



**THAI UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON  
THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN ENGLISH  
LEARNING TOOL**

**BY**

**AUTCHARA JUNRONG**

**AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
OF MASTER OF ARTS IN CAREER ENGLISH FOR  
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION  
LANGUAGE INSTITUTE  
THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMIC YEAR 2024**

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AN INDEPENDENT STUDY

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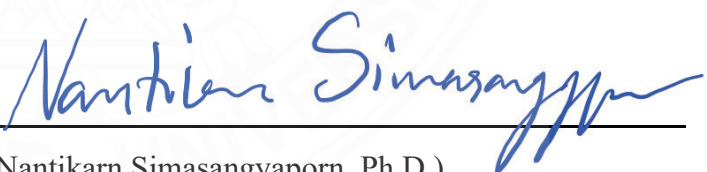
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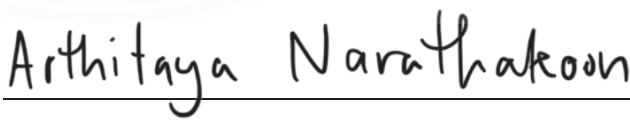
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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates Thai university students' perceptions of utilizing social media as an informal tool to support English language learning. The research was conducted among students participating in an internship program at the Port Authority of Thailand and was motivated by the increasing impact of digital technologies on educational practices. With approximately 60% of the global population actively engaging with social media, these platforms have begun to reshape traditional language learning paradigms by offering new avenues for autonomous and informal study. The objectives of the study were to identify the most commonly used social media platforms, to examine which English language skills students aim to develop, and to assess students' perceptions of the effectiveness of social media in enhancing their language proficiency. A mixed-methods approach was employed. Quantitative data were gathered from 57 internship students through a structured questionnaire based on Benson's four dimensions of OCLL: location, formality, pedagogy, and locus of control. Qualitative data were collected through a focus group interview with four students representing diverse academic disciplines and varying levels of English proficiency. This study focused on informal, out-of-class learning contexts, guided by Benson's (2011) Out-of-Class Language Learning (OCLL) framework. Findings indicated that YouTube and Facebook were the most frequently utilized platforms for language learning, followed by Instagram and TikTok. Students predominantly focused

on developing receptive skills, particularly listening and speaking, with specific goals such as vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation improvement, and exposure to authentic English usage. Social media was generally perceived as a convenient, motivating, and low-anxiety resource that facilitated flexible and self-directed learning. Quantitative results revealed high perception scores, particularly in the domains of learner autonomy and motivation. Nevertheless, participants also acknowledged certain limitations, including variability in content quality and the lack of systematic grammar instruction. Suggestions for enhancement included the integration of subtitles, interactive quizzes, and content tailored to advanced proficiency levels. In conclusion, social media serves as an effective supplementary resource for English language learning beyond the formal classroom. It fosters learner autonomy, especially in the development of receptive skills, and offers practical implications for educators and curriculum designers seeking to incorporate digital platforms into language education in a pedagogically meaningful way.

**Keywords:** Social media, Perception, Thai University Students, English Learning Tools

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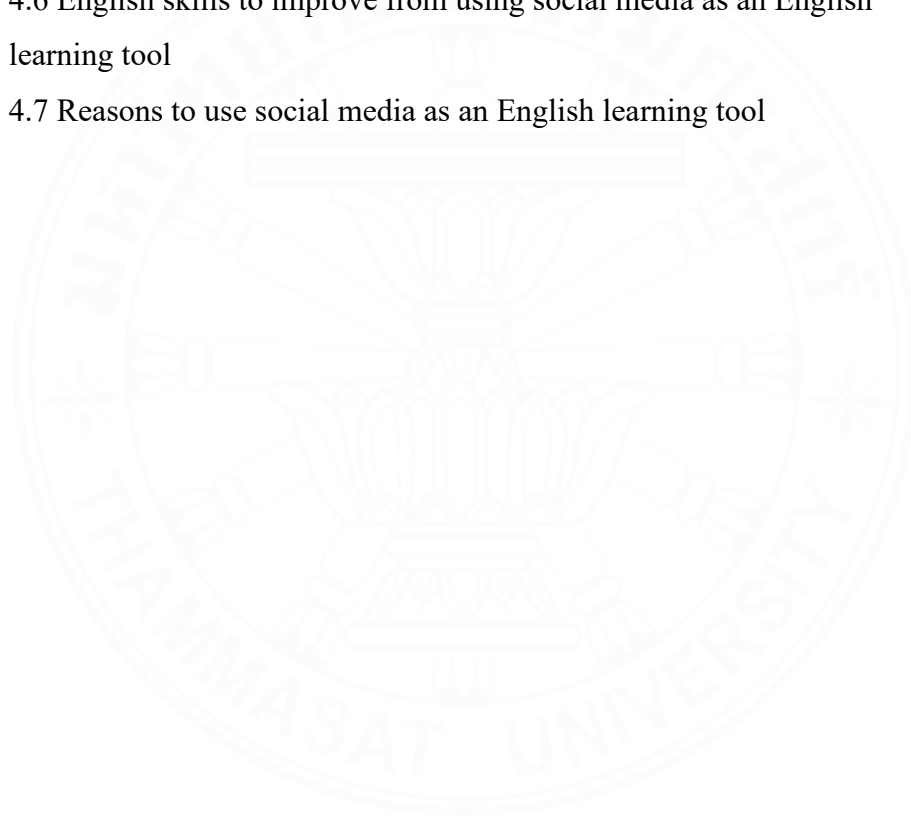
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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Social media has played a significant role in our lives. As of January 2023, there are over 4.80 billion social media users globally, accounting for 59.9% of the total population (Statista, 2023). More than half of the world's population is on social media, regardless of age, gender, and profession. People around the world use social media for different purposes. For that reason, social media have affected various aspects of our lives—creating an impact not only on structure and social interaction but also on the education field, especially English language learning (Muftah, 2022). In the past, the most common and accessible way that students could learn English was through textbooks and school teachers. However, as a result of the learning revolution, social media have transformed the way students learn English by applying different social media platforms as learning mediums. Increasing numbers of language learners have shown their interest in utilizing social media to improve their English because they find the platforms fun, interesting, effective, convenient, easy to access, and up-to-date (Erzad and Suciati, 2018).

Today, there are various established social media platforms out there. Some of the leading sites include Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Each platform has its unique features with different functions, which is why different platforms attract different target users. The platform chosen by each English learner also depends on the learners' needs and purposes. In addition, many social media platforms have developed and introduced new features regularly, and the number of active users on each platform also changes over time.

With these changes, it will be beneficial to explore the utilization of social media in English learning among Thai university students. Therefore, this study aims to examine the use of different social media as an English learning tool and identify the Thai university students' perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool, including how social media can help improve English learners' proficiency. The researcher would like to fill the existing gaps from the previous studies with an aim to

investigate Thai university students' perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool to improve their English skills and literacy.

## 1.2 Research Objectives

1. To investigate the type of social media that Thai university students use to improve their English
2. To examine the perception of Thai university students on the use of social media as an English learning tool to improve their English skills

## 1.3 Research Questions

1. Which social media platforms do Thai university students use to improve their English?
2. What are the Thai university students' perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool?

## 1.4 Definitions of Terms

**1) Social media** Social media are internet-based forms of communication that allow users to create content and share information through virtual platforms. In this study, social media includes Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, WhatsApp, TikTok, and X.

**2) Perception** Perception is a psychological process in which humans process reactions into positive or negative impressions based on their five senses. In this study, it refers to the experiences and responses of Thai university students in using social media platforms as tools for learning English.

**3) Thai university students** Thai university students refer to Thai students who have enrolled in the university for their degree and are in an internship program at the Port Authority of Thailand.

**4) English Learning Tools** English learning tools refer to aids, technologies, or materials—physical or digital—that facilitate the process of learning and mastering the English language, often incorporating interactive, engaging, or adaptive features to enhance the learner's experience.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

This research is designed to be a quantitative study. The results of the study will derive from the quantitative data and statistical methods. The researcher will create the questionnaire survey as a Google Form. The questionnaire is developed based on Benson's (2011) framework of out-of-class learning activities. The online questionnaire will be distributed via social media platforms to the samples who represent the target population in this study. As the primary objective is to investigate the perceptions of Thai university students on the use of social media as an English learning tool in order to improve their English, the population of this study is limited to Thai university students only. Fifty-seven Thai university students currently participating in an internship program at the Port Authority of Thailand will take part in this study.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The intention of this study is to investigate the perception of Thai university students on the use of social media as an English learning tool in order to improve their English. The results might help provide information and help increase understanding towards the use of social media by Thai university students. This will benefit relevant stakeholders in the Thai education sector by providing insight into how Thai university students use social media, thereby creating opportunities to enhance English language learning in ways that align with students' needs. In addition, English instructors would have information to improve their teaching based on the students' needs. The results of this study could further contribute to the use of social media platforms as an English learning tool.

### **1.7 Organization of the Study**

The present study consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the background of the study, the objective of the study, the research question, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, and the organization of the study. Chapter 2 presents the literature review regarding the topics of the definition of social media, types of social media, the role of social media in education, perception, and previous related studies. Chapter 3 describes the participants, the sampling method, the research instrument, the data collection, and the data analysis. Next, Chapter 4 consists of the findings from the

data collected, and Chapter 5 summarizes and discusses the results of the study based on the research questions before making conclusions. This last chapter also gives recommendations for future research.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

This chapter presents a survey of literature that is relevant to the research study, together with some areas that need to be taken into consideration. This chapter also includes the definition of social media, types of social media, the role of social media in education, the concepts of consumer perception which are essential in understanding consumers' perceptions towards the use of social media as an English learning tool, Benson's (2011) Out-of-Class Language Learning (OCLL) framework, and previous related studies.

#### **2.1 Definition of Social Media**

Junco, Heiberger, and Loken (2011) define social media as sites, services, and practices that encourage collaboration, community building, engagement, and information sharing among people through virtual communities. Davis III et al., (2015) also support the same concept by defining social media as web-based and mobile applications in which people can create, engage, and exchange content in various forms of communication on digital platforms. Social media have become widely used in recent years, especially for young people, as they provide new ways of communication and interaction. This modern-day social interaction may appear in different forms, such as sharing videos, photos, and posts, stating opinions on your own post or others, as well as creating or joining communities.

#### **2.2 Types of Social Media**

Based on the purpose and functionality, social media can be categorized in different ways. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) divide social media into six categories: namely, collaborative projects, blogs, content communities, social networking sites, virtual game worlds, and virtual social worlds. Over the last decade, new social media platforms have been created and evolved continuously. However, among these numerous platforms, there are certain social media that are most popular and widely used by global active users which are as follows:



### **2.2.1 Facebook**

At present, Facebook is the world's largest and most popular social media platform. Today, there are over 2.95 billion active users (Statista, 2023). Facebook allows users to upload pictures and videos, share opinions via status and comments, send messages, as well as create or watch live broadcasts. Another prominent feature is that users can create and follow Facebook Pages, and join groups containing specific content of their interests, e.g., English language-related content. For this reason, many researchers have explored the benefits of Facebook in language learning to find the correlations between Facebook and language learning. Peeters (2015) investigated the use of Facebook as a support tool for English language learning among a group of Belgian undergraduate students; the study revealed that students gained insights, knowledge, and skills—especially in academic writing. Faryadi (2017) also discovered that Facebook enhanced learners' English proficiency. The results indicated that Facebook offered a conducive learning environment for English learners as well as improved learners' motivation and perception of learning the English language.

### **2.2.2 YouTube**

YouTube is a platform designed for video hosting and sharing, with over 2.5 billion users currently (Statista, 2023). People can watch, share, like, comment, and upload their own videos as well as watch live-stream videos created by others. In the beginning, YouTube was first created as a video-sharing platform where anyone could upload videos on any subject but later it developed into career opportunities for content creators (Holland, 2016). One of the key points that attract visitors across the globe to this platform is the wide variety of content on YouTube—from entertainment to education. With its audio-visual content, YouTube has become an effective educational tool (Sharma T. and Sharma S., 2021). Hasan et al., (2018) also agree that YouTube is a motivating platform for English learning as it helps students improve English language skills, especially speaking and listening skills. By watching English audio-visual materials on YouTube, students can improve speech delivery, pronunciation, and grammatical knowledge more effectively.

### **2.2.3 Instagram**

Instagram is a platform that focuses on sharing photos and videos with followers. Currently, there are over 2 billion users on this platform (Statista, 2023). Most people use Instagram to share personal stories, catch up with friends, keep up to date with current issues, and connect with brands and celebrities through photos and videos. However, Instagram has more to offer than photography. People can learn and get inspired—especially in learning and improving English—as they follow their favorite foreign celebrities or English learning account. A study on the application of Instagram in learning English indicated that learners had positive perceptions towards Instagram as they found learning via Instagram fun and enjoyable (Zarei and Rudravarapu, 2019). The learners also revealed that Instagram as a learning tool helped them improve their language proficiency, grammar as well as vocabulary. Akpan and Chayanuvat (2022) also discovered that Instagram encouraged students to learn English by offering real-life opportunities for practicing, commenting, and interacting in English.

### **2.2.4 WhatsApp**

WhatsApp is an instant messaging application on smartphones. Today, there are over 2 billion people using this social media (Statista, 2023). It has become one of the most popular social media sites where users can send messages, images, audio, or videos. A study on the effectiveness of WhatsApp in developing students' English reading and writing skills revealed that WhatsApp was an effective tool in enhancing both skills as well as English in general (Ahmed, 2019). The study emphasized that students' vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, and writing skills had positively developed when utilizing WhatsApp in English learning. Also, WhatsApp offers a space for learners to use English in real situations where they can keep learning and practicing outside the classroom.

### **2.2.5 TikTok**

TikTok is a video-sharing platform where users are encouraged to create and share videos on any subject. TikTok users have skyrocketed in these past few years and recently have surpassed another huge milestone: 1 billion global active users. TikTok

has more to offer than just funny videos; it has become a platform where both young children and adults can connect and learn. It has become an alternative for language learning due to its engaging and entertaining features. Users can find content that provides tips for language learning, especially English language, such as instructional posts about vocabulary and grammar. In addition, there is a wide variety of content and accounts for learning English that can benefit the learners. However, there has been very little research regarding the effectiveness of TikTok in learning English since the popularity of this platform is recent, compared to other social media platforms.

### **2.2.6 X**

X is the site formerly known as Twitter. The rebranding of Twitter to X represents a bold step towards reinventing its identity and embracing a new era of social connectivity (Jyotisman, 2023). For now, the platform's rebrand is just a name change - no new features have been introduced. X is known as a micro-blogging website in which users get to engage and communicate in short messages. Currently, there are over 560 million users on this platform (Statista, 2023). It is one of the major social platforms for news sharing and reading, where news outlets, journalists as well as general people get connected and learn about current events. The communications are created through the exchange of quick and real-time information, consisting of photos, videos, audio, links, or text with limited characters per tweet. Fewell (2014) stated that social media offered a practical means for learners to communicate in authentic real-time situations, promoting language learning and social cohesion. Since it is a platform where lots of people are gathered, especially writers and journalists, students can learn some English phrases that fluent English speakers genuinely use when talking to one another in real life. They can also study the way other people, especially native English speakers, write natural sentences and study how words are formed and related to one another. Melliyani and Mardiyat (2022) also discovered that language learners use Twitter (X) to improve their vocabulary and grammar by looking for other users' tweets who are from English-speaking countries.

### 2.3 The Role of Social Media in Education

Social media have influenced various aspects of life—social, political, economic, and educational. Early in their development, social media were mainly created as tools for communication and business, but now they have gradually evolved in the field of education as well. AL-Bashabsheh and Pradhan (2022) explained that the utilization of social media in education enables students, teachers as well as parents to gain language knowledge while linking with other learning groups and other educational systems. Social media enhances learning opportunities for students as well as widen the scope of interactions with others (Meena, 2013). According to Meena, social media promotes the concept of self-paced learning, self-knowledge, skill development, and flexibility in learning. Learners can get access to the content at any place and time at her/his convenience, as well as have the freedom to select learning material according to their own interests and knowledge. Besides learning and collaborating, social media also creates opportunities for students to connect and practice language usage with others beyond the classroom.

### 2.4 Perception

Perception is a psychological process in which humans process reactions into positive or negative impressions based on their five senses: eyesight, hearing, taste, touch and smell. According to Rahul Jain PMP (2021), perception is the organization, identification, and interpretation of sensory information in order to represent and understand the environment. All perception involves signals in the nervous system, which are the result of physical or chemical stimulation of the sense organs.

Nugroho (2020) stated that perception is a process that starts from the use of the five senses in receiving a stimulus, then it is organized and interpreted to form an understanding of what is sensed. Another definition from Erin & Maharani 2018 pointed out that perception is a psychological process in which, through the experience gained by the five senses, individuals can process responses into positive or negative perceptions. Responses are obtained through the stages of selection, interpretation, and reaction. However, Fieldman (1999) stated that perception refers to a constructive process by which we go beyond the stimuli that are presented to us and attempt to

construct a meaningful situation. Meanwhile, Morgan (1987) stated that perception refers to the way experiences sound, feel, taste, or smell. In other words, perception can be defined as whatever is experienced by a person. From the definitions above, it can be inferred that perception is formed as a result of each individual's experiences and feelings.

#### ***2.4.1 Understanding Perception in the Context of Out-of-Class Learning***

At the moment, Benson's (2011) framework is regarded as the only approach to out-of-class context activities. It investigates the "settings" for the student in an out-of-class context, as well as the practice methods that are supported by the settings. Generally, a setting is outlined as the area, composition, and connection for learning, while a practice method is a collection of repetitive pedagogical processes utilizing the elements of a given setting to potentially improve its quality. Benson (2011) classified Out-of-Class Language Learning (OCLL) into four major dimensions: location, formality, pedagogy, and locus of control (see Table 2.1). Location relates to learning settings in the classroom, at a residence, on the street, or even digitally via the internet. Formality refers to the level of formality with which learning is conducted in non-formal or informal settings. Pedagogy relates to the level of pedagogical techniques used during the learning process, such as instruction and evaluation. The locus of control refers to decisions made when learning, such as self-directed or other-directed.

**Table 2.1***Dimensions of OCLL (Benson, 2011; Reinders & Benson, 2017, p. 562)*

Dimension	Description	Terms
Location	Where and when the learning takes place	Out-of-class, after class, extracurricular, self-access, out-of- school, distance
Formality	The degree to which learning is linked to educational qualifications or structured by educational institutions	Informal, non-formal, and naturalistic
Pedagogy	The degree to which teaching is involved	Non-instructed, self-instructed
Locus of control	How decisions are distributed between the learner and others	Autonomous, independent, self-regulated

While there have been empirical studies on English language learning in the classroom with Thai university students, there is still a scarcity of studies on informal learning out of the classroom. To fill this gap, this study examines the nature of informal OCLL language learning activities among Thai university students participating in government internship programs. The interpretation of the four dimensions listed below determines our comprehension of setting and practice methods. Here's how these dimensions contribute to the understanding of such activities:

1. Location: It encompasses both physical and virtual learning environments, such as classrooms, libraries, and community centers, as well as online platforms, forums, and simulations. Location can have significant effects on learning experience, accessibility, and engagement. Learning is not limited to traditional environments and can be enhanced by a variety of situations. According to Dincer (2020), online websites

and social media were the most frequently used digital tools engaged in by English major university students in out-of-class language learning.

2. **Formality:** It concerns the possibilities of learning activities within the scope of an institutional program that contributes to qualifications. In contrast to this method, informal learning involves pursuing interests outside of the institutional learning environment (Livingstone, 2006).

3. **Pedagogy:** It is the procedure by which direct interpretation, instruction, material development, and evaluation are all utilized. According to Dincer (2020), English major students tend to have greater self-determined motivation levels than those who learn English for the purpose of passing an exam or for career advancement.

4. **Locus of control:** It refers to where the control over learning decisions is situated, whether with the learner or with others. It is also determined by the learning activity patterns (self-directed or other-directed) as well as how teaching and learning decisions are distributed. According to Dincer (2020), digital platforms enable English learners to access high-quality content based on their own preferences and, also, they can learn and practice English in their preferred times, which illustrates how digital platforms can influence the locus of control in language learning.

This framework originates in the study of the frequently utilized and typically interchangeable phrases in language learning autonomy-related research, including out-of-class/school (location, informal learning).

## **2.5 Previous Related Studies**

This section includes previous studies on the subject of university students using social media platforms to improve their English language. All six studies highlight the positive role of social media in enhancing English language proficiency. The focus on the development of basic language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—is consistently noted. However, there is still a limited amount of research on this subject in the Thai context, particularly with regard to Thai university students participating in government internship programs. Therefore, the six articles examine the use of social media platforms by students to improve their English skills.

Erzad and Suciati (2018) conducted a study on “Social Media for Improving Students’ English Quality in the Millennial Era” to examine the use of social media in

students, the improvement of English skills, as well as the reason why students use social media to enhance their English proficiency in modern days. The data was collected using a qualitative research method by observation, interview, and documentation of undergraduate students from the Department of English Education in Indonesia. The results showed that the most popular platforms among students were YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and Line. The study also stressed the importance of the improvement of four basic skills—listening, speaking, writing, and reading respectively. In addition, the study discovered that students viewed social media as fun, interesting, easily accessible, and informative English learning tools.

Zhou (2021) reviewed the impact of social media on language learning from previous studies, underlining the use of social media as language skill development tools and intercultural communication platforms. The researcher discovered that social media delivered multiple benefits in language learning: providing authentic resources, offering stress-free practice spaces, and encouraging intercultural communication. However, the study pointed out some concerns about the utilization of social media, including distraction. Since this study focused on a few platforms, Facebook and YouTube in particular; therefore, the researcher suggested that further study should include more social media platforms such as Instagram and other local social media platforms to get a wider scope of ideas on this topic.

Muftah (2022) examined the impact of social media on English learning during the COVID-19 pandemic by investigating undergraduate English learners from a certain Saudi Arabia university using questionnaires. The findings showed that the utilization of social media in English learning had positive effects on students, especially in the field of writing skills, reading skills, listening skills, communication skills, linguistic lexical variation, and grammar usage. Students revealed that they did not use only one platform, but various social media platforms were applied for English learning. The study also reported that students viewed social media as both communicative and educational tools; therefore, it could be concluded that social media resulted in the improvement of learners' English proficiency. The researchers suggested that further studies should investigate the use of social media in education, particularly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic ends.



Akpan and Chayanuvat (2022) studied “the impact of social media on motivation toward learning English as a global language”, emphasizing the five most popular social media among Thai users as of 2021: YouTube, Facebook, Line, Facebook Messenger, and Instagram. In this study, the participants were Thai EFL undergraduate students from a private university. The researchers adopted a mixed-methods approach, using a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews to collect the data. The results showed that social media had a positive impact on learning English as a global language—enhancing both competence and language skills, promoting self-confidence and self-directed learning, and increasing motivation. It was found that, among the five platforms, YouTube was the most effective platform, demonstrating a significant influence on students’ motivation and English language learning.

Karim et al. (2022) investigated the role of social media in improving the English language among undergraduate students in Assam of India. The researchers conducted a study in different universities across Assam using a survey method, including online questionnaires. The results showed that social media created a major impact on students’ English performance as it helped improve students’ four English skills. Despite that browsing Facebook can be a waste of time for some students, the majority revealed that they learned English while utilizing social media in language learning. Students also reported that they found useful words, phrases, or sentences on social media. Moreover, learners showed a positive attitude towards the utilization of social media in education, considering it as one of the best ways to practice English in real life. However, the study suggested that in order to effectively improve their English proficiency, students must be engaged and stay motivated to use social media as well. Since this study explored the use of social media in learning the English language in general, it is recommended that future studies should be extended by focusing on specific skills like writing or speaking. In addition, this study examined the use of only six social media platforms—WhatsApp, Facebook, X, Instagram, YouTube, Messenger, and IMO. Therefore, further research should include other social media platforms in the study.

Abd. Rahman (2024) investigated a visually impaired English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learner’s out of class language learning (OCLL) practices using Benson’s (2011) OCLL framework. In interviews and journals, the study characterizes

three stages of learning English: early exposure to the language, early production of language and the evolution of communicative skills. The results of this research are indicative of how the learner moved from a passive to an active participant through self-regulated learning strategies, as well as how both the physical and virtual learning environments have been integrated. The research further emphasizes the importance of the social aspect, demonstrating that peer interaction can bolster learning outcomes. It contributes a crucial new piece of evidence to our understanding of how visually impaired learners navigate informal learning opportunities beyond traditional classroom settings.

In general, these six studies together highlight the common benefits of social media for educational purposes in English language learning and teaching. They shed light on its ability to offer real, embodied, and dynamic ways to develop skills and open avenues for future research to confront the pressing challenges and opportunities ahead in this area. Platforms like YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram have embedded good tools for improving your language skills offering access, convenience, and practicality in the learning process. Social media plays a multifactorial core role due to its contribution to motivation, self-directed learning and intercultural communication. Although the use of various social media platforms has been explored in English classes, an important area that remains underexplored is Thai university students' perceptions of social media usage during government internships.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Participants**

The population of this study was 63 Thai university students who were working under the internship program at the Port Authority of Thailand (PAT). The PAT is a public utility state enterprise under the supervision of the Ministry of Transport, playing a vital role in maritime transport to cope with the international standard supporting the country's economic development and national competitiveness enhancement. The internship program examined in this study is characterized by its inclusive structure, offering opportunities for students across various academic levels to gain practical experience. Participants in this research therefore comprised students from 1<sup>st</sup> year to 4<sup>th</sup> year. This diverse cohort allows for a comprehensive exploration of how social media is perceived and utilized for English language learning throughout their university studies, providing valuable insights into potential shifts in learning approaches as students' progress. This approach enables the study to capture a wider range of perspectives on the use of social media for English learning. In this regard, this research employed a calculated sample size determined using the Taro Yamane formula to ensure a representative group for distributing questionnaires. According to Yamane (1967), this formula yields a sample size with a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level. Hence, it was determined that 57 internship students should participate. Additionally, they all have experience in self-directed learning outside of the classroom via the use of social media. Although questionnaires were sent to 60 internship students, the response rate exceeded expectations, with 57 internship students completing the surveys. The sample consists of 57 internship students, aged between 21-23, classified by demographic information such as age, gender, and education background.

Moreover, four students, identified as A1, A2, A3, and C1 (pseudonyms for confidentiality), were chosen to participate in a focus group interview from a broader sample. Two of the participants were female senior students majoring in Business Administration. Participant A1, aged 23 or above, reported using Instagram daily to

improve her English writing skills. Similarly, participant A2, also aged 23 or above, used Instagram more than ten times per month. Another participant, A3, was a female junior student majoring in Logistics, aged 22, with an intermediate level of English proficiency; she used YouTube daily to enhance her listening skills.

The final participant, C1, was a 23-year-old male undergraduate student from the Faculty of Engineering, who reported using social media for less than five minutes per day for the purpose of English learning. All four students were enrolled in the internship program at the Port Authority of Thailand. The purpose of this interview is to obtain a comprehensive understanding related to the use of social media as an English learning tool. According to Hennink and Kaiser's (2022) recommendation, a range of 4-8 participants is effective in reaching data saturation with a limited number of interviews.

An illustration of the formula calculation is as follows:-

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where, n = the sample size

N = population size of Thai university students as internship students

e = the error of percent points

Below is the description of calculating values in the formula:

Step 1 : Take the number of total internship students into the formula : n = 63.

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{63}{1 + (63 \times 0.0025)} \\ n &= \frac{63}{1.1575} \\ n &= 57.427 \approx 57 \end{aligned}$$

Step 2 : Purposive sampling was used for data collection.

### 3.2 Methods

The sampling method used in this study was purposive sampling. In purposive sampling, the researcher takes a non-probability sample based on the availability and willingness of potential participants (Esteban-Bravo & Vidal-Sanz, 2021). Participants were selected based on their involvement in a diverse range of activities that support the development of their academic, creative, and professional skills. These activities

included reading and analyzing texts, writing their own work, participating in discussions, conducting reports and research, and engaging with the wider literary community. All of them had experience with self-directed language learning outside the classroom through the use of media. In this context, the participants were invited to complete an online questionnaire distributed via social media platforms through a link to a Google Form.

### **3.3 Research Instruments**

The present study used both qualitative and quantitative research instruments to collect the data. In terms of quantitative collecting data, questionnaires were used and focus group interviews with open-ended questions were conducted to gain a comprehensive understanding of the Thai university students' perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool for qualitative data collection.

### **3.4 Research Procedures**

#### ***3.4.1 The Survey Questionnaire***

The questionnaire was developed by adapting questionnaires from previous research drawing on Benson's (2011) framework of out-of-class learning activities. In addition, it was designed to collect specific information about participants (see Appendix). The theoretical framework aims to explore Thai university students' reasons for and perceptions of using social media to improve their English skills. The questionnaire is divided into three parts as follows:

Part 1 : Demographic Information

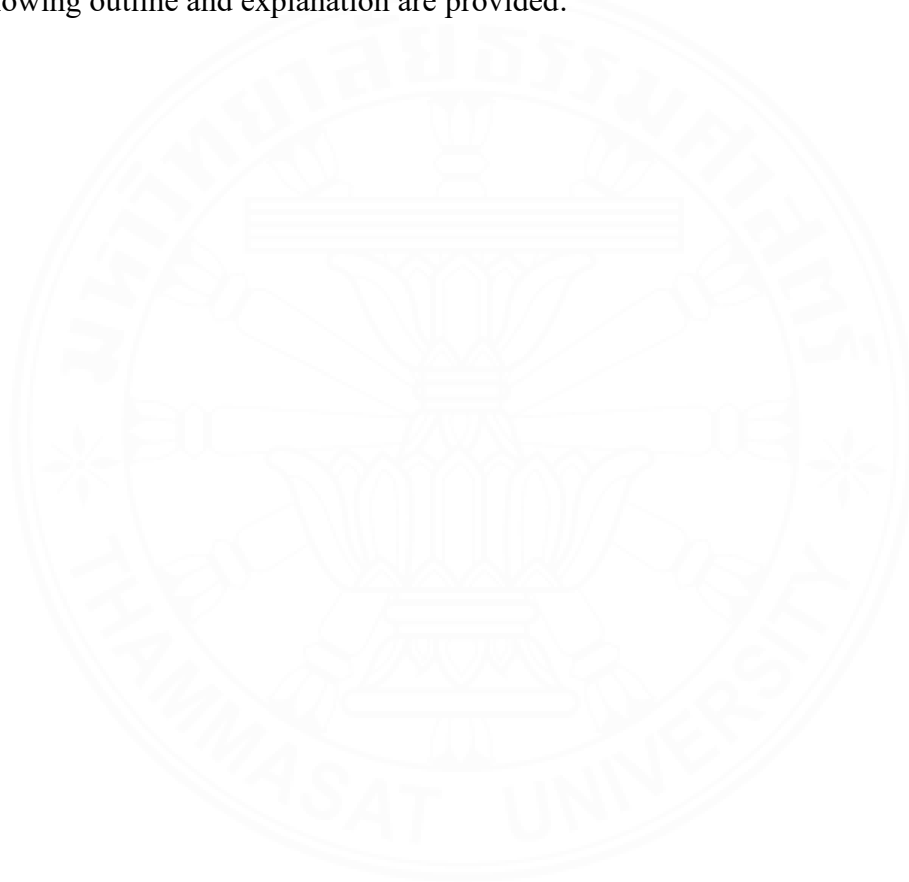
Part 2 : Information about the Behavioral Use of Social Media as an English Learning Tool

Part 3 : Perceptions on the Use of Social Media as an English Learning Tool

In this regard, the data in Part 1 (Demographics) and Part 2 (Information about the Use of Social Media as English Learning Tools) were collected using categorical, closed-ended items. Data in Part 3 (Perception on the Use of Social Media as English Learning Tools) was collected by using five-point Likert items, which are used in surveys to collect information about attitudes, beliefs, and other aspects of

psychological experience that cannot be exactly enumerated and which may be subjective (Krosnick and Presser, 2010).

**3.4.1.1 Method for Creating the Questionnaire:** The research applies the Benson (2011) framework from the book titled “The Handbook of Informal Language Learning” Edited by Mark Dressman and Randall William Sadler. To develop the methods section for creating a questionnaire based on Benson’s (2011) framework, the following outline and explanation are provided:



***Method for Creating Questionnaire Items in the "Location" Dimension***

**Item 1: "When learning English on social media, it reduces my stress and anxiety."**

**Source and Rationale:** This item was developed based on the concept from Benson's framework that learning outside the classroom can provide a more relaxed and stress-free environment compared to traditional settings. The emphasis on comfort and reduced anxiety in informal learning environments was directly derived from the discussions on learner emotions in non-traditional settings.

**Development Process:** The phrase "reduces my stress and anxiety" was chosen to capture the emotional benefits of learning in flexible and informal locations, as highlighted in the framework.

**Item 2: "The learning environment of English learning videos on social media makes me highly motivated to learn."**

**Source and Rationale:** This item draws from the motivational aspects discussed in Benson's framework, which emphasizes how non-traditional learning environments can enhance motivation through engaging and varied contexts. The reference to "English learning videos on social media" reflects the specific situational context that can influence motivation outside the classroom.

**Development Process:** The item was constructed to assess the impact of the digital learning environment on learner motivation, aligning with the framework's suggestion that location influences learner engagement and motivation.

**Item 3: "I can focus on my learning better when learning English on social media."**

**Source and Rationale:** This item was informed by the discussion in Benson's framework regarding the impact of the learning environment on concentration and focus. It highlights the potential for informal learning settings to offer more personalized and less distracting environments, which may enhance focus.

**Development Process:** The inclusion of "focus on my learning better" was aimed at measuring the perceived cognitive benefits of learning in a self-selected, comfortable location, a core aspect of the "Location" dimension in the framework.

Each item was carefully crafted to align with the theoretical insights provided in Benson's framework on how the physical and contextual setting of language learning can influence various learner outcomes, including stress, motivation, and focus.

### ***Method for Creating Questionnaire Items in the "Formality" Dimension***

**Item 4: "English learning videos on social media are practical for me to achieve my learning goals and objectives."**

**Source and Rationale:** This item was inspired by Benson's emphasis on the continuum between formal and informal learning environments. The practicality of informal learning tools like social media videos reflects their ability to meet specific learning objectives outside a structured classroom setting.

**Development Process:** The term "practical" was chosen to gauge how learners perceive the usefulness of informal resources in achieving formal learning goals, directly relating to the formality spectrum outlined in Benson's framework.

**Item 5: "English learning videos on social media are associated with knowledge I am looking for."**

**Source and Rationale:** This item was developed based on the notion that informal learning experiences can be highly personalized and targeted. The focus on the learner's ability to find relevant knowledge aligns with Benson's discussion of the flexibility and learner-centered nature of informal learning environments.

**Development Process:** The phrase "associated with knowledge I am looking for" captures the autonomous and need-based approach to learning, which contrasts with the pre-determined curriculum of formal settings, reflecting the flexibility discussed in the framework.

**Item 6: "Informal communication language use in English learning videos on social media makes me feel more relaxed."**

**Source and Rationale:** This item addresses the relaxed nature of informal learning settings, which Benson highlights as a key contrast to the often rigid structure of formal education. The informal use of language in these settings can reduce anxiety and make learning more approachable.



**Development Process:** The inclusion of "makes me feel more relaxed" was intended to assess how the informal communication style of social media content impacts the learner's comfort and engagement, tying back to the framework's exploration of the benefits of informality in language learning.

Each of these items was crafted to explore the learners' perceptions of the formality of their learning experiences, evaluating how the informal nature of social media-based learning tools aligns with or diverges from their goals and comfort levels, as guided by Benson's framework.

### ***Method for Creating Questionnaire Items in the "Pedagogy" Dimension***

#### **Item 7: "I can assess my past progress to make future study plans."**

**Source and Rationale:** This item stems from Benson's framework's focus on learner autonomy in pedagogical approaches, particularly how learners in informal settings often self-monitor and plan their learning. The ability to reflect on past progress and strategize for future learning is a key component of the pedagogical dimension, highlighting self-directed learning practices.

**Development Process:** The phrase "assess my past progress" was selected to measure reflective practices and strategic planning, which are vital for sustaining and enhancing learning in informal settings, as emphasized in Benson's discussion of pedagogy.

**Item 8: "I am highly self-instructing and successfully improving my English skills by my own efforts."**

**Source and Rationale:** This item aligns with Benson's view that informal learning environments foster self-instruction and personal responsibility for learning outcomes.

It emphasizes the role of the learner as an active participant in their learning journey, crucial to the pedagogical autonomy facilitated by informal settings.

**Development Process:** The terms "self-instructing" and "by my own efforts" were used to capture the essence of learner-driven instruction and improvement, a cornerstone of Benson's pedagogical dimension, highlighting the shift from teacher-led to learner-led learning.

**Item 9: "English learning videos on social media enable me to get engaged."**

**Source and Rationale:** This item was derived from Benson's emphasis on engagement through pedagogical tools in informal environments. The interactive and often participatory nature of social media content can enhance learner engagement, a critical pedagogical element in informal learning.

**Development Process:** The term "enable me to get engaged" was chosen to assess how the format and content of social media videos encourage active involvement and immersion, reflecting the pedagogical strategies discussed in the framework.

Each of these items was created to evaluate different aspects of the pedagogical dimension in Benson's framework, focusing on self-assessment, self-instruction, and learner engagement, which are essential for effective language learning in informal contexts.

#### ***Method for Creating Questionnaire Items in the "Locus of Control" Dimension***

**Item 10: "I create my own English study plan by learning from English learning videos via social media platforms."**

**Source and Rationale:** This item is based on Benson's framework's emphasis on learner autonomy and control over the learning process. The ability to design one's study plan is a direct reflection of the learner's control over their educational journey, a central theme in the locus of control dimension.

**Development Process:** The phrase "create my own English study plan" was used to capture the proactive and self-regulated nature of learning in informal contexts, highlighting the autonomy emphasized in Benson's discussion of locus of control.

**Item 11: "I set my own learning goals and objectives of my English study via English learning videos on social media."**

**Source and Rationale:** This item reflects the self-directed goal-setting aspect of Benson's locus of control dimension. It underscores the importance of learners

taking initiative in defining what they want to achieve through their learning activities, a critical factor in informal learning environments.

**Development Process:** The term "set my own learning goals and objectives" was chosen to measure the extent to which learners independently determine their learning outcomes, aligning with the framework's focus on learner control over educational objectives.

**Item 12: "When learning English from social media, I can manage my own learning time based on my convenience."**

**Source and Rationale:** This item is derived from Benson's emphasis on the flexibility and autonomy learners have in managing their learning schedule in informal settings. The ability to control when and how learning occurs is a significant aspect of the locus of control dimension.

**Development Process:** The phrase "manage my own learning time based on my convenience" was included to assess how learners exercise control over their time management, reflecting the framework's discussion on the personalized pacing and scheduling of learning activities.

Each of these items was crafted to evaluate the learners' perceptions of their control over various aspects of their learning process, such as planning, goal-setting, and time management, as outlined in Benson's locus of control dimension.

**3.4.1.2 Framework Application:** The questionnaire was designed using Benson's (2011) Out-of-Classroom Language Learning (OCLL) framework, which comprises four dimensions: Location, Formality, Pedagogy, and Locus of Control.

Each dimension guided the development of specific items in the questionnaire to assess Thai university students' perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool.

The four dimensions were thoroughly analyzed:

**Location:** This dimension refers to where learning takes place outside the traditional classroom setting.

**Formality:** This involves the degree to which learning is structured or informal.

**Pedagogy:** This focuses on the learning approaches and methods employed.

**Locus of Control:** This examines the extent to which learners take control of their learning process.

### ***3.4.2 Focus Group Interviews***

Focus group interviews were conducted at the end of the questionnaire, comprising six carefully crafted questions designed to delve deeper into the Thai university students' perceptions with each participant personally. It allows for the exchange of ideas and knowledge, whether about the past, the future, or specific features, between two individuals: the interviewer and the interviewee. However, for participants with time constraints, a telephone interview or an online interview using FaceTime, Zoom, or Line as an alternative or additional option could be undertaken, employing audio and video over the internet via a synchronous connection.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

The data were downloaded from Google Forms and analyzed in SPSS, which was chosen because of its flexibility and breadth of analyses available. The analysis begins with descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics are statistical tests that describe a single variable within the sample (Warne, 2021). For categorical items (Parts 1 and 2 of the questionnaire), frequency distributions (frequency and percent) were calculated for all items, and appropriate graphs (such as bar charts and pie charts) were constructed to illustrate data. This is used to build a demographic and behavioral profile for the sample. For Likert items (Parts 3) mean and standard deviation were calculated to show the central tendency and variation in the sample for each item. Additionally, this was calculated for the scale, using an unweighted average of all items in the scale. This showed general trends in the sample. The scores obtained from this part reflect the participants' perception levels, interpreted as follows:

**Table 3.1***The Scores of Participants' Perception Levels*

Scale	Mean Range	Score Range	Perception Level
5	Strongly Agree	4.50 - 5.00	Highest
4	Agree	3.50 - 4.49	High
3	Neutral	2.50 – 3.49	Moderate
2	Disagree	1.50 – 2.49	Low
1	Strongly Disagree	1.00 – 1.49	Lowest

Regarding the focus-group interview extracting a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the Thai university students' perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool, the results underwent conceptual content analysis. Moreover, the analysis of interview results was carried out through data analysis. In the process of reduction, the researcher collected all information from interview results, and audio recordings of interview sessions, via an online application, then transformed them by the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying and minimizing them to complete the purpose of the study.

### **3.6 Ethical Considerations**

When conducting research, ethical considerations are a vital issue that cannot be ignored. The data was only collected from the participants whose age reached the legal age of 18 years old. The participants were informed that they can refuse to answer any questions or refuse to take part in this research. Also, before taking part in this research, the participants were asked to sign a consent form to ensure that the participants were not forced to take part in this research. There was no benefit or incentive offered. Furthermore, none of the data collected in this research covered any personal contact details that can identify the participant's identity such as email address, telephone number, or identification number. However, there might be some details that create a risk of identifying the participant, such as an IP address. In that case, the data collected was stored in the researcher's password locked personal laptop. This data will

also be deleted after 3 years of completing the research to ensure that the data will not be used for any other purpose other than that which was consented to.



## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

This research aimed to investigate the behavioral use of social media platforms as an English learning tool of current Thai university students, and explore the Thai university students' perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool. In this chapter, the results from the data analyses of the mixed-method research are presented and interpreted. The quantitative data were gathered from the questionnaire survey, completed by 57 respondents. The qualitative data are the insights that were derived through the focus-group interview with four participants, coded as A1, A2, A3, and C1. These findings are regarded as valuable empirical data and insights which can be used to answer the following research questions:

- (1) Which social media platforms do Thai university students use as an English learning tool to improve their English?
- (2) What are the Thai university students' perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool?

This chapter is organized into two main sections: 1) quantitative results from the questionnaire survey, and 2) qualitative results from the focus-group interview. The first section provides the demographic information of the quantitative survey's respondents, the findings on the respondents' behavioral use of social media as an English learning tool and their perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool. The findings in the second section, derived through the focus-group interview, focus on their perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool.

#### **4.1 Quantitative Results from Questionnaire Survey**

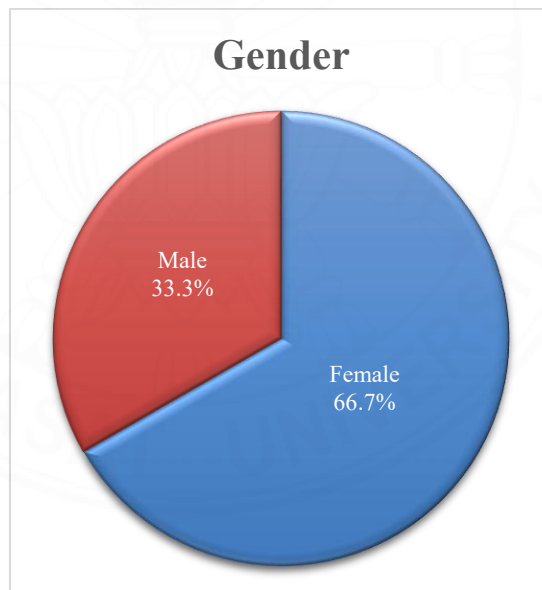
##### ***4.1.1 Demographic Information of the Participants***

At the beginning of the questionnaire survey, there were four questions asking the participants about their demographic information, including gender, age, GPA, and undergrad year. The data analysis of this part involved calculating frequency and percentage. The results from the data analysis are displayed in Table 4.1 to Table 4.4.

**Table 4.1***Gender of the Participants*

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	19	33.3
Female	38	66.7
Total	57	100

Based on the findings shown in Table 4.1, the respondents consisted of 19 males and 38 females, indicating that male respondents accounted for 33.3% while female respondents represented 66.7% of the total sample pool of 57. These findings can be visually represented as displayed in Figure 4.1.

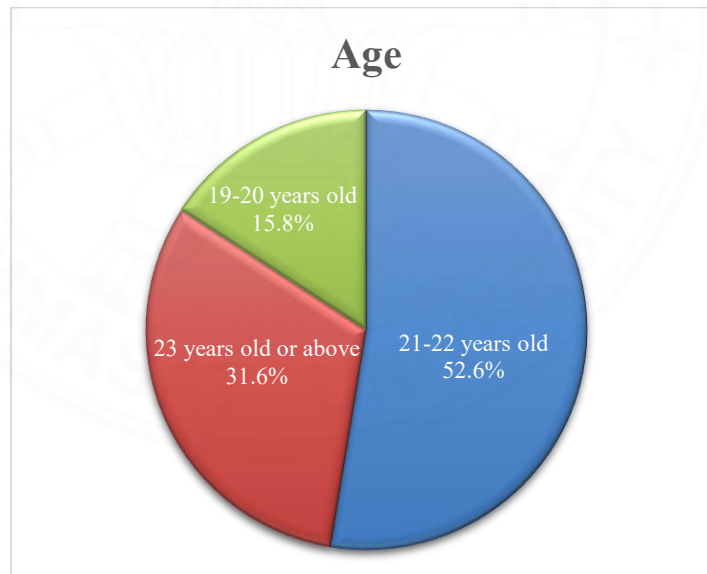
**Figure 4.1***Gender of the Participants*



**Table 4.2***Age of the Participants*

Age	Frequency	Percentage
19-20 years old	9	15.8
21-22 years old	30	52.6
23 years old or above	18	31.6
Total	57	100

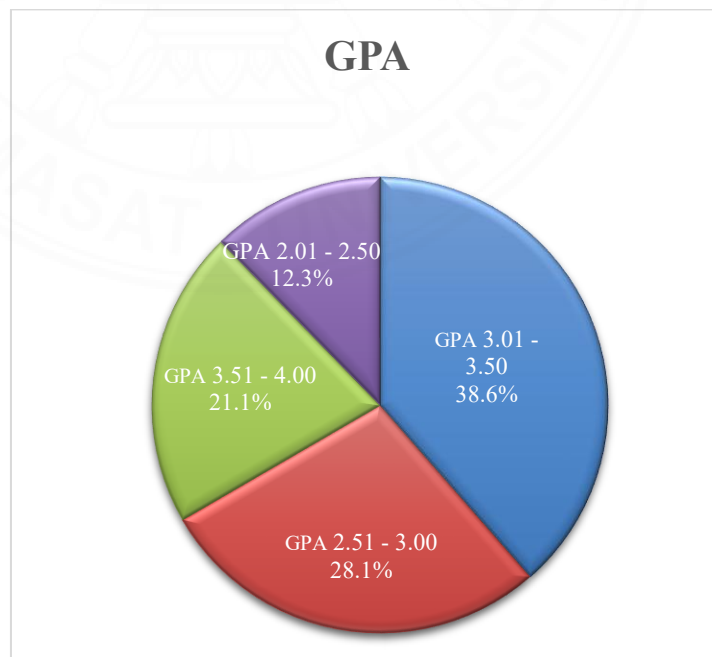
From Table 4.2, most respondents were aged between 21 and 22 years old, representing 52.6%. This is followed by respondents in the age group of 23 years old or above, which accounted for 31.6%. Only 15.8% of the total sample were 19-20 years old. These findings can be visually displayed in Figure 4.2.

**Figure 4.2***Age of the Participants*

**Table 4.3***GPA of the Participants*

<b>GPA</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
2.01 - 2.50	7	12.3
2.51 - 3.00	16	28.1
3.01 - 3.50	22	38.6
3.51 - 4.00	12	21.1
Total	57	100

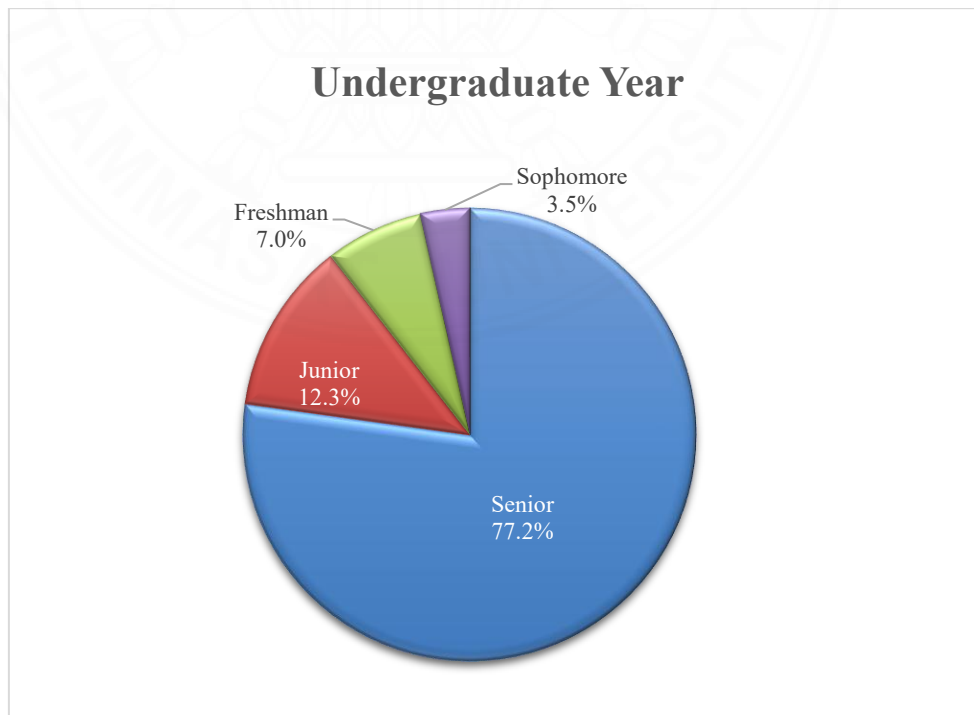
As shown in Table 4.3, the majority of respondents were students with GPAs ranging from 3.01 to 3.50, accounting for 38.6%. This is followed by the groups of students with a GPA range of 2.51 to 3.00, accounting for 28.1%, and those with a GPA range of 3.51 to 4.00, representing 21.1%. The smallest group of respondents were students with GPAs between 2.01 and 2.50, representing 12.3% of the total sample. The visual representation of these findings is in Figure 4.3.

**Figure 4.3***GPA of the Participants*

**Table 4.4***Undergraduate Year of the Participants*

<b>Undergraduate Year</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Freshman	4	7.0
Junior	7	12.3
Senior	44	77.2
Sophomore	2	3.5
Total	57	100

Regarding the undergraduate years of participants, Table 4.4 illustrates that senior students constituted the largest group of respondents, with 77.2%. This is followed by junior students (12.3%) and freshman students (7.0%), respectively. Only 3.5% were sophomore students, which was considered the smallest group. These findings can be plotted into a visual as shown in Figure 4.4.

**Figure 4.4***Undergraduate Year of the Participants*

#### 4.1.2 The Behavioral Use of Social Media as an English Learning Tool

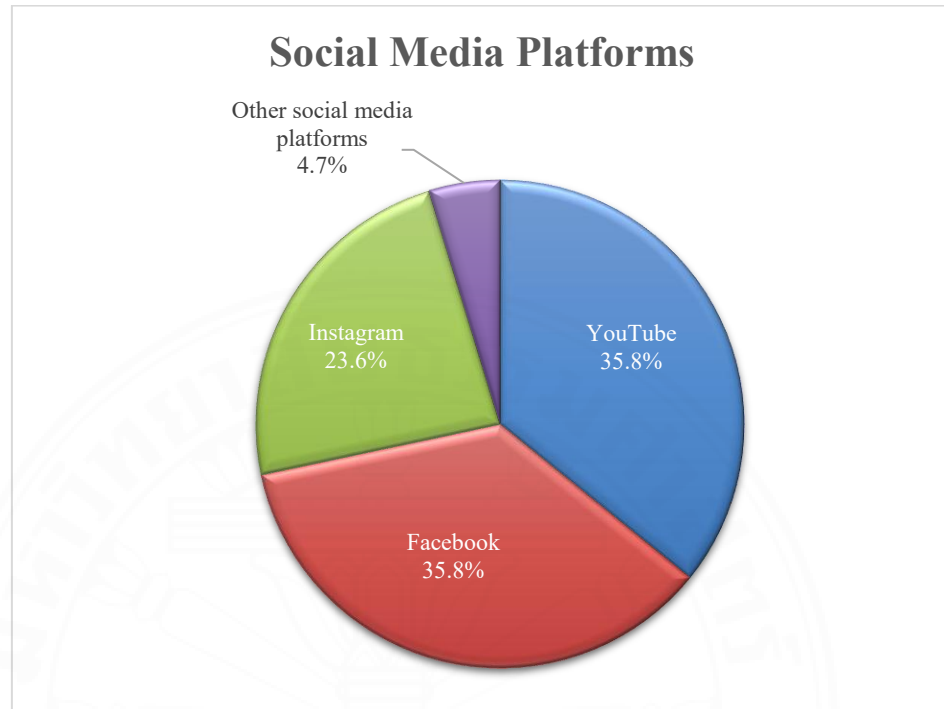
This part contains the findings from three questions regarding the respondents' behaviors in using social media as an English learning tool. The data analysis of this part involved calculating frequency and percentage. The results from the data analysis are displayed in Table 4.5 to Table 4.7.

**Table 4.5**

*Social Media Platforms Used for Watching English Teaching Videos*

<b>Social Media Platforms</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
YouTube	38	35.8
Facebook	38	35.8
Instagram	25	23.6
Other social media platforms	5	4.7
Total	106	100

The findings shown in Table 4.5 revealed the social media platforms that the respondents used for watching English teaching videos. It should be noted that this question was formulated using multiple choices and, importantly, respondents could select more than one answer. The findings indicated that both YouTube and Facebook were the most popular social media platforms for watching English teaching videos, each accounting for 35.8% of the respondents. Around 23.6% of the respondents used Instagram to watch English teaching videos, and only 4.7% reported that they used other social media platforms. These findings can be visually represented as displayed in Figure 4.5.

**Figure 4.5***Social Media Platforms Used for Watching English Teaching Videos***Table 4.6***English Skills to Improve From Using Social Media As an English Learning Tool*

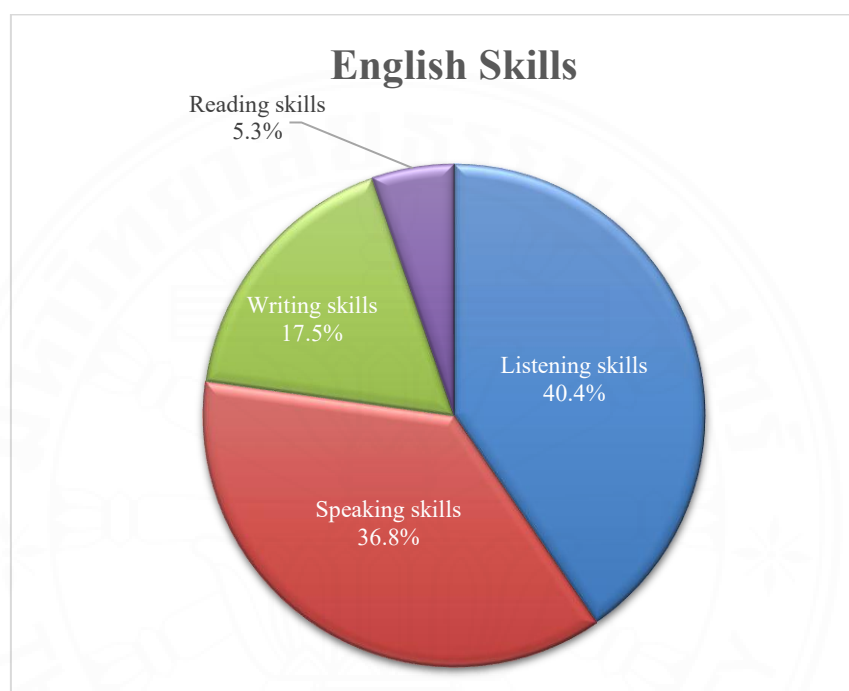
English skills	Frequency	Percentage
Listening skills	23	40.4
Reading skills	3	5.3
Speaking skills	21	36.8
Writing skills	10	17.5
Total	57	100

As shown in Table 4.6, the English skills that the respondents would like to improve the most from using social media as an English learning tool were listening skills, which were reported by 40.4% of them. This is followed by speaking skills, claimed by 36.8% of the respondents, and writing skills, which accounted for 17.5%,

respectively. Only 5.3% reported reading skills as the English skill that they would like to improve the most from watching English teaching videos. These findings can be visually displayed in Figure 4.6.

**Figure 4.6**

*English Skills to Improve From Using Social Media as an English Learning Tool*



**Table 4.7**

*Reasons to Use Social Media as an English Learning Tool*

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
To get new vocabularies	31	25.0
To gain reading techniques	10	8.1
To develop your speaking and/or listening skills	35	28.2
To improve your grammar	20	16.1
To enhance your writing ability	4	3.2
To develop your English	24	19.4

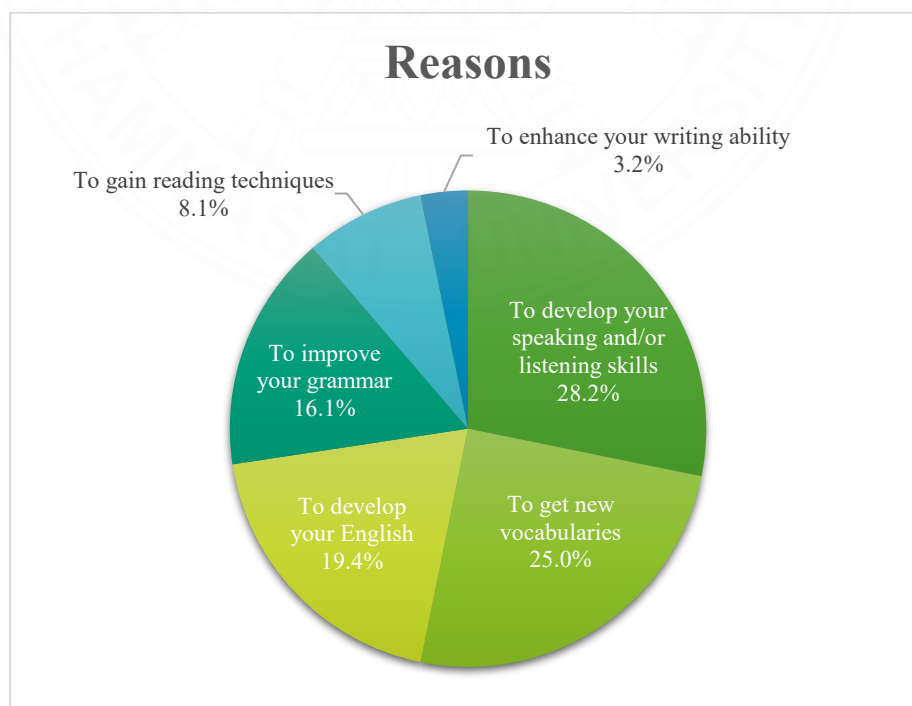
Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Total	124	100

Table 4.7 shows the findings regarding the respondents' reasons for using social media as an English learning tool. Again, please note that, in this multiple-choice question, the respondents could select more than one answer. The findings revealed that the majority of respondents used it to develop their speaking and/or listening skills (28.2%). This is closely followed by 'To get new vocabularies' (25.0%), 'To develop their English' (19.4%), and 'To improve their grammar' (16.1%), respectively. Only 8.1% of the respondents claimed that they used it to gain reading techniques.

The least selected answer regarding the reasons to use social media as an English learning tool was 'To enhance their writing ability', which was reported by only 3.2% of the respondents. The visual representation of these findings is in Figure 4.7.

**Figure 4.7**

*Reasons to Use Social Media as an English Learning Tool*



### 4.1.3 Perceptions on the Use of Social Media as an English Learning Tool

This sub-section provides the findings from four questions regarding the respondents' perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool. The data analysis of this part involved calculating mean and S.D. The results from the data analysis are displayed in Table 4.8 to Table 4.11.

**Table 4.8**

*Perceptions on the Use of Social Media as an English Learning Tool in Terms of Location*

Perceptions	Mean	S.D.	Perception Level
1. When learning English on social media, it reduces my stress and anxiety.	3.79	0.86	High
2. The learning environment of English learning videos on social media makes me highly motivated to learn.	4.04	0.63	High
3. I can focus on my learning better when learning English on social media.	3.88	0.73	High
<b>Overall Location</b>	<b>3.90</b>	<b>0.56</b>	High

Table 4.8 indicates the respondents' perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool in terms of the "location" dimension, which refers to the learning settings. Overall, the respondents had high perceptions regarding the location dimension of OCLL ( $M = 3.90$ ). As revealed by the analysis, the respondents highly perceived that the learning environment of English learning videos on social media makes them highly motivated to learn, and they can focus on their learning better when learning English on social media ( $M = 4.04$  and  $3.88$ , respectively). Additionally, the respondents highly perceived that learning English on social media reduces their stress and anxiety ( $M = 3.79$ ).



**Table 4.9**

*Perceptions on the Use of Social Media as an English Learning Tool in Terms of Formality*

Perceptions	Mean	S.D.	Perception Level
4. English learning videos on social media are practical for me to achieve my learning goals and objectives.	3.86	0.64	High
5. English learning videos on social media are associated with knowledge I am looking for.	4.04	0.60	High
6. Informal communication language use in English learning videos on social media makes me feel more relaxed.	4.16	0.62	High
<b>Overall Formality</b>	<b>4.01</b>	<b>0.45</b>	High

As illustrated in Table 4.9, overall, the respondents had high perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool in terms of the “formality” dimension of OCLL ( $M = 4.01$ ). Formality refers to the level of formality with which learning is conducted in non-formal or informal settings. The respondents reported that informal communication language use in English learning videos on social media makes them feel more relaxed, with a mean score of 4.16 indicating a high level of perception. Also, the respondents highly perceived that English learning videos on social media are associated with knowledge they are looking for, and English learning videos on social media are practical for them to achieve their learning goals and objectives ( $M = 4.04$  and 3.86, respectively).

**Table 4.10**

*Perceptions on the Use of Social Media as an English Learning Tool in Terms of Pedagogy*

<b>Perceptions</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>Perception Level</b>
7. I can assess my past progress to make future study plans.	4.00	0.63	High
8. I am highly self-instructing and successfully improving my English skills by my own efforts.	3.98	0.67	High
9. English learning videos on social media enable me to get engaged.	3.98	0.69	High
<b>Overall Pedagogy</b>	<b>3.98</b>	<b>0.48</b>	High

The findings in Table 4.10 show the respondents' perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool in terms of the "pedagogy" dimension. Pedagogy relates to the level of pedagogical techniques used during the learning process, such as instruction and evaluation. Overall, the respondents had high perceptions regarding the pedagogy dimension of OCLL ( $M = 3.98$ ). As suggested by the analysis, the respondents highly perceived that they can assess their past progress to make future study plans ( $M = 4.00$ ). Moreover, they are highly self-instructing and successfully improving their English skills by their own efforts, and English learning videos on social media enable them to get engaged, both with the same mean score of 3.98.

**Table 4.11**

*Perceptions on the Use of Social Media as an English Learning Tool in Terms of Locus Of Control*

<b>Perceptions</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>Perception Level</b>
10. I create my own English study plan by learning from English learning videos via social media platforms.	3.93	0.62	High
11. I set my own learning goals and objectives of my English study via English learning videos on social media.	3.93	0.65	High
12. When learning English from social media, I can manage my own learning time based on my convenience.	4.16	0.68	High
<b>Overall Locus of Control</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>0.46</b>	High

As displayed in Table 4.11, overall, the respondents had high perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool in terms of the “locus of control” dimension of OCLL ( $M = 4.00$ ). The locus of control refers to decisions made when learning, such as self-directed or other-directed. The respondents revealed that when learning English from social media, they can manage their own learning time based on their convenience, with a mean score of 4.16 indicating a high level of perception. As highlighted by the respondents, they highly perceived that they create their own English study plan by learning from English learning videos via social media platforms, and they set their own learning goals and objectives of their English study via English learning videos on social media, both with the same mean score of 3.93.

## **4.2 Qualitative Results from the Focus-Group Interview**

This study conducted the focus-group interview in order to elicit the informants’ experience in English language, experience in watching English videos from social media, perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool, perceptions on improving English skills, and perceptions on the concepts in English learning video from social media platforms. Moreover, the focus-group interview may provide

valuable recommendations drawn from their first-hand experiences, which may be beneficial in a wide range of applications. These comprehensive findings on the experience and perception toward the use of social media as an English learning tool, as summarized in Table 4.12 at the end of this section, can be categorized into six parts as follows:

#### ***4.2.1 Experience in English Language***

As described in Chapter 3, participants for the focus group interviews were selected using purposive sampling to ensure a diverse range of perceptions. Specially, participants were chosen based on their varying levels of social media usage for English learning and their year level in university. This section explores the participants' backgrounds and experiences with the English language, providing context for their perception on social media as a learning tool. It was found that all informants had prior experience with English through formal education, although the extent and nature of their experience varied. While most participants had studied as part of their academic curriculum, C1 presented a unique case. He noted that his university course was taught in Thai, yet he maintained a strong personal interest in English learning. This highlights the potential for self-directed learning to play a significant role alongside formal instruction. The informants shared their educational background:

*"I have been studying linguistics" A2.*

*"I hold a diploma in computer science but have always had a strong interest in English. I have self-studied extensively" C1.*

Beyond their informal education, all informants use English in their daily lives, further demonstrating their engagement with the language. Notably, A1 and A2 had professional experience using English, working as English tutors and on English-language projects, respectively. This suggests a high level of confidence and proficiency in their use of English. The informants elaborated on their professional experiences:

*"I have been working as a tutor for basic English for three years" A1.*

*"I have been working on English-language projects, such as writing and editing, for two years" A2.*

Interestingly, only A2 had enrolled in a formal English course within the last two years, indicating a reliance on other forms of learning. A2's recent engagement with an online academic English writing course suggests a focus on developing specific skills. In contrast, C1 explicitly stated his preference for self-learning:

*"I enrolled in an online academic English writing course about six months ago."* A2.

*"No, I haven't taken formal English courses within the last two years. However, I regularly engage in self-learning activities"* C1.

This contrast between A2's recent course enrollment and C1's emphasis on self-learning suggests that students may adopt different approaches to English language development, potentially influencing their perceptions of social media as a learning tool.

#### **4.2.2 Experience in Watching English Videos from Social Media**

With respect to the experience in watching English videos from social media, the platforms that the informants used include YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. The results revealed that YouTube was utilized by two of these informants to watch English videos. Instagram was mentioned by two informants as a social media that they adopted in watching English videos. Again, it was found that two informants watched English videos from TikTok. The content engaged in by these informants varies, ranging from vocabulary and grammar, to idioms, pronunciation, and conversation. This can be interpreted from the following statements.

*"I have been watching English teaching content on TikTok and Instagram for the past two years. They are usually short and focus on specific topics like idioms or pronunciation."* A2.

*"I often watch English learning videos on YouTube shorts and Instagram reels, especially those related to academic writing and conversational skills."* A3.

In addition, all of them claimed that they felt comfortable with English learning videos. This is because the content is engaging and easy to understand, with functions

like pause and replay. It was mentioned that the creators used visuals to make content interactive. For example:

*“I feel comfortable because I can pause and replay the videos if I don't understand something.” A3.*

*“I feel comfortable because the content is interactive and uses a lot of visuals, which makes it easier to grasp.” C1.*

#### **4.2.3 Perceptions on the Use of Social Media as an English Learning Tool**

With respect to their perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool, all informants seemed to commonly agree that the content, in general, is effective, engaging, convenient, and flexible. Also, it provides real-life English usage, with a wide range of resources. However, some informants mentioned that it is not sufficient if you are looking for in-depth grammar and writing nor should it replace traditional methods of English learning. These findings can be extracted from the following statements:

*“Social media is a good supplementary tool for English learning. It's convenient, and the interactive features make learning more engaging, but it shouldn't replace traditional methods.” A2.*

*“I believe social media platforms are great for improving practical skills like listening and speaking, but they might not be sufficient for in-depth grammar and writing skills.” C1.*

#### **4.2.4 Perceptions on Improving English Skills**

Regarding their feelings based on the results from such use, it was found that most of them feel more confident when communicating in English, especially in professional conversations or interactions with foreigners. For example, the informants exactly stated:

*“I feel very confident and motivated when I notice improvements in my English skills through social media. It helps me perform better in tasks like drafting documents in English and communicating with colleagues.” A1.*

*“It's exciting to see my English skills improve because it boosts my confidence when interacting with foreign staff or reviewing English documents.” A3.*

For the perceived benefits, it was mentioned that it helps them perform better in English writing and verbal communications with colleagues, as well as better pronunciation and increased vocabulary. These can be interpreted from the following statements.

*“The biggest benefits I’ve experienced are better pronunciation and increased vocabulary, which make me more comfortable in professional conversations”* A1.

*“I’ve benefited by developing better writing and comprehension skills, which are especially useful when translating or summarizing English materials for my internship tasks.”* C1.

#### ***4.2.5 Perceptions on the Concepts in English Learning Video from Social Media Platforms***

With respect to their perceptions on the concepts in English learning videos from social media platforms, the findings revealed that the video content is creative, engaging, well-structured, and easy to follow. The content is quite diverse, covering grammar, vocabulary, and even cultural aspects of English and, importantly, it focuses on practical language skills, which are useful for real-life applications. However, it was mentioned that audiences need to be critical as not all videos provide accurate information. Moreover, there should be more advanced lessons available for people with a high English level so they can improve their English to the next level. These can be extracted from the following statements:

*“I think the content in English learning videos on social media is very creative and engaging. Many videos focus on practical language skills, which are useful for real-life applications, especially in a professional setting”* A1.

*“The content is quite diverse, covering grammar, vocabulary, and even cultural aspects of English. However, I sometimes find that the quality varies depending on the creator, and not all videos provide accurate information.”* A2.

*“The content is interesting and modern, often incorporating trending topics or interactive features. However, I feel it could include more advanced lessons for learners with higher proficiency levels.”* C1.

#### **4.2.6 Recommendations to Creators of English Teaching Videos on Social Media**

Regarding recommendations from the informants, they advised that creators should focus on the accessibility and availability of the content and also engage directly with the audience to make the content more impactful. For instance, the informants exactly mentioned:

*“I recommend focusing on the accessibility of English learning videos. Ensuring that videos include subtitles and are available on multiple platforms could make learning easier for a wider audience.” A1.*

*“My recommendation is to explore how interactive features, like quizzes or live sessions, could enhance learning outcomes. Engaging directly with the audience might make the content more impactful.” C1.*

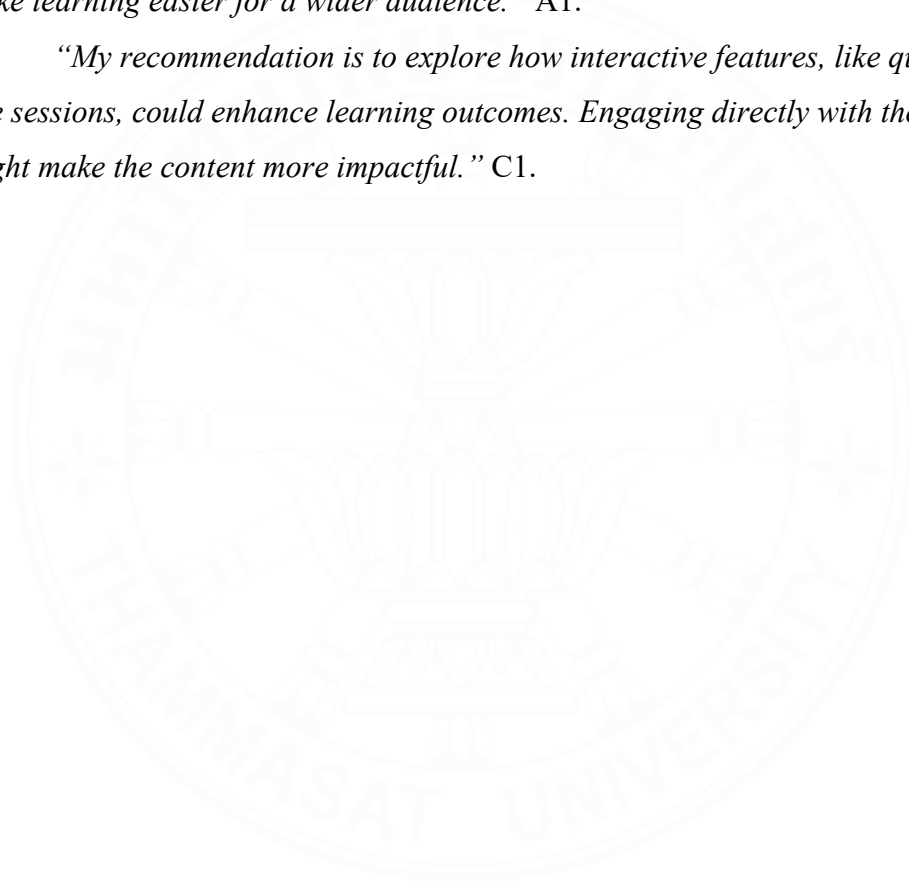




Table 4.12

## Summary of the Qualitative Findings from the Focus-Group Interview

Main Topic	Questions	A1	A2	A3	C1
Experience in English Language	Educational background	High school diploma in language studies	Studying in Linguistics	Business Management and English was the medium of instruction	A diploma in Computer Science but always had a strong interest in English
	English language experience	Working as a tutor for basic English for three years	Working on English-language projects for two years	Worked as a part-time English tutor	Self-studied extensively and used English at work daily for over four years
	English course taken in the last two years	No English courses taken in the past two years	Enrolled in an online academic English writing course	No English courses taken recently	No English courses taken in the past two years
Experience in watching English videos from social media	Platforms	YouTube	YouTube shorts and Instagram reels	TikTok and Instagram	Mainly on TikTok
	Content engaged	Vocabulary and grammar	Academic writing and conversational skills	Specific topics like idioms or pronunciation	Bite-sized lessons about grammar and pronunciation
	Comfortability	Very comfortable as engaging and easy to understand	Somewhat comfortable but sometimes is too fast to follow	Comfortable as can pause and replay	Comfortable due to interactive content and use of visuals
Perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool		Very effective, provide access to diverse content, informal, flexible learning	A good supplementary tool, convenient and engaging with interactive features	A helpful tool, provides real-life English usage and a wide variety of resources	Great for improving practical skills like listening and speaking
		Innovative as it integrates learning into daily activities	But shouldn't replace traditional methods	Makes learning more fun	But not sufficient for in-depth grammar and writing
		Feel very confident and motivated	Feel proud and satisfied	Exciting, more confident when interacting with foreign staff or reviewing English documents	Feel empowered, more capable
Perceptions on improving English skills	Results from such use	More comfortable in professional	A practical and enjoyable way to learn		
	Benefits perceived	Perform better in drafting documents in English and communicating with colleagues	Improved listening skills and helped learn idiomatic expressions, which useful when writing reports and emails for internship	Enhanced grammar, help understand different accents which is helpful during meetings or presentations	Better writing and comprehension skills which useful when translating or summarizing English materials
Perceptions on concept in English learning video from social media platforms		Very creative and engaging	Content is quite diverse, covering grammar, vocabulary, and even cultural aspects of English	Well-structured and easy to follow, digestible lessons	Interesting and modern, trending topics or interactive features
		Focus on practical language skills, which useful for real-life applications			But should include more advanced
Recommendations		Focusing on the accessibility and availability	Include a comparison of different social media platforms to identify which are most effective for English learning	Include an analysis of how different age groups or proficiency levels interact with English learning videos	Explore how interactive features could enhance learning outcomes.
		Ensuring subtitles included			Engage directly with the audience

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter consists of (1) a summary of the study, (2) the discussion of the findings, (3) the conclusion, (4) the implications, (5) the limitations of the study and (6) recommendations for further research.

#### **5.1 Summary of the Results**

This study investigated the perceptions of Thai university students regarding the use of social media as a tool for learning English. It aimed to identify the most frequently used social media platforms, examine the types of English learning activities students engage in through these platforms, and understand students' perceptions of their effectiveness. Data were collected using a mixed-methods approach: a quantitative survey completed by 57 internship students from the Port Authority of Thailand, and qualitative data gathered through a focus group interview with four selected participants. The quantitative questionnaire consisted of three parts: demographic information, behavioral use of social media, and students' perceptions. Descriptive statistics—including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations—were used to analyze the survey responses. The qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis techniques to extract themes and insights from interview transcripts. The findings revealed that YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram were the most commonly used platforms among participants. Students used these platforms primarily to improve listening, vocabulary, and general English skills. Respondents appreciated the flexibility, accessibility, and engaging nature of social media learning but also noted limitations such as uneven content quality and a lack of resources for advanced grammar and writing skills.

#### **5.2 Discussion**

This section discusses the research findings in relation to the research questions and relevant literature. The two primary objectives of this study were (1) to investigate which social media platforms Thai university students use to improve their English, and

(2) to examine their perceptions of using these platforms as English learning tools. The study found that the most commonly used platforms among the participants were YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram. These results support previous research by Erzad and Suciati (2018) and Hasan et al. (2018), who emphasized the widespread appeal and educational utility of these platforms. The popularity of YouTube can be attributed to its audio-visual features, which enhance learners' listening and pronunciation skills. Instagram and Facebook, meanwhile, provide visual content, posts, and community engagement that encourage language use in informal, low-pressure settings. In terms of perceived usefulness, the participants generally viewed social media as a convenient and enjoyable way to learn English. They appreciated the flexibility, accessibility, and interactive nature of content on these platforms, aligning with the findings of Muftah (2022) and Zarei and Rudravarapu (2019). Furthermore, many students reported feeling more motivated and confident when learning through social media, as it allowed them to practice English in real-life contexts and at their own pace. This aligns with Benson's (2011) concept of autonomous learning within informal learning environments. However, several limitations were identified. Although students found social media helpful for improving listening, vocabulary, and general communication, they noted that some platforms lacked structured support for advanced grammar, academic writing, and formal reading. This finding reflects the concerns raised by Zhou (2021), who warned that excessive reliance on social media may lead to fragmented learning or distraction if not guided properly.

Finally, the findings also reflect the dimensions of Benson's OCLL framework. The learning took place in informal, self-directed settings (location and locus of control) with minimal pedagogical structure (pedagogy). Students' preferences for learning at their own pace and choosing content that matched their interests demonstrate high autonomy and self-regulated learning behaviors, supporting the theoretical framework applied in this study.

### ***5.2.1 The Use of Social Media Platforms as an English Learning Tool***

The findings revealed that Thai university students used several social media platforms to support their English learning, with YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram being the most popular. These platforms were primarily employed to improve listening,

vocabulary acquisition, and general communication skills. YouTube was the most frequently used platform, offering students access to English-language videos such as tutorials, music, and vlogs, which helped them enhance their pronunciation and listening comprehension. These results align with Hasan et al. (2018), who highlighted YouTube's effectiveness in supporting audio-visual learning. Facebook was used to follow English learning pages, engage in language learning groups, and read informal posts or articles. This platform allowed students to interact with written English in casual contexts, supporting vocabulary growth and reading fluency, consistent with findings by Peeters (2015) and Faryadi (2017). Instagram, although primarily visual, was used to follow accounts that post English idioms, grammar tips, or short educational videos. Students appreciated Instagram's concise and engaging format, which made it easy to integrate English learning into their daily routines. This is supported by Zarei and Rudravarapu (2019), who reported that Instagram's multimedia content positively influences learner motivation and vocabulary development. Overall, students reported that social media platforms were convenient, motivating, and flexible, making them suitable for informal, self-paced learning. However, they also acknowledged the limitations of these platforms, such as the lack of structured progression, inconsistent content quality, and limited support for advanced grammar or writing. These findings highlight the need for integrating social media with more structured learning strategies to maximize its educational potential.

### ***5.2.2 The Perceptions of the Use of Social Media as an English Learning Tool***

The findings from both the questionnaire and focus group interviews indicate that Thai university students hold generally positive perceptions toward the use of social media for English language learning. Most participants agreed that social media platforms offered a stress-free, motivating, and personally relevant way to engage with the language outside of formal classroom environments. Students appreciated the flexibility of being able to choose when, where, and how they learn, which resonates with Benson's (2011) concept of learner autonomy and self-regulated learning. The digital environment allowed students to engage in learning at their own pace and according to their individual preferences—an important aspect of Benson's "locus of control" dimension. Moreover, the informal nature of social media

content, such as casual language use in videos or short grammar explanations on Instagram, helped reduce learning anxiety and encouraged frequent exposure. Perceptions were particularly favorable regarding the engaging nature of social media content. Participants felt more motivated to learn English through platforms that integrated entertainment with education, such as English-language TikTok clips or YouTube learning channels. This aligns with previous research by Akpan and Chayanuvat (2022), who found that learners are more likely to sustain motivation when using multimedia platforms that combine learning with enjoyment. However, students also acknowledged certain limitations in using social media for English learning. Some reported feeling overwhelmed by the abundance of unverified content and distractions. Others mentioned that while social media is helpful for basic and intermediate skills—like listening or vocabulary—it lacks the depth and structure needed for more advanced learning, such as academic writing or critical reading. These concerns reflect the challenges noted by Zhou (2021) and underline the need for intentional, guided integration of social media in broader educational strategies.

In conclusion, students' perceptions were largely shaped by the informal, interactive, and user-controlled nature of social media. While these platforms are perceived as effective supplements to formal instruction, they are not seen as replacements for structured learning environments. Their value lies in supporting motivation, exposure, and autonomy in English language learning.

### ***5.2.3 Recommendations from Research Participants as an Audience***

To tackle this, there were some recommendations provided by the informants that content creators may take into consideration, i.e., content creators should focus on the accessibility and availability of the content. They should also engage directly with the audience to make the content more impactful. Moreover, there should be more advanced lessons available for people with a high English level so they can improve their English to the next level.

### 5.3 Conclusion

Based on the results, the study concludes that social media functions as a useful and practical tool for learning English, especially listening, speaking and vocabulary skills. Nonetheless, its effectiveness greatly relies on the quality of the content delivered and whether learners actively engage with the material. It serves as a helpful adjunct to formal education but cannot in and of itself eliminate the need for traditional methods of mastering complex grammar and writing skills. The findings highlight the effectiveness of social media in improving English proficiency not only for Thai university students, but also in general because of its accessibility and appeal.

### 5.4 Implications

The findings of this study could prove advantageous for both English instructors and researchers with an interest in utilizing social media platforms as an English learning tool. For English instructors, understanding students' perceptions regarding social media usage both in classrooms and out of the classroom are significant. Through social media, lessons can be interactive and students can also experience practical real life language where they can talk to different people from different part of the world at the same time. YouTube and Instagram take English teachers' classroom activities to a fun and amusing level, especially when combined with audio-visual materials. If you are a content creator, you really have a chance to create structured content and a more comprehensive learning for advanced learners.

### 5.5 Limitations of the Study

This study had a number of limitations:

1. The number of interviewees was relatively small (57 people responded to the questionnaires; four people took part in focus groups), which may limit the generalizability of the results.
2. The study involves mainly Thai university students in an internship program, which may limit the background diversity in perspective.
3. One limitation of the measures reported above is the use of self-reported data, which can be subject to bias due to participants over- or under-estimating their actual amount of engagement and proficiency.

### 5.6 Recommendations

Future research should recruit larger and more diverse samples to increase generalizability.

1. Areas of research may investigate the long-term effects and sustainability of using social media for English learning and the specific language skills, such as advanced writing or grammar, that can benefit from such use.

2. Comparative studies across different regions or educational contexts may provide deeper insights into the cultural and contextual factors that define the effectiveness of social media as a learning tool.

3. Investigating how platforms are constructed currently to provide sufficient tools for language development. This could involve examining newer platforms such as TikTok, which may offer even more potential for language learning, and exploring whether the ways they are currently being used reveal a gap that could be meaningfully addressed.

4. To lessen the risk of a few participants dominating the focus group interviews, future research should consider employing additional qualitative data collection methods that are matched to the particular population. This technique will enhance data triangulation and increase the resilience of the study's findings.

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The seal of Thammasat University is a circular emblem. It features a central five-tiered umbrella (parasol) with a lotus flower at its base. Above the lotus is a horizontal bar with five vertical lines. Radiating from the center are eight stylized rays or petals. The entire emblem is enclosed within a circular border. The Thai text "มหาวิทยาลัยธรรมศาสตร์" is written along the top arc, and "THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY" is written along the bottom arc, separated by two small floral motifs.

## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONNAIRE

**Research Study:** Thai University Students' Perceptions on the Use of Social Media as an English Learning Tools

**Explanation:** This survey questionnaire is only served for the educational purpose. The information of the respondents will be kept with the most confidentiality. The researcher appreciates the respondents for completing the questionnaire with the sincere answer.

#### Part 1: Demographic Information

Instruction: Please tick ☐ for the most appropriate answer.

1. Gender

☐ Male

☐ Female

2. Age

☐ 18 years old or below

☐ 19 – 20 years old

☐ 21 – 22 years old

☐ 23 years old or above

3. GPA

☐ 2.00 or below

☐ 2.01 – 2.50

☐ 2.51 – 3.00

☐ 3.01 – 3.50

☐ 3.51 – 4.00

4. Undergraduate Year

☐ Freshman

☐ Sophomore

☐ Junior

☐ Senior

## Part 2: Information about the Behavioral Use of Social Media as an English Learning Tool

Instruction: Please tick ☐ for the most appropriate answer.

1. How often do you use social media as an English learning tool?
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Everyday	<input type="checkbox"/> 8 – 10 times per month
<input type="checkbox"/> 2 – 4 times per month	<input type="checkbox"/> More than 10 times per month
<input type="checkbox"/> 5 – 7 times per month	
2. How long do you spend on average using social media as an English learning tool per time?
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 5 minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> 11 – 15 minutes
<input type="checkbox"/> 5 – 10 minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> More than 15 minutes
3. Which of the following social media do you use for watching English learning videos?
  - ☐ YouTube
  - ☐ Facebook
  - ☐ Instagram
  - ☐ Other social media platforms .....
4. Which English skills would you like to improve the most from using social media as an English learning tool?
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Speaking skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Writing skills
<input type="checkbox"/> Listening skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading skills
5. Which of the following are the reasons for you to use social media as an English learning tool? (can choose more than one answer)
 

<input type="checkbox"/> To get new vocabularies	<input type="checkbox"/> To improve your grammar
<input type="checkbox"/> To gain reading techniques	<input type="checkbox"/> To develop your English
<input type="checkbox"/> To enhance your writing ability	
<input type="checkbox"/> To develop your speaking and/or listening skills	

### Part 3: Perceptions on the Use of Social Media as an English Learning Tool

Instruction: Please choose the statement indicating your perception on the use of social media platforms as an English learning tool. There are five level of agreement rating as follows:

- Level 5 means Totally agree
- Level 4 means Agree
- Level 3 means Moderate
- Level 2 means Disagree
- Level 1 means Totally Disagree

Perceptions on the Use of Social Media as an English Learning Tools						
No.	Location	1	2	3	4	5
1.	When learning English on social media, it reduces my stress and anxiety.					
2.	The learning environment of English learning videos on social media makes me highly motivated to learn.					
3.	I can focus on my learning better when learning English on social media.					
	Formality	1	2	3	4	5
4.	English learning videos on social media are practical for me to achieve my learning goals and objectives.					
5.	English Learning videos on social media are associated with knowledge I am looking for.					
6.	Informal communication language use in English learning videos on social media makes me feel more relaxed.					

	<b>Pedagogy</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
7.	I can assess my past progress to make future study plans.					
8.	I am highly self-instructing and successfully improving my English skills by my own efforts.					
9.	English learning videos on social media enable me to get engaged.					
	<b>Locus of Control</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
10.	I create my own English study plan by learning from English learning videos via social media platforms.					
11.	I set my own learning goals and objectives of my English study via English learning videos on social media.					
12.	When learning English from social media, I can manage my own learning time based on my convenience.					

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION**

## **APPENDIX B**

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

#### **1. Experience in English Language**

1.1 Kindly explain me on your educational background and English language experience.

1.2 Have you taken any English courses within the period of two years?

#### **2. Experience in watching English learning videos from social media**

2.1 What experiences do you have with English learning videos from social media platforms?

2.2 How comfortable do you feel when watching English learning videos from social media platforms?

#### **3. Perceptions on the use of social media as an English learning tool**

3.1 What do you think of the use of social media platforms as an English learning tool?

#### **4. Perceptions on improving English skills**

4.1 How do you feel when you have better English skills resulting from the use of social media platforms as an English learning tool?

4.2 What benefits did you experience from viewing English learning videos from social media platforms?

#### **5. Perceptions on concept in English learning videos on social media platforms**

5.1 What do you think of the content provided in English learning on social media platforms at present?

#### **6. Recommendation**

6.1 Anything else that you would like to add as a suggestion or recommendation on the use of social media as an English learning tool?