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FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y DE LA EDUCACION

**CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y
EXTRANJEROS**

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Theme:

SOCIAL MEDIA AND READING COMPREHENSION

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DEDICATION

TO:

Myself, for the effort, dedication and perseverance throughout this collage journey.

My mom Tatiana and dad José who have always encouraged me to do my best and not to give up. My brother Javier and little sister Dany who I love with all my heart.

My grandparents, Rosa and José who watched me grow up and have always wished me well. To all my relatives who have stayed close giving me their pieces of advice and unconditional support.

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Patico.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUPERVISOR APPROVAL	ii
DECLARATION PAGE	iii
BOARD OF EXAMINERS APPROVAL PAGE	iv
COPYRIGHT REUSE	v
DEDICATION	vi
AKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
INDEX OF TABLES	x
ABSTRACT	xi
RESUMEN	xii
CHAPTER I. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	1
1.1. Research Background	1
Theoretical foundation of the variables	4
Independent Variable	4
Social-constructivism	4
Online-learning approach	5
Social Media	6
Dependent Variable	13
English Language skills	13
Reading skill	13
Reading comprehension	15
1.2. Objectives:	20
General objective	20
Specific objectives	20

1.3. Fulfillment of the objectives.....	20
CHAPTER II. METHODOLOGY	21
2.1 Materials.....	21
2.2 Methods.....	21
2.2.1 Research approach	21
2.2.2 Modality	21
2.2.3 Type of research /Research design.....	22
2.2.4 Techniques/tools	22
2.2.5 Population	22
2.2.6 Procedure.....	23
Research questions	24
CHAPTER III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	25
3.1 Analysis and discussion of the results.....	25
3.2 Discussion	34
CHAPTER IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	38
4.1 Conclusions	38
4.2 Recommendations	39
REFERENCES.....	39
ANNEXES	54

INDEX OF TABLES

Table 1: <i>Population</i>	23
Table 2: <i>Social media interaction</i>	25
Table 3: <i>Social media interaction</i>	26
Table 4: <i>Social media interaction</i>	26
Table 5: <i>Type of social media content</i>	27
Table 6: <i>Levels of reading comprehension</i>	28
Table 7: <i>Reading materials</i>	30
Table 8: <i>Open-ended questions</i>	31

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Theme: “Social media and Reading comprehension”

Author: Patricia Fernanda Acosta Montesdeoca

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ABSTRACT

The current research identified the most used social media platform for improving the reading comprehension skill of English learners. A total of 76 students (29 males and 47 females) of B1 level of Centro de Idiomas of Universidad Técnica de Ambato took part in a descriptive investigation. The data was collected through a survey with 18 items on a Likert scale and 7 open-ended questions. It was validated with the coefficient Cronbach's Alpha (0.991) and by three experts of the major. Additionally, the research was based on three research questions that were proposed to achieve the main objective of this study. The results revealed that the most common types of content consumed by English pupils were the rational-informative and rational-educational. In addition to this, it was discovered that students carried out a set of reading activities to enhance their reading comprehension competence when they use Facebook and Instagram. Furthermore, the majority of students know and use WhatsApp, however, they prefer Facebook and Instagram to access to reading content. Then the majority of learners reach a literal reading comprehension level and they only achieve the critical level of comprehension when they connect the text to their personal experiences. Finally, it was evidenced the preference for online and authentic reading materials as means for improving the reading comprehension ability. Nevertheless, traditional printed materials still being popular among English pupils.

Key words: *social media platforms, Facebook, Instagram, reading comprehension skill, types of content in social media, reading comprehension levels, types of reading materials.*

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RESUMEN

El presente trabajo de investigación tuvo como objetivo identificar la plataforma de redes sociales más utilizada para mejorar la habilidad de comprensión de lectura de los estudiantes de inglés. Un total de 76 estudiantes (29 hombres y 47 mujeres) de nivel B1 del Centro de Idiomas de la Universidad Técnica de Ambato participaron en una investigación descriptiva. Los datos se recopilieron mediante una encuesta con 18 preguntas en una escala de Likert y 7 preguntas abiertas. Se validó con el coeficiente Alfa de Cronbach (0.991) y por tres expertos. Además, la investigación se basó en tres preguntas de investigación que se propusieron para alcanzar el objetivo principal de este estudio. Los resultados revelaron que los tipos más comunes de contenido consumido por los estudiantes de inglés eran el informativo-racional y el educativo-racional. Así también, se descubrió que los estudiantes realizaban una serie de actividades de lectura para mejorar su competencia en comprensión de lectura cuando utilizaban Facebook e Instagram. Ahora bien, la mayoría de los estudiantes conocen y utilizan WhatsApp, sin embargo, prefieren Facebook e Instagram para acceder a contenido de lectura. Luego, la mayoría de los estudiantes alcanzan un nivel de comprensión de lectura literal y solo logran el nivel crítico de comprensión cuando conectan el texto con sus experiencias personales. Finalmente, se evidenció la preferencia por materiales de lectura en línea y auténticos como medios para mejorar la habilidad de comprensión de lectura. Sin embargo, los materiales impresos tradicionales siguen siendo populares entre los estudiantes de inglés.

***Palabras clave:** plataformas de redes sociales, Facebook, Instagram, habilidad de comprensión lectora, tipos de contenido en redes sociales, niveles de comprensión lectora, tipos de materiales de lectura.*

CHAPTER I. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. Research background

This section of the present study was intended to provide investigations to stand out the relevance of using social media, specifically Facebook and Instagram for the improvement of reading comprehension skills of English learners. This research work was supported with information obtained from different sources of academic databases, in particular Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Eric, etc. This information gathered is mainly in relation to the utilization of social media, in particular Facebook and Instagram platforms and its application regarding reading comprehension competence.

In a study conducted by Putri et al. (2021), the primary objective was to discover the use of Instagram application, through a specific learning account, to enhance students' reading skills. The account of @gurukumrd on Instagram was chosen for its focus on reading activities, encompassing narratives, comments, and viewpoints. This was a qualitative research using the Ethnography approach. The instruments were observations and interview guidelines, with a total of 37 students as population. The findings revealed that this Instagram account effectively aids pupils in grasp the meaning of reading materials and enable quick comprehension of straightforward paragraphs as well. Based on the research results, it can be inferred that the Instagram account @gurukumrd plays a positive role in enhancing students' reading proficiency.

The research made by Ananda (2023) aimed to clarify how Instagram can serve as means to enhance reading comprehension skills. This was a quasi-experimental investigation with a non-equivalent control design which involved 57 students from Building Drawing Engineering. The results of an independent sample T-test, conducted at a significance level, lead to the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis and the rejection of the null hypothesis. This suggested that the use of Instagram as a medium has a significant influence on enhancing students' reading comprehension skills. Instagram proved to be an effective educational tool due to its wealth of content and diverse accounts, capable of engaging students through visual elements such as images, videos, and extended video reels.

Authors like Fathi (2018) conducted a quasi-experimental investigation and adapted a qualitative and critical ethnography approach which meant to explore the

impact of using Instagram and another social media in learning reading comprehension of EFL beginners. Therefore, assessed the feasibility of integrating traditional classroom instruction with Instagram and another to motivate and to enhance reading comprehension skills. Furthermore, the researcher used a pre-test, post-test and an attitude questionnaire as instruments. It was found and concluded that technology plays a crucial role so that learners need some guidance before using social media platforms as educative tools to introduce Instagram into enjoyable and effective learning environments.

In addition, Erarslan (2019) carried out a research to investigate the viewpoints of 219 English university learners, regarding Instagram as an educational tool and its impact on students' language learning experiences with formal classroom instruction. The author used a mixed-method approach with a survey and interviews as instruments. Furthermore, the findings revealed that Instagram was the social media platform that sees the highest usage frequency among the participants, and they had positive impacts and expressed preference in relation to language learning purposes as well. Consequently, the writer concluded that Instagram could be a tool to learn English language, complementing formal instruction by exposing learners to the language by their everyday use of the platform.

Furthermore, Raja et al. (2021) developed a study intended to explore the perception of 41 students, from middle and high schools, of the utilization of online digital media to determine its connection with reading comprehension skills. There were two instruments used, one was a close-ended Likert-scale questionnaire and an adapted British Council reading comprehension test. The author found that most learners believed that online digital interactive media played a beneficial role in the process of acquiring a language. Additionally, the reading comprehension test indicated a favorable connection between students' viewpoints and their proficiency in reading comprehension. At the end, it was suggested that pupils' positive perceptions regarding the use of online media that allow to interact, for instance Facebook, Instagram or other, strongly align with their performance in reading comprehension.

Similarly, Marlina and Rokhayati (2019) led a research to determine if there was a notable and constructive impact of the frequency of posting Instagram updates on learners' reading comprehension competence. This study was applied to 35 eleventh

grade' students of the class IPS 3, of SMA Negeri 2 Purworej. The methodology employed was descriptive-quantitative, and additionally tools were questionnaires and a reading. The writers confirmed that the frequency with which students posted Instagram updates had a positive and significant impact on their reading comprehension. All in all, the authors concluded that it existed a significant strong connection between the frequency of Instagram status updates among students and their reading comprehension abilities.

On the other hand, Mutia et al. (2023) managed a research to investigate whether utilizing picture series on Instagram social media could enhance students' reading comprehension competence of procedural text. This was an experimental-quantitative study where the population was twelfth-grade students at SMA Negeri 5 Banda Aceh. The author used a pre-test and a post-test as instruments in this investigation. After the post-test, the findings revealed that there was a noteworthy enhancement which was reflected in the scores. Finally, the writers concluded that employing picture series on Instagram platform strengthened students' performance in reading comprehending of procedural text.

Additionally, Dewi et al. (2022) carried out a research to analyze the impact of Instagram in improving reading comprehension among students with different level of motivation. This research was quantitative and had an experimental approach. The population was a group of 51 learners at the 9th Grade of SMPK Santo Albertus Sampit. The authors used a questionnaire, a pre-test and a post-test as instruments. Moreover, after applying the post-test the writer discover that there was a distinction in the mean learning outcomes between the control group and the experimental group since the scores of the experimental class were higher. Finally, the researcher suggested that Instagram content proved to be more efficient than traditional media.

Another research conducted by Klimova and Zamborova (2020) aimed to investigate the impact of emerging technologies, particularly mobile applications including Instagram, Facebook, on second language reading comprehension. The authors conducted a descriptive research with a qualitative approach. Additionally, pre and post-reading comprehension tests, questionnaires, interviews and observations were the instruments to collect information of learners from 14 to 21 years. The findings suggested that most studies affirmed that mobile applications improved the

reading comprehension skill. In conclusion, there was a considerable potential for further research in mobile applications and its impact on reading comprehension, especially in large-scale randomized control studies with extended interventions.

A descriptive study managed by Sudiran (2022) aimed to examine how students perceive the use of Instagram as a tool for improving reading comprehension skill. Therefore, 156 pupils participated, took questionnaires and attended interviews. The results showed that learners held a positive opinion of Instagram as a tool for improving reading comprehension, considering that this platform result useful for searching reading materials, vocabulary, and English grammar resources. These results suggested that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers should consider incorporating Instagram into their teaching methods to enhance students' reading comprehension skills. For further investigations the author suggested using other very-well known social media applications like Facebook as well.

All the previous studies had a remarkable impact and contributed significantly to this research work by demonstrating, highlighting and exposing the effectiveness of using social media platforms into educational fields for reading comprehension. These investigations had in common that the social media platforms studied were Facebook and Instagram, which are the main applications to focus on this research work. They were very relevant because they explained how these social media platforms were previously used and with what purpose. Finally, the findings and conclusions discovered were relevant since they helped to determine and to support the present investigation.

Theoretical foundation of the variables

Independent variable

Social-constructivism

According to Saleem et al. (2021), the Vygotsky's social-constructivism theory involved a procedure in which language and culture extend the cognitive development of learners through active participation in the learning process. This theory was proposed by Piaget in 1968, it indicates that students learn and increment previous knowledge by experimenting, sharing, and collaborating with others around them, especially with other students in the classroom, educators and classmates. Briefly to conclude, learners actively built their knowledge by sharing their experiences and

insights with others, rather than just receiving instructions from teachers passively (Al-Qays et al., 2020).

The social-constructivism theory had two fundamental principles which were born from Vygotsky's theory of social learning. One of them was the concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) while the other was internalization of psychological functions, for example, logical way of thinking (Vygotsky, 1978). Holzman (2018) defined ZPD as other way to aid someone's learning through the guidance of an expert. In other words, the ZPD of learners grows with the support of experts or more competent peers and not working alone therefore, that is exactly what social-constructivism theory highlights.

On the other hand, Latif et al. (2019) mentioned that the learning process could be facilitated through social interaction explaining the utilization of social media in educative environments. It seems to be that social media is connected with social-constructivism theory since they both allow people to collaborate and participate within a context. Agbo et al. (2020) proposed a series of social-constructivism activities which are in line with social media and resulted beneficial in educational fields. For example, it allows users to work in groups, actively interact, to communicate, to share and to enhance learning outcomes. Although social media was not created specifically for education purposes so that not all learners use it as tool to learn languages (Alismaiel et al., 2022).

Online-learning approach

Several authors like Efriana (2021) recognized that online-learning approach referred to a part of distance education that specifically looks for the integration of ICT (Information and communication technologies) and internet networks in the learning process. Additionally, Hoy et al. (2018) concluded that online-learning is a method that involves an automatic learning process in which students would be able to overcome the disadvantages of batch learning. In summary, online learning mean to join ICT, technology, and applications into distance learning in order to support pupils to master knowledge.

Online learning approach could result beneficial and contradictory to use in the classroom because of some reasons. According to Yu (2021), online learning made

grow students' engagement, enhance the quality of discussions, and promote interactions between peers. Moreover, Dhawan (2020) indicated that online learning allows the creation of a more student-centered, new and flexible environment. On the contrary, Almahasees et al. (2021) suggested that online education obstructed students from actively participating in classroom activities, In addition, students miss out on the benefits of peer learning. All in all, online learning environments affect and impact both, positively and negatively ways in the academic field.

Online learning is a kind of education that is not necessary to be face-to-face. It is mainly known because it results closely connected with technology and ICT in order to facilitate, enhance, and support students to gain knowledge. Castro et al. (2019) noted the effectiveness of the application of ICT tools to improve and to raise the standards of education. Likewise, Dutta (2020) emphasized that most educators became masters using ICT in classes by using social media platforms to help learners improve their learning process. In conclusion, online learning encompasses the use of information and communication technologies. This in turn, plays a fundamental role in the use of ICT for learning through what they offer, such as social media platforms.

English classrooms and online learning involves the incorporation of digital materials and the use of online tools, platforms and social media applications that facilitate the English language learning. This connection has become increasingly significant since nowadays technology has played a significant role in the field of English language instruction. Nugroho and Atmojo (2020) stated that online English learning could be successfully accomplished through the use of social media platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook and others. Nonetheless, Famularsih (2020) indicated some barriers when working in an online English class environment, for example, limited internet speed, inability to cover all the course material through online learning, lack of interaction between teachers and learners.

Social media

According to Aichner (2021), social media was first coined in Tokyo in 1994 within an online media environment known as Mattise. The term social media could be easily defined as interactive platforms where people can share common interests, upload content, and be in contact with others. Authors like Ajijola (2023) referred to social media as a collection of online communication platforms centered around user-

generated content, collaboration, and community engagement. They all enable the creation, organization, and sharing of content, for instance two examples are Facebook, Instagram. Finally, social media comprises digital technologies in the form of software applications and websites, it encompasses prominent platforms like Facebook and Instagram (Appel et al., 2019).

Most common social media platforms

The popularity of social media platforms could change quickly. However, one that has had a large number of users and continue to have is Facebook that is a platform for connecting with people and for sharing photos, videos and updates. In 2019, Facebook was the biggest and most popular social media service in the world with a 2.4 billion users (Ospina, 2019). On the other hand, Instagram was the swiftest expanding social media with over a billion of users. It provides people with features such as exploring, sharing, tagging, employing hashtags, providing comments, and expressing admiration for visual content encompassing images, videos, and gifs (Instagram, 2023).

Frequency of use and time spent in social media platforms

Even though when the expansion of Facebook and Instagram has stabilized in the past half-decade, it still maintained its position as two of the most frequently accessed social media platforms specifically in United States. On the right side, Facebook mainly had about 69% of the adult population, people from 18 and 29 years age used Facebook several times at a day and daily. On the left side, young-adults from 18-29 years old, which represents a 71% of the population, were Instagram users. Half of the users reported to visit this platforms several times per day (Auxier & Anderson, 2021).

Content consumption and Social media usage

Regarding the use of social media and content consumption, firstly some authors have established the main reasons why people tend to use social media platforms. Aksoy (2018) identified that most users of social media use social networks for shortage of friends, the societal requirement for social media engagement, a sense of satisfaction, the anxiety of not staying current, and simply for the integration of social media into everyday life. Additionally, Dixon (2023) mentioned that most

people make use of social media to stay connected with friends and family, to occupy leisure moments, to stay informed by reading news articles or stories, and to share updates about personal life.

Furthermore, Yau and Reich (2019) recognized Facebook and Instagram are spaces used to interact with friends through posting about engaging occurrences. Additionally, a significant part of the users are interested on posting about sports, parties, funny activities and not really about personal feeling details. To interact with others, people first pay special attention to likes and comments on other people's posts as well. Moreover, Katchapakirin et al. (2018) identified that individuals use Facebook social media platform as a mean to express their viewpoints, emotions, and personal experiences. To summarize, people use Instagram and Facebook mostly for sharing and interact with what they consider interesting by commenting, liking and posting.

Equally important, numerous authors show that people, specifically educators and young learners, consume content with educational purposes. Prestidge (2019) detected that professors and those who teach use social networks to self-educate themselves. Thus, they all consume social media content in social media platforms in order to acquire knowledge, exchange thoughts and materials, become part of groups for cooperation and connection, at any time and from any location. Just like mentors, young people like learners consume content to improve and make easy their English learning process. For instance, English learners consume content on social media that make them increase their four main skills, including reading and reading comprehension. Furthermore, they consume content to read and to watch new information through pictures or videos (Handayani et al., 2020).

Types of content in social media

Content consumption on social networks is varied and includes a broad variety of subjects and areas. Shahbaznezhad et al. (2021) categorized content on social media the three categories. In rational content people find informative, practical, educational, or related to current events information. Then interactional is the one that goes with the hand of experiential or personal information; Finally, transactional which refers to sales promotion material. Statista (2020) showed that videos, memes, and comical

content stand out as some of the most widely distributed and enjoyed forms of entertainment across platforms like TikTok and Instagram. To conclude, there is a vast array of available content on social media. It reflects the evolving of preferences and behaviors of users, ranging from informative to entertaining content, and emphasizes the popularity of videos, memes, and comical content among users.

Rational content

Rational-informative content

Previously mentioned, rational content is divided into informational, functional, educational, and current event. For instance, Dolan et al. (2019) pointed out that inside rational content there is valuable and useful information that users have access through social media services. Al-Mukhallafi (2020) stated that social networks provide content for reading to develop collaborative skills by offering free and easy access to information. Additionally, Coelho et al. (2016) indicated that the audience of rational content in social media platforms enjoy of information related to events, locations, individuals, or public or famous figures, whether directly associated with a brand or not. Moreover, posts containing photo and video content linked to brands are part of this category of content as well.

Rational-educational content

The use of social media platforms in the educational field has been growing up since these spaces enable learners to engage in educational online communities by generating, modifying, and distributing content online, communicating, and sharing opinions, fostering connections, establishing social networks, and forming communities tailored to various requirements. Within community groups, people can easily get engaged in activities such as chatting, writing and reading news, organizing events, creating, writing or reading blogs, posts, and editing wiki pages, as well as sharing resources like files, images, videos, and more (Silius et al., 2011).

Many authors agree that the utilization of social media platforms for English learning purposes result beneficial for learners in many aspects. Daramola (2023) highlighted that the content to enhance reading comprehension skills involves sharing reading journeys with a social media audience through social networks like Instagram or Facebook. Additionally, the reading materials involve engaging in conversations

about books or articles, expressing and reading the viewpoints of other individuals, even initiating a virtual book club. All in all, through social media learners have different alternative to participate in different activities to practice their reading comprehension competence.

Regarding the content consumption for educational purposes, Li et al. (2020) discovered that there is a strong demand for educational materials like guides, web-based courses, and enlightening videos on social media platforms. In addition, it appears the term “digital literacy” which is strongly connected with reading skills in learning. Wu et al. (2023) defined digital literacy as the need to have good skills to know what information is true and valid on social media. According to Khumaeroh and Mayuni (2023), social media applications like Facebook have emerged as popular digital literacy platforms utilized for enhancing reading skills. This is largely due to their incorporation of educational and entertaining content. These applications provide various tools, however good digital literacy is crucial because of the substantial amount of unreliable content.

Interactional and transactional content

To start, Dolan et al. (2019) identified that interactional contents make reference to entertaining content, which are connected to fun and enjoyable materials. This content encompasses how well it meets the desire of users to connect with others, interact socially, and to gain social benefits in general. On the other side, transactional content can be understood as a function of social media which make easy the consumption and communicative ability of users of a certain social media network (Manzerolle & Wiseman, 2016). Then Parackal et al. (2021) expressed that a dynamic transactional model in social media is in relation to a reciprocal link that promotes conversation, communication and foster learning among members of a social media service.

Social media in English language learning

According to Al Arif (2019), students use social media platforms, principally Instagram and Facebook, for learning English at home. It was identified that learners showed favorable opinions regarding the integration of social media into English language learning. In addition, it was mentioned that the use of these platforms

motivates and enhances pupils to improve their English language abilities. Their implementation in English learning could be positive, considering that many applications has their own features which make them interesting for people. Ariantini (2021) noticed that due to the tools that application has, learners reflected a positive impact in their vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and other abilities in the English language.

The integration of social media platforms into the English educational field could cover as many benefits as drawbacks for pupils. Firstly, Amin et al. (2020) pointed out that the common disadvantages of applying social media platforms in English learning is that students learn ungrammatical mistakes, they missed out real language interaction and in an online environment there is lack of non-verbal communication such as body language. Nevertheless, Ahmed et al. (2021) indicated a set of advantages. For instance, learners make themselves autonomous and control their own learning, the language is learn without emotional barriers such as anxiety or a lack of motivation. Likewise, social media platforms provide lot of new and updated information for English language learning.

Instagram social media platform in English language learning

Instagram could easily serve as a valuable tool in English language learning by providing exposure to authentic language use, opportunities for practice and it could be useful for those students who adore visual and interactive spaces. Gonulal (2019) stated that individuals like learning English using Instagram as a mobile language learning tool since this application let them communicate through posting, commenting, and texting. Additionally, English pupils like following official English language accounts to learn better, and finally, Instagram supplied learners with enjoyable authentic material texts to read.

Regarding the English educational field, Instagram social media offers a dynamic and visually engaging environment to practice listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills, increasing the motivation to learn English. Sari and Wahyudin (2019) pointed out that the majority of students displayed strong positive attitudes toward incorporating Instagram into their learning experiences. As this social media platform positively influence their motivation, engagement, and overall outlook. Azlan et al.

(2019), successfully incorporated task-based learning activities through Instagram application increasing and motivating English students to develop their English abilities as well.

Nowadays, Instagram as other social media applications, has been used with academic purposes especially in English learning. Numerous authors have explored the use of Instagram as a tool to assist students in their language learning. Sitorus and Azir (2021) found out that English learners raised their reading and listening abilities by using verified accounts on Instagram. Sanusi et al. (2021) agreed the idea of using Instagram application to teach English language as well, because it offers many not limited teaching materials. That makes the English learning process challenging for teachers, as they need to be very creative to help students to improve their English language proficiency.

Facebook social media platform in English language learning

There are numerous social media platforms to implement for English classes. One of them which is very well-known for everybody is Facebook application. Chugh and Ruhi (2018) suggested four principal reasons why to use Facebook for English classes, these are: to enhance learning, to increase involvement and interaction, to facilitate and to exchange information. Nonetheless, Cetinkaya and Sütçü (2018) mentioned that WhatsApp compared to Facebook is more effective, at least for vocabulary learning. To conclude, at the moment of choosing a social media platform to learn English, like Facebook it would be ideal first to consider the learning goals and objectives.

Facebook could be perceived as medium to enhance English language learning informally due to what it offers like authentic material through videos, pages to learn languages, and of course as this social media is available all over the world, individuals can interact with English native speakers. Lai et al. (2015) planted a bunch of informal digital learning of English. Such as to comment Facebook postings in English, to talk through video-chatting with native people, to read English postings in the original language, and to watch TED talk videos that appear on Facebook. On the contrary, Habes et al. (2018) asserted that students are too addicted to social media, specifically

Facebook, and it has a big and negatively impact on pupils thus, they presented lack of concentration on academic assignments affecting their academic performance.

Most students agree the statement that the use of Facebook help them to learn English better. Abraham et al. (2018) came to the conclusion that several English learners perceive Facebook as a potential effective online platform to learn English language. Furthermore, Facebook would result a valuable English teaching tool. In addition, Thao (2019) expressed that a great number of English learners exclaimed their positive thoughts and notable interest to use Facebook as a learning tool. There were reported benefits in terms of extensive reading, facilitating information exchange, and competitiveness. Overall, this space emerges as a promising alternative for English language education.

Dependent variable

English language skills

Regarding the English language skills, Gilakjani (2017) mentioned that the four main skills: speaking, reading, writing and listening, are necessary in order to develop and master the language. That is why, for many years educators has been teaching these four abilities in a second and foreign language. In addition to this, Markström (2019) claimed that the four English basic competences are essential abilities to master the English language, thus students should be able to speak and write in English. They should also understand when others speak or write in English. Reading and listening are skills that help students understand what others are trying to communicate.

Reading skill

Reading can be interpreted as a process of understanding written material, like books, articles, newspapers, websites, and others. Axmadjonova and Fazliddinova (2023) defined it as an act of interpreting written language to gain knowledge, essentially serving as a means of exchanging ideas, opinions, experiences, and information presented in written form. Reading competence allows individuals discover new knowledge, information, and access the inner worlds of authors. Thus, reading skill plays a crucial role in acquiring knowledge, communication, education, and personal enrichment. Kairienė (2021) mentioned that this skill enhance future employability and cultural understanding, fostering effective communication and collaboration with people from diverse backgrounds.

According to Spratt et al. (2011), reading belongs to a receptive skill that involves a process in which individuals need to comprehend what is written. In addition, these authors indicated the types of reading, which are extensive and intensive reading. Extensive reading is reading for happiness, meanwhile intensive reading is reading with academic purposes. Similarly, Muchtar (2019) differentiated the two types of reading. Extensive reading involves reading extensively and in substantial amounts, primarily for the purpose of enjoying the act of reading. In contrast, intensive reading is confined to shorter texts and is undertaken with the primary goal of comprehending the entire content of the reading material.

Authors like Ta and Razali (2023) defined reading as a fundamental learning tool crucial for students to attain success in both academics and their future careers, which also exerts a substantial influence on lifelong learning. Numerous authors share common perspectives and provide close definitions for the concept of this skill. Suson et al. (2020) concluded that reading ability is an indispensable capacity for students to thrive and to gain insight into the functioning of society because the majority of information is conveyed through written text. All in all, this capability results vital for human beings and it is pretty important to develop it since without it individuals would probably have future problems in every field, not only academic ones.

Reading habits

Regarding to reading habits, it was already mentioned that most readers use electronic sources than printed ones. Moreover, it is important to mention that the frequency of reading has an impact on reading comprehension. In other words, reading comprehension skill could be benefit or affected by the reading habits of each person. Sulaiman and Harpiansi (2018) exposed that there is a notable connection between one's reading routine and their achievements in reading comprehension. Likewise, Pham (2021) agreed that maintaining reading habits would lead to an improvement in reading comprehension achievement, and conversely, an improvement in reading comprehension achievement would encourage the continuation of a reading habit.

In addition, Septiarini et al. (2018) stated a correlation between students' reading habits and their reading comprehension skill. It means that if pupils improve their reading habits then their ability to comprehend texts will increase. Moreover,

Atayeva et al. (2019) indicated that English learners practiced their reading ability by reading English books and English texts like newspapers, leaflets, comics and others. In conclusion, to make students develop their reading comprehension competence by building reading habits, this can be accomplished by choosing the correct materials to encourage pupils to read.

Reading comprehension

According to Liou (2021), reading comprehension is an active procedure that includes predicting, summarizing the central idea, questioning one's predictions, and clarifying any unclear concepts. Similarly, Elleman and Oslund (2019) referred to reading comprehension as a cognitive task, involving the synthesis of information at various levels, from individual words and phrases, to sentences and paragraphs, and even extending to entire articles or books. To conclude, reading comprehension alludes to the ability of individuals to understand and interpret written materials with the help of a range of cognitive process.

The ability to comprehend reading texts is pretty important since the lack of it can damage or result little favorable affecting any aspect of individuals' life. For instance, numerous authors like Al-Jarrah and Ismail (2018) realized that EFL learners who had a low level of reading comprehension skills were affected in their academic performance. Likewise, Whitten et al. (2019) indicated that when students read and understand just for pleasure they got the higher scores, in subjects like English, than other pupils who do not read. To sum up, it is important to look for the ways to increase the reading abilities. Then due to that the reading comprehension skills would raise at the same time, being beneficial for students.

Process of reading comprehension

Authors like Dara (2019) mentioned that there are two types of reading comprehension process, these are Bottom-up and Top-down. Firstly, Bottom up process in reading comprehension involves the gradual understanding of smaller language components, leading to a comprehension of larger sections. This involves first deciphering individual words within the text and then grasping the overall meaning and content of the text. On the other hand, Top-down process in reading

involves comprehending the meaning and content of a text by initially using general information and then delving into more specific details of the text (Mantra et al., 2020).

Levels of reading comprehension

Reading comprehension involves the categorization of levels of reading comprehension skills. Dewi et al. (2020) categorized the levels of reading comprehension in literal level, inferential level and critical comprehension level. Literal comprehension level makes reference to the meaning that the text exactly transmit, so that readers pay special attention to details. Then inferential comprehension level requires the integration of prior knowledge with the extracted meaning from the text in order to construct a representation of the text is meant to express implicitly. Finally, in critical comprehension level readers are able to assess the quality of written texts. They can question and evaluate evidence, distinguishing between accepted and supporting materials (Rojas et al., 2019).

Literal level of reading comprehension can be understood as the process of reading and understanding literally what is written in texts to identify specific details and the chronological order of events. Meanwhile, critical level of reading comprehension involves reading to discover implicit meaning. It goes beyond basic understanding and includes literal comprehension, previous knowledge, and the reading process as a whole (Kamagi, 2020). At least, Mistar et al. (2016), inferential level involves the capability to comprehend the intended message of the writer. Therefore, inferential level allows people to make predictions, and formulate judgments.

A range of experts affirmed that there are three levels of reading comprehension skills that people can achieve. Atiullah et al. (2019) mentioned that literal comprehension occurs when the reader extracts information explicitly presented in the text. Inferential comprehension involves readers uncovering implicit information and synthesizing details to obtain a solutions. Regarding critical reading comprehension level, Nurwanti et al. (2019) pointed out that critical comprehension implicates evaluating information presented in the reading text in relation to the readers' personal knowledge and values.

Literal comprehension encompasses understanding the explicit meaning, including understanding facts, vocabulary, locations, times, dates, and various other details (Azman et al., 2020). On the other side, in inferential level readers are requested to recognize the central and supporting details, make assumptions, obtain conclusions, and deduce. Additionally, it allows learners to enhance their individual knowledge to create meaning beyond explicit statements and to draw inferences. This process let pupils to comprehend the purpose of a passage (Sajid & Fraidan, 2019). Finally, Mohamedi and Rico (2020) defined critical level as evaluative level as well. It involves an evaluative examination of the ideas encountered. At this level readers require to have deeper cognitive engagement with the information to form and give judgments about reality, facts, and opinions.

Reading comprehension sub-skills

Reading comprehension involves the utilization of reading sub-skills in order to make readers understand the written material thus, reading comprehension takes place. Several authors suggest a set of sub-skills. Erya and Pustika (2021) claimed that reading comprehension occurs when the reader relates text information with their own background knowledge. Reading comprehension happens when the reader has the ability to summarize the main ideas of what he or she is reading. Other authors like Al-Jarf (2021) proposed a set of reading comprehension skills in text books, such as guessing meaning from context, recognizing the structure of texts, inferring, skimming, scanning, making predictions, summarizing and others.

Regarding reading skills that help to enhance reading comprehension, Okasha (2020) mentioned four strategic techniques to optimize reading comprehension competence. One of them is clarifying which consists in making the text easier for readers to understand by asking questions, reading again, expressing the content in different words, and enhancing overall comprehension of the text. Other technique is predicting that is using students' anticipation and predictive abilities to guess the upcoming content in the text. Questioning involves gathering input, previous to read the text, through brainstorming with the aim of fostering student engagement and interaction with the given paragraph. Lastly, summarizing is meant to guide learners to arrange and rephrase the content of the reading passage in written format.

Reading comprehension encompasses make use of reading skills or sub-skills. For instance, skimming helps readers to read quickly through the text. Its main purpose is to get a general idea of the text and its main point, readers do not look for details. Other reading skill is scanning which enables the reader to swiftly read particular details. When people scan, they have a pre-defined idea of the information they seek, making it a method to retrieve specific details efficiently (Banditvilai, 2020). Fatmawan et al. (2023) stated that skimming and scanning are reading strategies that require rapid eye movements and the utilization of keywords to efficiently navigate through written material, with each technique serving distinct objectives.

A wide variety of authors called extensive and intensive reading as strategies that help in the improvement of reading comprehension skills. Strategies for successful reading like making use of background information, formulation of quality questions, and guessing as well (Madolimovich, 2022). In addition, Par (2020) differentiated between reading strategies and skills. Moreover, it was highlighted the effectiveness of using reading strategies for EFL reading comprehension. Similarly, Maldonado (2022) pointed out that beneficial effects on reading comprehension goes with the hand of extensive reading, which is reading for pleasure. In conclusion, the enhancement of EFL reading comprehension is often associated with the adoption of various reading strategies for effective reading, and for both extensive and intensive reading.

Reading comprehension materials

There is a vast range of reading comprehension materials; People can find them in books, magazines or newspapers. Nowadays, with technology, reading materials are accessible online. According to Qureshi (2020), online reading materials involve using digital sources and technology for reading, while paper-based reading refers to the traditional printed materials like books, magazines, newspapers, etc. Clinton (2019) recognized that reading from screens is pretty common and normal nowadays with the advancement of technology and internet connection. Furthermore, Kung (2017) claimed that English learners prefer authentic reading materials, so that they increase their positive attitude and motivation. All in all, students prefer authentic reading tools, which they can access online through platforms like blogs, pages, and social media.

Likewise, Belet and Güner (2018) mentioned that many readers have positive impacts when working with authentic based materials for reading comprehension. Febrina (2017) defined authentic materials as those materials that reflect how natives use in real contexts the language, contrary to non-authentic materials like books that are created for academic purposes only. In addition, Guo et al. (2020) identified that learners improve their reading comprehension competence when traditional text has images or pictures instead of the text only. Briefly to conclude, these authors highlighted the potential for enhancing reading comprehension abilities through the utilization of diverse and engaging reading resources this with the purpose of benefiting learners, so that they improve their reading comprehension skills.

The use of authentic material for teaching English has increasing throughout the time. Albiladi (2019) asserted that the implementation of material which is not created for learning could be challenging to manage. However, there are lots of benefits at the moment of implementing real-life based texts in the English classroom, especially for social and academic aspects, including the elevation of motivation and cultural sensitivity. Additionally, online resources facilitate learners' access to free reading materials. Krishnan et al. (2020) highlighted that using online reading resources pupils enhance their reading competences anytime and anywhere through the use of a device and internet connection. Further to this, it was mentioned that free online resources strengthen social interaction among educators and pupils.

Various authors have aimed to find out the favoritism regarding online reading material and paper based reading materials. Alamri (2019) claimed that most learners showed a greater inclination toward using electronic devices for personal purposes rather than academic ones. These personal activities included surfing the internet, consuming media, and answer personal email texts. Then Kong et al. (2018) demonstrated that reading from printed or paper-based sources was much better than reading from a screen specially for reading comprehension. In summary, even though with the advancement of technology readers still preferring using paper materials for reading and like using electronic tools for personal reasons.

1.2. Objectives:

General objective

To identify the most used social media platform for improving reading comprehension.

Specific objectives

To analyze the type of content of social media learners consume for the improvement of the overall reading comprehension skill.

To determine the level of reading comprehension of learners when using social media.

To describe the most common reading materials from social media learners prefer to enhance reading comprehension.

1.3. Fulfillment of the objectives

For the development of this study it was proposed a general objective which was to identify the most used social media platform for improving reading comprehension skill. In order to achieve it, there were presented three specific objectives which were: to analyze the type of content of social media learners consume for the improvement of the overall reading comprehension skill; To determine the level of reading comprehension of learners when using social media; To describe the most common reading materials from social media learners prefer to enhance reading comprehension.

These objectives were successfully accomplished after investigating in different academic bibliographic sources, reading about the most common type of content in social media, the level of reading comprehension, and the most common reading materials learners employ when they use social media, specifically Facebook and Instagram. Additionally, it was necessary to collect real data in relation to these three aspects. Therefore, it was conducted the application of a survey that had items to know the perspective of English pupils when using social media platforms to enhance reading comprehension to achieve the general objective of this research.

CHAPTER II. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Materials

This research project was carried out by the employment of human, institutional and technological resources. Firstly, students at the beginner level of English from the Centro de Idiomas at Universidad Técnica de Ambato were the target population for this study. In addition, it was essential to have laptops, phones, internet connection and the digital survey that the researcher provided to collect information. Finally, this investigation made use of several academic papers, journal, articles and books as resources. These materials were useful to support and to sustain the theoretical framework and the research background of this research as well.

2.2 Methods

2.2.1 Research approach

Quantitative approach

This research had a quantitative approach because it allowed the construction and development of the study topic which was achieved by analyzing, describing, tabulating and interpreting the information derived from the results obtained. Therefore, at the end the results revealed important results from students and their performance of reading comprehension through the use of social media platforms. Quantitative research is an approach that employs numerical data and statistical analysis to assess theories regarding customer attitudes and behaviors. This methodology assists researchers in methodically collecting and examining data in order to acquire valuable insights and to establish conclusions based on evidence (Cornell, 2023).

2.2.2 Modality

Bibliographic research

The modality that was used in this research work was Bibliographical – documentary research. This work was based on information and sources from internet which helped to support the two variables. The sources of information were articles, journals, research projects and books from internet mainly, which served as guide to have a good explanation about the problem and the information helped to develop the research process. Fernández (2021) defines bibliographic researches as a systematic

and retrospective observational research method that focuses on selecting, analyzing, interpreting, and discussing the theoretical viewpoints, findings, and conclusions presented in research articles published in recent years on a chosen topic. The goal is to extract valuable information that aids in addressing specific issues.

2.2.3 Type of research /Research design

Descriptive

This study was descriptive since it aimed to describe the attitudes and behaviors of the participants regarding the use of social media, especially Facebook and Instagram to improve reading comprehension skills. According to Korkmaz and Toraman (2020), descriptive studies offer a summary of a preexisting phenomenon by employing numerical data to define individuals or groups to assess the current state of conditions. Furthermore, Arias (2021) stated that descriptive studies examines the attributes of a population or phenomenon, however it does not analyze deeper with the intention of knowing the interrelationships.

2.2.4 Techniques/tools

In this research, a survey was used as a research technique where a questionnaire was the tool. The questionnaire contained a set of 25 close and open-ended questions with the purpose of collecting data from the participants. This data was essential to draw the results and conclusions of this study. The questionnaire was made through the operationalization of variables, and it was validated through a pilot test. Mathers et al. (2009) referred to survey as a commonly employed method to gather data concerning opinions and actions. Similarly, Taherdoost (2019) noted that questionnaires and surveys have the potential to serve as valuable instruments for gathering the necessary data for research and assessment purposes.

2.2.5 Population

This research was conducted at the Centro de Idiomas of the Universidad Técnica de Ambato. The establishment and participants had online resources, technological devices like phones and internet connection. In addition to this, the study participants were people who had notion about social media platforms including Facebook and Instagram and they had profiles on them. Finally, the surveyed individuals were

learners of the B1 levels of English. The learners were 29 male and 47 female, with a total of 76 participants.

Table 1: *Population*

Population	Participants	Percentage
Females	47	61, 8%
Males	29	38, 1%
Total	76	100%

Note: The information was collected from the learners chosen to take the survey.

2.2.6 Procedure

This research was conducted following a carefully established process to guarantee a detailed examination of the topic. The first and most important step consisted in making an exhaustive review about social media and reading comprehension. This in order to collect relevant, crucial and valuable information from a broad variety of sources, including research papers, articles and databases like Google Scholar, Research Gate, Eric, etc.

To continue, the next step was the development of the tool of this research. This survey encompasses a set of 25 open and closed items rated on a Likert scale (1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neutral, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree.). This instrument was constructed in accordance with the theoretical framework related to social media and reading comprehension key concepts, aligned with the three research questions. After that, it was conducted the operationalization of variables (see annex 1). For the independent variable, the following dimension was considered: Type of content consumed in social media. While for the dependent variable, dimensions like reading materials and levels of reading comprehension were taken into account.

After the survey was carefully organized, it went through a validation process to evaluate its reliability and validity. It was validated by three professors of the major of Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros and additionally by SPSS program. A pilot test was carried out with ten participants from the eighth semester, in order to obtain data to assess the reliability of the items. The data gathered from this pilot test was inputted manually into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to carry out validation procedures, making use of statistical measures like the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The high value of 0.991 for the coefficient showed that the survey instrument was very consistent and reliable.

Once the survey was totally validated, it was applied to a population of 76 English learners, 47 females and 29 males. The participants chosen were B1 level English students from Centro de Idiomas of Universidad Técnica de Ambato. Nonetheless, before the survey was completed, pupils received a brief explanation of the topic, objectives of the research, and key instructions to fulfill the instrument as well. To make the survey administration process easier, the survey link was shared with the educator of the courses. Subsequently, the information collected was analyzed using SPSS program and data tables. Quantitative data was explored employing suitable statistical techniques like calculating means, meanwhile qualitative data from the open-ended questions was carefully examined without machines, applying thematic analysis techniques to find important patterns, themes, and new insights.

The information gathered was of vital importance since real data was obtained in order to address the three research questions proposed, that in turn helped to achieve the objectives of this study. Likewise, for this research there were three meaningful conclusions and valuable recommendations accurately written based on the processed results. Additionally, these findings provided future researchers and educators with real-world impacts regarding the use of social media platforms, specifically Facebook and Instagram, as learning tools for the improvement of reading comprehension ability of English learners.

Research questions

1. What types of social media content do learners use to enhance reading comprehension skills?
2. What is the level of reading comprehension of learners when using social media?
3. What are the most common reading materials from social media learners prefer to enhance reading comprehension?

CHAPTER III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Analysis and discussion of the results

The current chapter is aimed to show the results of the data collected from the survey in order to answer three research proposed questions:

1. What types of social media content do learners use to enhance reading comprehension skills?
2. What is the level of reading comprehension of learners when using social media?
3. What are the most common reading materials from social media learners prefer to enhance reading comprehension?

The data was processed through SPSS to obtain the mean and to be able to tabulate the results. Additionally, the analysis conducted in this research involves comparing the gathered data with previous studies conducted by other authors.

Table 2: *Social media interaction*

Question	Answer	Total
Do you use social media platforms	Yes	76
	No	0
	Total	76

Analysis and interpretation

Currently, social media platforms are the means of communication most used by the majority of individuals in the world, due to their intuitive interface that results attractive and easy to use, it is important to recognize that the use of these applications have gone beyond just meeting people. Table 2 represents that the 100% of participants use social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Tik Tok and others. Based on this information, it could be deduced that they all know about these platforms, have profiles on these spaces, and use theme for different purposes such as meeting friends, interacting with others, having access to different information and even learning.

Table 3: Social media interaction

Question	Answer	Total
How often do you use social media platforms?	From 1 to 3 hours per day	41
	From 4 to 6 hours per day	30
	More than 7 hours per day	5
	Total	76

Analysis and interpretation

Table 3 displays the time that people spend on social media. Curiously the majority of the population, 54% of learners, indicated that they use social media platforms just from 1 to 3 hours. The 39% of the participants spend from 4 to 6 hours every day and just the 6% pointed out that they use a social media, like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Tik Tok or any other, more than 7 hours daily. In this way, these results allow to know that a large percentage of participants do not spend too much time on these platforms although it is assumed that all of them have profiles on at least one social network, internet connection and a technological device such as a phone.

Table 4: Social media interaction

Question	Answer	Total
Which of the following social media platforms do you know?	Facebook	68
	Instagram	65
	WhatsApp	71
	Messenger	43
	Others	20
	Total	267
Which of the following social media platforms do you use?	Facebook	60
	Instagram	52
	WhatsApp	67
	Messenger	14
	Others	11
	Total	204

Analysis and interpretation

Table 4 presents the results in relation to the social media platforms that learners know and that they use. Surprisingly, the most voted answer in both questions is WhatsApp. The 93,4% of participants know it and the 88,2% use it. It is followed by Facebook and Instagram, which are the second most chosen social media spaces. The 89,5% of learners know Facebook and the 78,9% use it. Meanwhile the 85,5% of pupils know Instagram and the 68,4% use it. There were other platforms that represent a minority of people surveyed, the 82% of students know about Messenger, Tik Tok, Telegram, and LinkedIn. However, just the 32% use them.

The most popular social media among English learners turn out to be the ones they find most useful when communicating, interacting, and even learning. In this sense, WhatsApp turned out to be the most popular, followed by Facebook and Instagram, which are platforms that attract people not only because of the features they offer but also because of the different ways in which people use them with different purposes. That is why the use of these tools has been increasing over time and they have also been used in other fields, for example education demonstrating that these networks can be used for more than just making friends.

Table 5: *Type of social media content*

Item	Mean
I read on social media like Facebook and Instagram because it is easy to access to reading information.	3, 83
I like using social media platforms (Facebook and Instagram) to acquire knowledge, exchange information and access to reading material anytime and anywhere.	3, 66
I consume content to improve my English language skills in social media platforms.	3, 64
I look for content to improve my reading skills in social media platforms.	3, 67
I practice my reading comprehension skills by reading original English postings on social media (Facebook and Instagram).	3, 55
I use social media platforms (Facebook and Instagram) to read the viewpoints of other people about books or articles of my interests.	3, 42

I like following Facebook and Instagram official accounts for learning English because they provide reading material that is not necessary for learning purposes.	3, 43
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Note: The mean values were gathered from the Likert scale: 1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neutral, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree.

Analysis and interpretation

The research question number one is: *What types of social media content do learners use to enhance reading comprehension skills?* The results showed that the type of content on social media, consumed by the majority of the participants was the rational-informative, with a mean of 3,83. It could be interpreted that learners consume this reading material since it is easy to access to it. Equal important findings with a mean that varied from 3,66 to 3,55 revealed that most learners access to rational-educational content. In turn, this content is linked to activities that help them to improve their reading comprehension ability. There were two main activities using social networks to enhance the reading comprehension skill, for instance to exchange information, materials, and to read posts and others' points of view.

On the contrary, the lowest mean of 3,42 suggested that just few learners access to rational-educational content on social media platforms to read and to interact with the perspective of others in relation to books of common interests. These findings helped to identify that all learners consume informative and educational rational content. However, the vast majority lean towards rational-informative content because it is easier to access to it. Then a significant percentage of the class like educational content for several reasons like it can be beneficial for their own English learning process and for the improvement of their reading comprehension ability. Finally, it was deduced that the least popular way to use Facebook, Instagram or any other medium is to read about other points of view about books.

Table 6: *Levels of reading comprehension*

Item	Mean
I pay special attention to details like dates and time when I read. (Literal level)	3, 68
I understand only what I can see in the texts when I read. (Literal level)	3, 76

I understand the intended message of texts when I read. (Inferential level)	3, 75
I make predictions and conclusions of texts when I read. (Inferential level)	3, 66
I use the main and supporting details of reading texts to obtain conclusions when I read. (Inferential level)	3, 63
I relate the information of texts with my personal experiences when I read. (Critical level)	3, 80
I get really engaged with readings to evaluate and judge the information when I read. (Critical level)	3, 43

Note: The mean values were gathered from the Likert scale: 1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neutral, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree.

Analysis and interpretation

The research question number two is: *What is the level of reading comprehension of learners when using social media?* The research results helped to identify that pupils achieved the three levels of reading comprehension when they use social media platforms. Nevertheless, the two main levels of reading comprehension mainly reached by the majority of learners were critical and literal level. Firstly, the highest mean of 3,80 indicate that most students achieve a critical level. It means that they are supposed to be able to analyze reading passages in order to have a deep understanding of written information. However, the findings allow to discover that this level is only approached when students associate what they read with their own experiences. Therefore, they are not really able to judge texts.

According to the results, the second most reached level of reading comprehension when using social media, with a mean of 3,76, was the literal. At this level readers are able to comprehend explicitly the information of reading passages. Furthermore, learners can understand just words, they cannot deduce or infer as in inferential level. In addition to this, the inferential reading comprehension level did not obtain the lowest mean. The mean was of 3,75, thus, students understand beyond just the words, being able to analyze and interpret reading passages in order to recognize the intended message of texts or authors.

Finally, the lowest mean of 3,43 show that just few English learners reach the critical level of reading comprehension when they use social media. This time, it was identified that not all the participants agreed the idea that they are capable of evaluating, judging and analyzing the information to have complete understanding of reading texts. It is suggested that very few learners achieved completely the critical level of reading. Since previously, it was indicated that they approach it when they connect the information with their previous incidents, nonetheless just few of them have the skill to analyze and judge the written materials.

Table 7: *Reading materials*

Item	Mean
I like reading online reading materials like pdf books because I can access to them anytime and anywhere with my phone or laptop.	3, 78
Reading magazines, newspapers, posts help me to improve my overall reading comprehension ability. (Authentic material)	3, 75
The printed texts like books, magazines, or newspapers with images help me to understand better the reading passages.	3, 78
My teacher uses other reading materials in the English class, like newspapers, magazines, and English original posts.	3, 74

Note: The mean values were gathered from the Likert scale: 1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neutral, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree.

Analysis and interpretation

The research question number three is: *What are the most common reading materials from social media learners prefer to enhance reading comprehension?* First of all, there are two scores that resulted the same quantity. The first mean of 3,78 highlighted that a significant percentage of learners prefer using online reading materials to enhance their reading comprehension skill. Online reading includes reading pdf, E-books, free online content, and reading using an electronic devices such as phones or laptops. These materials have the great advantage that readers can use them anytime, anywhere through a technological device with internet. It could be the reason why many students prefer these materials, additionally because almost everybody use their phones to read.

Even with the advancement of technology, and online reading materials that bring benefits, largely help those who cannot obtain paper-based books, or simply like to read not necessarily through papers, some students still prefer to use traditional printed books. The second mean of 3,78, which obtained the same quantity, suggested that learners like printed or traditional texts with pictures to have a better understanding of readings passages, so that they can improve their reading comprehension ability. The progress of technology and the ease that it has brought with it, such as online reading materials, have not been enough to replace traditional printed materials, this must be the main reason that many students still read in material that they can touch.

Additionally, the findings which varied from 3,75 to 3,74 indicated that English learners like reading authentic materials such as news, posts, magazines in the original languages when they use social media platforms, like Facebook, Instagram or any other. A significant percentage of the participants showed interest and positive attitude in relation to learn and to implement authentic English materials with real language in their English classes. Authentic reading materials allude to those resources that are not created specifically to learn or to teach. Hence, pupils are interested in learning with different reading tools that contains real use of language, since it could be more helpful to develop their reading comprehension skill.

Table 8: *Open-ended questions*

Question 1	Answer	Total
Which of these social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram or another, do you use the most to access to reading content?	Facebook	38
	Instagram	17
	Twitter	2
	Tik Tok	5
	WhatsApp	3
	Telegram	1
	Others	10
	Total	76
Question 2	Answer	Total
What do you consider is your level of reading?	Literal level	33
	Inferential level	14

For example: I understand only what I can see in a reading passage	Critical level	4
	Others	25
	Total	76
Question 3	Answer	Total
What reading material do you use the most to develop reading comprehension skills? For example: Online reading material: digital material for reading. It includes reading on phones or laptops.	Online reading materials (PDF, E-books, online books, reading in the phone, audiobooks)	57
	Online authentic reading materials (news, articles, trading audiobooks, English original posts)	7
	Printed books	4
	Printed authentic reading materials (written stories/ anecdotes)	1
	Others	7
	Total	76

Analysis and interpretation

Table 8 shows the results of the open-ended questions used to reinforce the research questions. The first open-ended focused on knowing which is the social media platform most used to access to reading content. The results showed that the first and most popular social media platform used to access to reading content, with 50% of participants, was Facebook. It suggests that many learners like using it as medium to access to reading materials. Then the 22,3% of respondents proposed Instagram, making it the second most accessible space to read. Moreover, other learners provided other responses such as Twitter, Tik Tok, Telegram and WhatsApp, which represents the 14,4%. Lastly, a 13,1% of people provided other responses that are not specifically social networks, they were Google, Online library, and Wattpad.

Based on the results of the first open-ended question, it could be concluded that the majority of the participants prefer Facebook and Instagram for reading comprehension purposes and to access to reading content. It is important to highlight

this fact since previously learners indicated that WhatsApp is the most popular social media platform and it was the most chosen platform. However, and as this is a different open-ended question the findings changed, suggesting that learners like using Facebook and Instagram social media applications mostly for reading and academic purposes. The findings indicate that students use these social media applications to access to reading content for reading because they have free and easy access to them, they can interact, exchange opinions and share with others.

The second open-ended question focused on determining the level of reading comprehension of students when using social media. According to the results obtained, the 43,4% of the respondents reach a literal level of reading comprehension. It means that they are able to understand explicitly what they can see in written texts. After that, the second most reached level by English pupils was the Inferential, with an 18,4%, suggesting that students are able to infer, to understand the message of the author and to draw conclusions. This time, just the 5% of learners achieved the critical level, showing that students cannot judge or analyze reading information. Finally, the 33% of the participants gave other type of responses that were completely different and not related to levels of reading comprehension.

The third open-ended question focused on obtaining information about the most used reading materials from social media people use to enhance their reading comprehension skills. Based on the results, the 75% of the learners expressed their inclination towards online reading materials such as PDF, E-books, and reading online through their phones. Additionally, it was discovered that a 9,2% of pupils like online authentic reading materials to enhance their reading comprehension abilities. The materials they provided were news, articles, trading audiobooks, and English original posts. Surprisingly, this time the percentage of students who liked paper-based reading materials decreased, nevertheless just the 5% of them stated their enthusiasm for reading printed stories and anecdotes.

This last open question shows that little by little the use of technology and the material that can be obtained from it becomes more popular and more used not only for English students but for everyone in general. This may be because for many students it may be easier, more entertaining or more motivating to read using their cell phone and online materials than to carry a book or printed sheets everywhere, which

does not happen with online resources. In addition to this, the use of authentic material that contains language actually used by native speakers resulted to be attractive to students and these are generally found mostly on the Internet. For example, through a social media they can find and follow official pages that transmit material to read and not necessarily to make people learn, in this case, the English language.

3.2 Discussion

The applied survey was aimed to identify the social media platforms most commonly utilized by learners to enhance their reading comprehension skills. The data were gathered from English learners at the B1 level of the Centro de Idiomas at the Universidad Técnica de Ambato, aged between 20 and 25 years. The questionnaire, designed with three research questions, sought to unveil the preferred social media applications tailored for the improvement of reading comprehension among English learners. Question 1 focused on determining the types of social media content used for this purpose.

Findings revealed that the majority of learners predominantly engaged with rational-informative and rational-educational content, it means the content to keep informed and to keep learning. In this sense, Shahbaznezhad et al. (2021) categorized social media content into three types: Rational, Interactional, and Transactional. Rational content encompassed informative, practical, and educational resources, this aligned with Al-Mukhallafi's (2020) assertion that platforms like Facebook and Instagram provide free access to informative materials, fostering collaborative skills in learners. Hence, it can be inferred that students who have access to informative and educative content due to its convenience and no-cost nature are likely to reinforce their reading comprehension competence.

Rational-educational content in social media allude to the material that was posted with specific learning purposes and to catch the attention of students. Several authors highlight the benefits of using social networks in the English educational field and the ways in which learners use them to reinforce their English skills and reading comprehension competence. Authors such as Prestidge (2019) discovered that most English learners consume educational when they exchange thoughts and materials at anytime and anywhere they are. Likewise, Handayani et al. (2020) noted that English pupils like consuming educational content, by watching and reading information

through images or videos, since it help them to increase their reading comprehension abilities.

In this regard, these statements aligned with the insights since many pupils indicated that they like to use social media spaces to increase their English language skills. This findings implies an opportunity for educators to leverage these platforms as alternative learning tools, and future research could further explore platforms like Facebook and Instagram for their potential contribution to English learners' reading comprehension skills. Additionally, to exploit the fact that students like to use these applications for educational purposes to carry out future experimental research and thus further investigate these two platforms: Facebook and Instagram, to verify that they help in the development and improvement of the reading comprehension skills of English learners.

The survey results indicated that learners make use of social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram to perform various activities to enhance their reading comprehension, with the least popular being reading and sharing viewpoints about books and following official pages for learning English, although most of these pages provide users with valuable information to learn. However, Daramola (2023) found that many English pupils actively use social media for sharing, reading, and expressing viewpoints regarding reading materials such as books of common interest, aligning with Gonulal's (2019) observation, that students prefer enhancing learning experiences by following official English language accounts in which users encountered information to learn.

The most welcomed activities for improving reading comprehension using social media applications turned out to be reading publications in the original language with authentic material, such as blogs, news or posts not specifically to learn the language, for instance official pages that do not share educative content. This aligns with Silius et al. (2011) and Lai et al. (2015), who stated that social media enables users to read news, blogs, and posts in the original language. These findings underscore the importance of social media platforms in supporting English learners' reading comprehension skills since they reveal the most popular activities to develop this competence using a social media tool they like using every day.

The second research question focused on the level of reading comprehension among learners when using social media. The results indicated that the majority of participants reached the literal comprehension level that is understanding only the explicitly written information. In this context, Dewi et al. (2020) recognized that pupils only understand words and concentrate specifically on the details when reading a text. Moreover, this opinion not only aligns with the data but also with Atiullah et al. (2019), who emphasized that a literal level involves comprehending explicit words without deducing deeper meanings.

According to the results, the inferential and critical levels were also chosen by many pupils. Regarding the inferential level, learners indicated that they understand implicitly the information and make conclusions from the ideas of the readings. In this particular aspect, Mistar et al. (2016) and Sajid and Fraidan (2019) noted that when people reach this level they understand the intended message of the author and readers recognize main and supporting details, make assumptions, conclusions, and deductions. Likewise, pupils demonstrated that they achieve the critical level since they connect the texts with their own experiences to comprehend. This insight aligns with Nurwanti et al. (2019), who mentioned that critical individuals relate personal knowledge with what they read in order to understand and to evaluate written information.

This descriptive research, employs a survey with closed and open-ended questions, targeted intermediate-level English language learners. Nonetheless, it revealed challenges, with some students providing less accurate answers. This could potentially be due to a lack of seriousness from pupils, misunderstanding of the questionnaire or questions and even because of a low reading comprehension level itself. Thus, future researchers may consider working with different course levels and trying implementing other alternative instruments to obtain more precise and helpful results.

The third research question was meant to explore the most common reading materials preferred by English pupils to enhance reading comprehension ability through social media. After the analysis, it was discovered that online reading, particularly PDFs, e-books, articles, and news, not specifically for learning English, were the most popular resources to read among students, nonetheless some of them

still preferred printed traditional texts. Few of them manifested their pleasure to read papers that they can touch and written stories in paper-based materials.

Regarding to online reading materials, Krishnan et al. (2020) emphasized the fact that students like reading online materials so that they can improve their reading skills by reading at any time and from any place just by using online reading resources or reading through a technological device like a phone with internet connection. This theory was confirmed through the learners' findings. However, Guo et al. (2020) found that students enhance their reading comprehension skills when traditional reading contains images. Likewise, Kong et al. (2018) noted that reading from printed materials significantly outperformed reading from a screen, particularly in terms of reading comprehension. These two last theories could be verified because few learners disagree with the use of online reading materials for reading comprehension.

Equal important results were helpful to know about the preferences of reading materials of English learners. For instance, most learners agreed the idea of using authentic English materials to improve their reading comprehension ability. This insights align with what Belet and Güner (2018) discovered. They suggest that employing authentic reading materials for reading comprehension has a positive effect on numerous readers. Furthermore, Kung (2017) observed that English learners have a preference for reading materials that are not really created with the purpose of teaching. They result helpful to raise the motivation towards reading and learning.

In conclusion, these findings shed light on the activities and social media platforms favored by students for learning and improving reading comprehension skills. Educators can consider integrating these platforms into English language education, not only for language learning but also for sharing valuable reading content and activities. Likewise, English language learners can utilize social media platforms to enhance their reading comprehension skills by accessing valuable materials. Future research could explore experimental approaches using platforms like Facebook or Instagram as tools for accessing content and activities to reinforce reading comprehension ability.

CHAPTER IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

After analyzing and processing the results collected, there were some conclusions to state. Firstly, it can be assumed that English learners mainly consume content to keep informed themselves and to reinforce their English learning on social media in order to enhance their overall reading comprehension skill. It is concluded that most pupils know and use WhatsApp for chatting, interacting, staying in contact, etc. However, they preferred Facebook and Instagram to access to reading material, indicating that they use these platforms because it is easy to access to them for reading anytime and anywhere, and suggest a set of activities in order to enhance their reading comprehension abilities. For instance, to read in the phone from any place, at any time, and to read original posts, blogs, news through images, videos. Finally, a small group of participants pointed out that they follow accounts to reinforce their English skills and to read others' perspectives of books.

The results helped to determine that the levels of reading comprehension mainly reached by the majority of the participants were the literal and the critical. Most English learners indicated that they only understand explicitly written words. Furthermore, students mentioned that they can understand texts better when they connect the ideas in the reading with what they already know. This suggests they are reaching a critical level of understanding. However, many struggle with forming opinions by evaluating information, possibly due to not grasping implicit details or lack of time for reading. Additionally, the majority of students demonstrated an ability to grasp the author's intent and the content of the text; however, only a small number of them could make predictions and formulate conclusions based on written texts.

Based on the results, it can be concluded that the most common reading material chosen by English learners was the online reading tools such as pdf, e-books and reading in the phone. Since they are easy, free to access, and allow people to read in anytime and anywhere. Surprisingly, some pupils still showing interest for traditional printed materials with images for reading. Lastly, it is established that students preferred to use reading resources that are not created for learning especially, it means authentic materials. Many participants expressed their desire to

improve their English reading comprehension competence by reading news, articles, and English original posts.

4.2 Recommendations

The sample of this study were 76 individuals, most of them from 21 to 25 years-old with B1 English level. However, it might be interesting to investigate the opinion of more people at different English levels with different ages for future research and to conduct experimental research as well, so that researchers could verify or reject the use of social media tools for reading comprehension. Regarding the results, it can be recommended the use of Facebook and Instagram, as alternative tools for reading. Teachers should upload useful content to read by creating a page, plan reading activities, create activities to interact, to participate and to learn collaboratively taking advantage of the applications and of the fact that learners like using them for learning and as spaces to read anytime and anywhere.

It is recommended for educators to implement more activities to reinforce the critical and inferential reading comprehension level. Based on the results, pupils have troubles judging and interpreting written information, as well as inferring hidden messages from texts, presumably because of lack of reading or activities to understand deeper reading passages. Thus, it would be beneficial for them to be provided with text comprehension tasks in which they practice making assumptions, obtaining conclusions and judging properly written content after reading.

It is recommended the use of online and authentic reading materials, as complementary tools using social media platforms since the majority of students showed their preferences for reading through them. Most of them manifested they like pdf and reading in the phone for improving their reading comprehension skill. Therefore, they lean towards reading, articles, news, and posts that are in the original language. Even though, when few pupils still appreciate traditional printed materials for reasons such as easy accessibility without technology and the tactile experience of handling and highlighting physical papers.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1

Supervisor approval

CARTA COMPROMISO

Ambato 08 de agosto de 2023

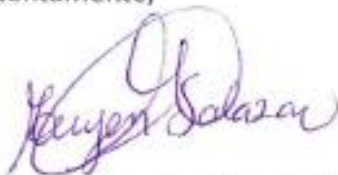
Doctor
Marcelo Núñez
Presidente
UNIDAD DE TITULACIÓN
Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y de la Educación

Yo, Miryan Consuelo Salazar Tobar, en mi calidad de Directora del Centro de Idiomas de la Universidad Técnica de Ambato me permito poner en su conocimiento la aceptación y respaldo para el desarrollo del Trabajo de Titulación bajo el tema: **"SOCIAL MEDIA AND READING COMPREHENSION"** propuesto por la estudiante Patricia Fernanda Acosta Montesdeoca, estudiante de la Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y de la Educación en la Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

A nombre de la institución a la cual represento, me comprometo a apoyar en el desarrollo del proyecto.

Particular que comunico a usted para los fines pertinentes.

Atentamente,



Miryan Consuelo Salazar Tobar
DIRECTORA DEL CENTRO DE IDIOMAS



Annex 2

OPERATIONALIZATION OF VARIABLES

Objective: To identify the most used social media platform for improving reading comprehension.

Instructions: For the following statements, select one of the options:

1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neutral, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree.

1. Social media	Dimensions	Indicators	Questions
Social media platforms (like Facebook and Instagram) encompasses a set of web-based applications with different characteristics and features that made them unique; they all are interactive platforms that allow users to be in contact with others, to text, to follow accounts, to upload, to share and to consume different type of content.	Social media platforms	-Facebook -Instagram	1 and 5 1 and 5
	Type of content	-Rational-Informative -Rational-Educational	6 7-12
2. Reading comprehension	Dimensions	Indicators	Questions
Reading comprehension skills refer to the ability to understand and interpret appropriately written information of different types of reading materials and also it involves three reading comprehension levels: literal, inferential and critical level.	Levels of reading comprehension	-Literal -Inferential -Critical	13-14 15-16 17-18
	Reading materials	- Online reading material - Authentic reading material - Paper-based reading material	20 21 and 23 22

Annex 3

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,991	18

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
I read on social media like Facebook and Instagram because it is easy to access to reading information. (Rational-informative)	51,000	624,500	,993	,990
I like using social media platforms (Facebook and Instagram) to acquire knowledge, exchange information and access to reading material anytime and anywhere. (Rational-educational)	51,000	632,000	,893	,991
I consume content to improve my English language skills in social media platforms. (Rational-educational)	51,000	636,500	,834	,992
I look for content to improve my reading skills in social media platforms. (Rational-educational)	51,000	630,000	,920	,991
I practice my reading comprehension skills by reading original English postings on social media (Facebook and Instagram). (Rational-educational)	51,000	632,000	,893	,991
I use social media platforms (Facebook and Instagram) to read the viewpoints of other people about books or articles of my interests. (Rational-educational)	51,000	624,500	,993	,990
I like following Facebook and Instagram official accounts for learning English because they provide reading material that is not necessary for learning purposes. (Rational-educational)	51,000	624,500	,993	,990
I pay special attention to details like dates and time when I read. (Literal level)	51,000	624,500	,993	,990
I understand only what I can see in the texts when I read. (Literal level)	51,000	651,500	,638	,993

I understand the intended message of texts when I read. (Inferential level)	51,000	630,000	,920	,991
I make predictions and conclusions of texts when I read. (Inferential level)	51,000	624,500	,993	,990
I use the main and supporting details of reading texts to obtain conclusions when I read. (Inferential level)	51,000	624,500	,993	,990
I relate the information of texts with my personal experiences when I read. (Critical level)	51,000	651,500	,638	,993
I get really engaged with readings to evaluate and judge the information when I read. (Critical level)	51,000	624,500	,993	,990
I like reading online reading materials like pdf books because I can access to them anytime and anywhere with my phone or laptop.	51,000	624,500	,993	,990
Reading magazines, newspapers, posts help me to improve my overall reading comprehension ability. (Authentic material)	51,000	624,500	,993	,990
The printed texts like books, magazines, or newspapers with images help me to understand better the reading passages.	51,000	624,500	,993	,990
My teacher uses other reading materials in the English class, like newspapers, magazines, and English original posts.	51,000	624,500	,993	,990

Annex 4

Turnitin report



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