



The Use of Social Media in Teaching Listening Skills To Students in the Arabic Language

Education Department:

A Phenomenological Study at the Sultan Syarif

Kasim State Islamic University in Riau

Wilsa Martiana¹, Yasmaruddin Bardansyah², Nandang Sarip Hidayat³

^{1,2,3}Arabic Language Education at Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau State Islamic University

Article Info	Abstract
Accepted: 2026-05-29 Revised: 2026-06-01 Accepted: 2026-06-24 Keywords: Social Media, Listening Skills, Arabic language learning, Student Experience DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v14i1.9697 Corresponding authors: Wilsa Martiana martianawilsa@gmail.com Arabic Language Education at Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau State Islamic University	<i>This study aims to explore the experiences of Arabic Language Education students in utilizing social media for learning listening skills, supporting and inhibiting factors, as well as students' perceptions of the use of social media in learning Arabic listening skills. This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological type. Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews and the distribution of Likert scale questionnaires to students. Interviews were conducted with several students majoring in Arabic language education. Meanwhile, the questionnaire aimed to identify and measure students' perceptions of the use of social media as a medium for learning listening skills. The results showed that students used social media, particularly YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram, as alternative learning spaces that were independent, flexible, and sustainable. The learning listening skills process was carried out through intensive repetition strategies, vocabulary recording, meaning search, and pronunciation imitation. The questionnaire data showed that YouTube was the most frequently used social media platform (45.5%) because it provided long-duration content and stable audio, followed by TikTok (40.9%) as a medium for listening practice, and Instagram (13.6%) as a supporting medium. Supporting factors for social media utilization include ease of access, flexibility of time and place, diversity of Arabic-language content, and exposure to authentic language. Meanwhile, inhibiting factors include digital distractions,</i>

notifications, advertisements, limited internet access, and excessive use. From a perceptual standpoint, students assessed that the use of social media had a positive impact on learning motivation, self-confidence, and listening skills. However, this impact was more dominant in receptive aspects than in productive skills. Thus, social media is considered effective as a supporting tool for learning listening skills.

1. Introduction

Arabic is a global language that is undergoing social and scientific development (Khafidatul & Nandang 2024). In learning a language, listening skills is the most basic skill to master (Nurul Fawzani et al. 2022). Listening skills are considered by some to be the most important skill, because this skill is a basic skill that must be mastered by anyone who wants to learn a foreign language (Hidayatullah et al. 2023). This listening skill can be achieved through continuous practice of listening to the differences in language sounds through the audio provided (Fairuza & Maman 2022). Therefore, in learning listening skills, there needs to be media that can help facilitate language comprehension.

The current era of disruption is fundamentally changing the way people view and live their social lives, as well as the world of education, particularly Arabic language learning, with the advancement of technology and the emergence of new ways of learning in both the real and virtual worlds, such as the web, YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, etc. (Amzaludin et al. 2023). The use of social media as a medium for presenting educational content or digital learning can help identify additional learning content, expand learning materials, and share knowledge with other users on social media (Fitriani, 2021).

The phenomenon of using social media in language learning is also evident among students, including at Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau State Islamic University. Previous research results show that students actively use social media as an additional learning resource. These findings indicate a tendency for independent learning through social media to strengthen language skills. Students' daily activities are dominated by the use of social media such as Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook (Ilmiani & Muid 2021).

Based on preliminary observations by researchers at the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau State Islamic University, it is known that lecturers teaching the listening skills course have begun to utilize one social media platform, namely YouTube, as a learning medium to practice listening skills. Lecturers utilize Arabic-language videos from YouTube with various topics

in each meeting. This practice demonstrates the awareness and innovation of teachers in integrating technology and social media into Arabic language learning.

However, students' experiences in utilizing social media as a means of learning Arabic, especially *mahārah istimā'*, have rarely been studied in depth. Therefore, this study seeks to explore the real experiences of students in utilizing social media for learning *mahārah istimā'*. This is in line with Johnson's view that social media can be an effective tool in language learning because of its attractive and accessible nature (Rafiq et al. 2024). It is also supported by research findings that show the effectiveness of online media in improving Arabic listening skills (Ubaidillah & Fanni Izzatul Millah 2024).

Several previous studies have also reviewed similar topics. First, research by Rianah Desipusvitasari et al., entitled *The Use of Social Media in Arabic Language Education study program at State Islamic University Jakarta*. The research results show that there are several social media platforms used by students in their learning, including Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. By using these social media platforms, students can broaden their knowledge and deepen their understanding of their fields of interest. The skills learned on social media and the motives for using social media vary (Desipusvitasari et al. 2024). The second study by Siti Imaniatiul Muflihatin and Faridatun Najiyah is titled "The Use of Social Media in Improving Arabic Language Practice Among STEI Permata Bojonegoro Students."

The results of the study show that social media content prepares Arabic language learning materials, including conversations, thus providing space for students to learn without space and time constraints, access reading sources and vocabulary, and create more creative and varied learning patterns as material for conversation (Muflihatin & Najiyah 2024). The third study by Tiasa Thasya & Nuril Mufidah is titled "The Use of Social Media as a Learning Tool for speaking skills for International Class Program (ICP) 2021 Students at Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang State Islamic University During the Covid-19 Pandemic." The results of the study show that in addition to external factors such as the language learning process using a foreign language in class, students must also hone internal factors such as honing their speaking skills from within so that they are not afraid to express themselves in Arabic (Thasya & Mufidah 2022).

When compared, the three studies share similarities with this study, namely that they all focus on the use of social media as a learning medium. The difference lies in the aspects studied: Rianah Desipusvitasari et al. used social media in this study for four *maharah*. Siti Imaniatiul Muflihatin and Faridatun Najiyah focused on improving the practice of speaking skills. Meanwhile, Tiasa Thasya & Nuril Mufidah focus on *kalam* learning. This study explores the experiences of Arabic Language Education students in utilizing social media for listening skills.

Based on the above description, the questions formulated in this study are:
1). How do students of the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau State Islamic University experience the use of social media for

learning listening skills? 2). What are the supporting and inhibiting factors faced by students in the use of social media for listening skills? 3). How do students perceive the benefits of using social media in learning listening skills?

This study shows that it specifically examines the use of social media in learning listening skills with a phenomenological approach, emphasizing students' subjective experiences in developing independent listening habits. This provides a new theoretical contribution by expanding the study of social media-based listening skills learning through a phenomenological approach that emphasizes students' subjective experiences and self-regulation. Practically, this research provides a strategic overview of students' learning patterns in utilizing social media as a source of authentic Arabic language input.

Therefore, this study focuses on the experiences of students in the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau State Islamic University in utilizing social media for learning listening skills'.

2. Method

This research was conducted at the Arabic Language Education Study Program, Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau State Islamic University. This research used a phenomenological qualitative approach. Phenomenology implies allowing everything to emerge as it is. Meaning emerges, on the one hand, by allowing reality/phenomena/experiences to be revealed. On the other hand, meaning emerges as a result of the interaction between the subject and the phenomena encountered (Nasir et al. 2023). The researcher will examine the experiences of Arabic Language Education students in utilizing social media for learning listening skills, supporting and inhibiting factors, as well as students' perceptions of the use of social media in Arabic learning listening skills, particularly in the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau State Islamic University.

Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews as the main data source, in which students recounted their experiences in detail. The interview results were transcribed and coded to identify themes and patterns of experience. Meanwhile, Likert scale questionnaires and documentation were used as supporting data rather than for statistical measurement, thereby emphasizing an understanding of the phenomenon from the subject's perspective. Subsequently, interviews were conducted directly with several informants (ALA), (NAR), (SFA), (AS), (ZAJ), (SHN), and (NKL).

This was done to find answers to the research questions by asking specific questions to the informants, including "1). How do students of the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau State Islamic University experience the use of social media for learning listening skills? 2). What are the

supporting and inhibiting factors faced by students in the use of social media for listening skills? 3). How do students perceive the benefits of using social media in learning listening skills?"

Data analysis was conducted through three activities, namely data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. These three steps were carried out in order to obtain valid data, a measurable and targeted process, and accountable results. Information was obtained from various sources.

3. Results

Data Analysis

Based on the results of the Likert scale questionnaire, the social media most frequently used by students is YouTube (45.5%), followed by TikTok (40.9%) and Instagram (13.6%). This data was used to observe initial trends in social media usage prior to conducting in-depth interviews.

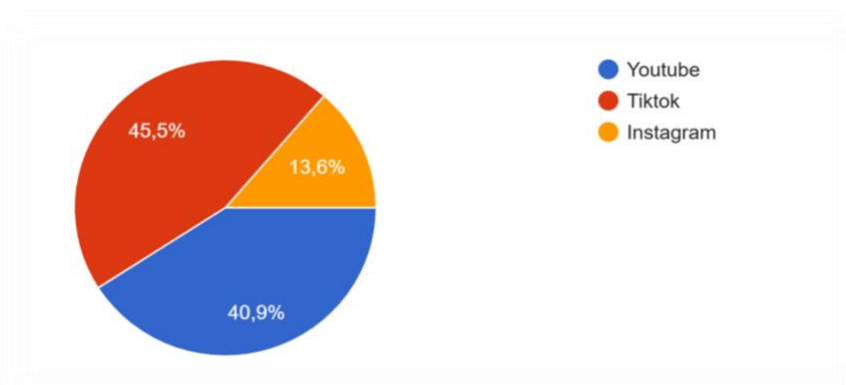


Figure 1. Diagram of survey results via google form

Student Experiences in Utilizing Social Media For Learning Listening Skills

Student experiences in utilizing social media as a means of learning listening skills show a process that is personal, gradual, and not fully structured. The findings show that most students begin their learning activities not from formal planning, but from daily interactions with social media platforms, which then develop into independent learning habits. Social media ultimately functions as an alternative learning space that allows students to access Arabic language input more flexibly and at their own pace (MT.A4a; MI.G4a; MI.G4b).

In practice, students tend to choose content types that are considered easy to understand both auditorily and visually. Content in the form of cartoons, simple dialogues, and light-themed videos are the main choices because they are considered more interesting and do not cause heavy cognitive load. There are also students who try to listen to news content or more formal material, but are often constrained by the speed of the native speaker's intonation (MT.A5a; MT.B5a; MI.G5a; MT.A5b; MT.B5b).

Furthermore, the learning process of students through social media is generally carried out with an intensive repetition strategy. Based on statements in interviews, students do not just listen once, but play the video repeatedly until they gain a more complete understanding. This listening activity is often accompanied by noting down new vocabulary, searching for meanings using online dictionaries, and attempting to imitate the pronunciation of native speakers. These activities illustrate the students' awareness in managing their own learning process even though they are in a non-formal learning space (MY.E4a; MY.D4c; MT.C4c; MT.C4b).

The use of social media also provides a relatively enjoyable and low-pressure learning experience. Students feel free because they can study anytime without being bound by classroom rules. However, this experience is not always stable; sometimes they still feel bored, especially when the content is too long or the level of difficulty exceeds their current abilities. Nevertheless, the students' main orientation is to build the habit of listening first before demanding perfect understanding (MT.C6a; MY.D6a; MY.E6a; MT.B6a; MY.F6a; MT.B4c)

Over time, students felt a noticeable change in their listening skills. The process, which was initially difficult, gradually became easier to understand. This improvement was evident in their increased vocabulary, their ability to grasp the main ideas without always relying on subtitles, and their growing confidence in using Arabic orally. Thus, social media not only serves as a source of entertainment, but also as a medium for language input that has an impact on the development of students' receptive and productive competencies (MT.A6a; MT.A7a; MY.E7a; MT.C7a; MY.D7a).

Based on these experiences, it is evident that the use of social media in mahārah istimā' learning for students takes place as a flexible, repetition-oriented, independent learning process that relies on the selection of content according to personal needs. Social media becomes an authentic practice space that allows students to build listening habits naturally, contributing to a gradual improvement in Arabic language comprehension (MT.A4a; MY.E4a; MT.C4a; MY.D7a; MI.G7a).

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in The Use of Social Media For Learning Listening Skills

The findings show that the use of social media in learning listening skills is influenced by a number of supporting factors derived from platform characteristics, content availability, and students' personal circumstances. Social media is seen as an easily accessible, free, and flexible tool that allows students to learn anytime without space and time constraints. This ease of access allows students to obtain Arabic language input on an ongoing basis according to their learning needs (MT.A8a; MT.B8a; MY.D8a; MY.E8a; MY.F8a).

In terms of platform characteristics, students assessed that each social media platform has different advantages. TikTok is considered more interesting, concise, and less monotonous, making it easier for some students to understand, especially because there are many Arabic content creators who are active on the platform. Meanwhile, YouTube was chosen because of its longer video duration, clearer audio quality, and relatively lower level of distraction compared to other platforms. Instagram is considered to be in the middle, with a duration that is not too short and not too long, making it comfortable for listening activities (MT.A2a; MT.A2b; MT.B2a; MT.B2b; MT.C2a; MY.D2a; MY.D2b; MY.E2a; MI.G2b).

The availability of diverse content is also an important factor that supports the *istimā'* process. Students feel helped by the availability of a lot of content from native speakers, cartoons, dialogues, and educational videos that they can choose according to their interests. This diversity prevents students from getting bored easily and gives them more freedom to determine the topics they want to learn. In addition, the comment feature on several platforms allows students to obtain assistance in understanding from other users, making the learning process more interactive (MT.A9a; MY.F2a; MY.F2b; MI.G2a; MI.G8a).

The use of social media also has a positive impact on students' enthusiasm for learning. Most informants felt an increase in motivation and desire to listen to Arabic more often after getting used to using social media as a practice medium. They also felt an increase in their listening skills with varying percentages, ranging from around 50% to 75%, which indicates subjective progress in understanding Arabic speech (MT.A10a; MT.B9a; MT.C10a; MT.C10b; MT.C10c; MY.D9a; MY.E10a; MY.F9a; MY.F9b; MI.G10a).

However, this study also found a number of significant inhibiting factors. Digital distractions were a major obstacle, especially the appearance of message notifications, advertisements, or other content that suddenly diverted students' attention during the listening process. These distractions often cause students to lose concentration, forcing them to start over from the beginning (MT.A11a; MT.B10a; MT.C11a; MY.E11a).

In addition, technical constraints also affect the effectiveness of learning, particularly in relation to internet network quality and quota limitations. Unstable access causes audio interruptions and reduces the clarity of speech. Furthermore, some students avoid content without translation because they feel unable to follow the intonation of native speakers, which is too fast (MY.E11a; MY.F10a; MI.G11a). From a linguistic perspective, the level of language difficulty is a barrier in itself.

Fast intonation, unclear articulation, and the need to understand repeatedly require students to make a greater effort to listen. This condition demands intensive repetition strategies and a high level of patience in order to understand the message well (MY.D11a; MY.F10b). The interaction between these supporting and inhibiting factors shapes the dynamics of students' learning experiences in utilizing social media as a medium for strengthening listening skills (MT.A8a;

MY.E8a; MT.A11a; MY.F10b; MI.G11a).

*Students' Perceptions of The Benefits And Impacts of Using Social Media in Learning
Listening Skills*

Social media is perceived as a means of motivating students to continue practicing listening to Arabic. The habit of repeatedly listening to Arabic content encourages students to be more active in practicing their listening skills independently (MT.A13a; MT.B12a; MY.F12a). In addition to motivation, students also feel more confident after becoming accustomed to exposure to Arabic speech on social media. Understanding the speech they hear makes them more confident when interacting in an academic environment, especially when lecturers or friends speak Arabic (MT.B13a; MT.C14a; MY.D13a; MI.G14a).

However, this confidence is still more dominant in terms of comprehension, not yet fully in terms of the courage to speak (MY.E13b; MT.B13b). Another benefit felt is an increase in vocabulary mastery. Furthermore, the content presented on various platforms helps students learn new vocabulary that can then be applied in simple communication (MI.G13a). In terms of access, social media is considered flexible because it can be used anytime without requiring special costs, making it easier for students to find listening practice materials (MY.D12a; MY.E12a).

Students are also aware of the negative impact of using social media as a learning medium. The most common obstacle is distraction when listening to content. Notifications and recommendations for other videos often divert attention from the original learning objective (MT.B14a; MT.C15a; MI.G15a). Some students also expressed a tendency toward addiction. Unconsciously scrolling through content makes learning time uncontrolled and exceeds what is needed (MT.A15a; MT.C15b; MY.F14a).

This condition has the potential to reduce the effectiveness of learning if it is not accompanied by good self-management. In addition, the impact felt is still more dominant in increasing receptive abilities. Students acknowledged that although their understanding of Arabic speech had improved, their courage to speak actively had not developed significantly (MY.E13b; MT.B13b). This shows that the use of social media needs to be balanced with productive practice in order to optimize learning outcomes. Overall, students view social media as a useful tool in learning listening skills, especially in increasing motivation, understanding, and confidence. However, its usefulness is highly determined by the individual's ability to control the use of social media so as not to cause distraction and addiction (MY.E14a; MI.G15b).

Here are some types of social media content that students use for learning listening skills:



Figure 2. Instagram content

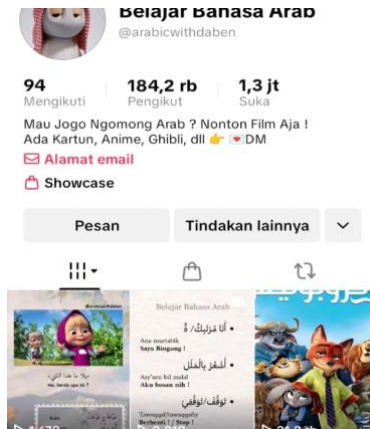


Figure 3. Tiktok content

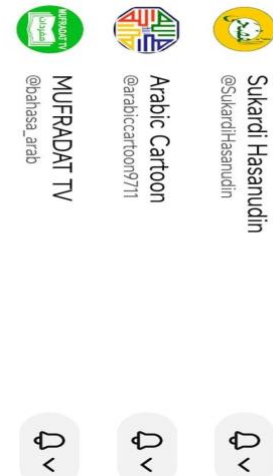


Figure 4. Youtube content

4. Discussion

Student Experiences in Utilizing Social Media for Learning Listening Skills

Referring to the data presented, the researchers found that students' experiences in utilizing social media for learning listening skills were personal, gradual, and dominated by independent learning patterns. This process is in line with Vygotsky's constructivist view, which emphasizes that learning is a social process in which individuals construct knowledge through interaction with their environment (Tamrin et al. 2011). Social media functions as a digital learning environment that provides authentic language input so that students can build their understanding gradually. The students in this study also did not start learning from formal planning, but rather from the habit of accessing content, which then turned into continuous learning activities.

Furthermore, students chose light content such as cartoons, simple dialogues, and educational videos with themes that show that language learners tend to choose content that is relevant to their personal needs and provides a sense of emotional closeness. The repetition strategies employed by students, such as playing videos repeatedly, taking notes on vocabulary, and imitating pronunciation, reflect the practice of self-regulated learning as described by Zimmerman, namely the existence of independent planning, monitoring, and evaluation in the learning process (Zhang & Romero Forteza 2024).

In addition, the positive experiences of students who feel more comfortable learning without the pressure of a classroom support the research by Nirmala et al., which found that online media-based *istimā'* material creates a more flexible and personalized learning climate (Nirmala et al. 2023). Thus, the experiences of students in this study can be understood as a process of language acquisition based

on authentic input mediated by social media.

Students also felt a noticeable change in their listening skills. In this case, there was an increase in vocabulary mastery, the ability to grasp main ideas without always relying on subtitles, and the growth of courage to use Arabic verbally. Thus, social media not only serves as a source of entertainment, but also as a medium for language input that impacts the development of students' receptive and productive competencies. This is in line with research findings that say that listening skills are important in language learning, and a lack of listening skills will make interaction difficult (Mizan et al. 2024).

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Use of Social Media

Based on the interview results, there are several supporting and inhibiting factors in the use of social media for learning listening skills. Among the supporting factors is that students choose certain platforms because they are considered capable of meeting their learning needs. Students choose the platform that best satisfies their learning needs. This is in line with the Uses and Gratifications theory (Katz & Foulkes 1962). Second, it was found that TikTok is considered interesting and concise, YouTube is more in-depth and has minimal distractions, and Instagram is in a moderate position.

This is in line with the results of Ilham et al.'s research, which confirms that the characteristics of each platform influence preferences and the effectiveness of learning Arabic (Ilham et al. 2024). Third, the diversity of content from native speakers is also a major supporting factor. This is reinforced by research by Claudya & Fadillah, which shows that YouTube provides clear and natural audio contexts that help improve istima' comprehension (Claudia & Fadillah 2025). Based on the interview results, it is known that the 50–75% increase in students' istima' skills is also in line with previous studies which concluded that social media is effective in enriching learning experiences and increasing the motivation of Arabic language students.

Then there are several inhibiting factors, the first of which is distraction and the tendency to lose focus when studying using social media. For example, message notifications, advertisements, or other content suddenly appear and distract students while they are listening. The results of the study show that there are several challenges for learning listening skills on YouTube, namely: first, visual distractions and advertisements on YouTube; second, the accent and speed of the speakers on YouTube are difficult to understand; third, YouTube minimizes two-way interaction (Hamidah & Adinda 2024). Second, technical constraints also affect the effectiveness of learning, particularly in relation to internet network quality and quota limitations. Unstable access causes audio interruptions and reduces the clarity of the speech heard.

Finally, there are also linguistic obstacles in the form of the speed of native speakers' speech, which is also relevant to Krashen's affective filter concept (Nattinger 2014). When the level of difficulty is too high, students tend to avoid content without translation.

Student Perceptions of Benefits and Impacts

Everyone has different perceptions. The interview results show that students have diverse perceptions of the use of social media in learning listening skills. The researchers grouped these perceptions into two main aspects, namely positive benefits and negative impacts. The first positive perception students had regarding the benefits of social media was that they felt an increase in motivation, confidence, and mastery of vocabulary. The second was that students were more confident in understanding speech than in speaking actively. One of the problems that often occurs when learning listening skills is a lack of student motivation to master listening skills, which can be caused by a lack of confidence or boredom with the material presented (Resy Mulyani et al. 2025).

There are also positive emotional experiences felt by students that reinforce Piniel & Albert's opinion about the role of affection in language learning outside the classroom. When students feel happy and unstressed, the frequency of interaction with language input increases (Piniel & Albert 2018). There are many positive values in learning Arabic using social media, including easier access for students, increased enthusiasm, and training students to be independent without having to be guided directly by the teacher (Riqza & Muassomah 2020). Furthermore, the negative impacts felt by students when using social media include distraction, addiction, and limitations in developing productive skills.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the positive benefits experienced by students are related to increased motivation to learn, growth in self-confidence, increased vocabulary mastery, and ease of access to learning. Meanwhile, the negative impacts are related to distraction, addiction tendencies, and limitations in the development of productive skills.

5. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, the researcher concluded that Arabic language education students use various social media platforms to learn listening skills. Among these social media platforms are YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. Students' experiences in utilizing social media as a means of learning listening skills are independent, flexible, and have developed into more focused learning activities. Students utilize social media as an alternative learning space that provides authentic and continuous Arabic language input in accordance with the needs and learning rhythms of each student.

Furthermore, the learning process of students through social media is generally carried out with an intensive repetition strategy. Students do not just listen once, but play the video repeatedly until they gain a more complete understanding. These listening activities are often accompanied by noting down new vocabulary, searching for meanings through online dictionaries, and attempting to imitate the pronunciation of native speakers.

The use of social media as a medium for learning listening skills has supporting and inhibiting factors. The supporting factors include ease of access, flexibility of time and place, availability of diverse Arabic-language content, and exposure to authentic language from native speakers. Meanwhile, significant inhibiting factors include digital distractions, notifications, advertisements, limited internet access, and the tendency to overuse social media. Social media is perceived as being able to increase learning motivation, foster confidence in understanding Arabic speech, and enrich vocabulary mastery.

On the other hand, students are also aware of the negative impacts in the form of distractions, addiction tendencies, and limitations in developing productive skills. The improvement felt by students is still more dominant in the receptive aspect (listening comprehension) than in active speaking skills. Therefore, social media is perceived as an effective supporting tool for *istimā'* learning, but it needs to be balanced with other learning strategies to optimize learning outcomes.

As a recommendation, further research is expected to examine the use of social media in other Arabic language skills or use different methodological approaches to enrich the study of technology-based Arabic language learning.

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