview in Learning (TRANSTOOL), vol. 2, no. 3, 2023, doi:10.55047/transtool.v2i3.1381.

Fauziah, A. and Sutrisno, D. *High School Students' Perceptions of Using Social Media in Learning English: A Quantitative Study*. Teaching English as a Foreign Language Journal, 2025.

Godwin-Jones, Robert. *Second Language Acquisition in the Digital Age*. Language Learning & Technology, vol. 22, no. 1, 2018, pp. 1-15.

Greenhow, Christine and Cathy Lewin. *Social Media and Education: Reconceptualizing the Boundaries of Formal and Informal Learning*. Learning, Media and Technology, vol. 41, no. 1, 2016, pp. 6-30.

Haque, Md. Ziaul. *The Use of Social Media Platforms in Language Learning: A Critical Study*. Journal of Global Research in Education and Social Science, vol. 17, no. 1, 2023, pp. 20–28.

Haque, Md. Ziaul. *The Use of Social Media Platforms in Language Learning: A Critical Study*. Journal of Global Research in Education and Social Science, vol. 17, no. 18, 2023, DOI:10.56557/jogress/2023/v17i18109.

Livingstone, Sonia, and Ellen Helsper. *Gradations in Digital Inclusion: Children, Young People and the Digital Divide.* New Media & Society, vol. 23, no. 3, 2021, pp. 12-30.

Mayer, R. E. *Multimedia Learning*. Cambridge University Press. 2009

Mayer, Richard E. *Multimedia Learning*. Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Paivio, A. *Dual Coding Theory: Retrospect and Current Status*. Canadian Journal of Psychology, 45(3), 255–287. 1991

Paivio, Allan. *Dual Coding Theory: Retrospect and Current Status*. Canadian Journal of Psychology, vol. 45, no. 3, 1991, pp. 255–287.

Plass, J. L., Chun, D. M., Mayer, R. E., & Leutner, D. *Cognitive Load in Reading a Foreign Language Text with Multimedia Aids and the Influence of Verbal and Pictorial Annotations*. Computers in Human Behavior, 19(2), 221-243. 2003

Plass, Jan L., et al. *Cognitive Load in Reading a Foreign Language Text with Multimedia Aids and the Influence of Verbal and Pictorial Annotations*. Computers in Human Behavior, vol. 19, no. 2, 2003, pp. 221-243.

Romanova, I. V., O. V. Konnova, and A. V. Glazkova. *The Impact of Social Media on Language and Communication*. Russian Linguistic Bulletin, no. 3 (51), 2024, https://rulb.org/archive/3-51-2024-march/10.18454/RULB.2024.51.20.

Thorne, Steven. *The Intercultural Turn and Language Learning in the Digital Sphere*. Language Teaching, vol. 49, no. 4, 2016, pp. 21-42.

Vanderplank, R. *Captioned Media in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching: Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing as Tools for Language Learning*. Palgrave Macmillan. 2016

Vanderplank, Robert. *Captioned Media in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching: Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing as Tools for Language Learning*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Weber, Jean-Jacques and Kristine Horner. *Introducing Multilingualism: A Social Approach*. Routledge, 2012.

Zainal, Zahirah, and Noor Hanim Rahmati. *Social Media and Its Influence on Vocabulary and Language Learning: A Case Study.* European Journal of Education Studies, vol. 7, no. 11, 2020, Zhou, Y. *Impacts of Social Media on Language Learning: A Review of Literature. Advances in Social Science* Education and Humanities Research, 2022.