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Media content impact on linguistic and cultural competence in English teaching

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ABSTRACT

This research is based on an empirical analysis of the impact of media content on the development of students' linguistic and cultural competences (CCs) during English learning. The study involved 216 students studying at Korkyt Ata Kyzylorda University, Republic of Kazakhstan. The study's data were collected using the author's questionnaire and analyzed in Jeffreys's amazing statistics program (JASP). Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and linear regression model were used in the analysis. The study found that students' overall linguistic, media, and CCs were high. Differences by gender and English language level were not statistically significant. However, the regression analysis showed that media content use was the strongest and most statistically significant predictor of linguistic competence. The effect of the time of consumption of English media content on linguistic competence was not significant. However, this suggests that the qualitative characteristics of media content are more important than the quantity. At the same time, it was found that students with a high language level (C1) have significantly higher language competence (LC). The research results indicate the usefulness of systematically and strategically using media content in teaching English to develop linguistic and CCs. The conclusions from the study allow us to develop methodological recommendations for the integrated use of media resources in an intercultural context.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized environment, learning English plays a crucial role in international academic, professional, and social communication. English has been considered a significant and at the same time ubiquitous agent of international communication. Subsequently, the goals of language education have slightly altered. In the contemporary world, learning a language is not limited to grammar and vocabulary awareness; it also includes intercultural awareness, which makes interaction with different cultures more effective [1].

The rapid development of digital technologies has significantly transformed the educational landscape, leading to the integration of innovative teaching methods and resources. In this context, media content-including online platforms, videos, podcasts, and social media-has become an essential component of English language instruction [2]. These resources provide learners with practical knowledge and real

experience, thereby encouraging improvement of linguistic and cultural competence (CC). Studies have also demonstrated the benefits of using media content in education, such as increased student engagement and academic achievement [3].

It is widely accepted that media content is currently a quite relevant aspect of language education; however, there is a lack of empirical evidence from quantitative data on how media actually affects the language learning process. Additionally, results from some previous studies appear contradictory. On the one hand, some researchers highlight the positive impact of media exposure on language acquisition; on the other hand, factors such as content quality, learner engagement, and instructional design are argued to play a more decisive role. Such inappropriate features demonstrate a precise research gap and require a systematic, data-driven inquiry [4].

Since the modern education system demands the implementation and expansion of digital learning, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic, which strengthened online classrooms and blended learning, the significance of the study has increased in recent years. Simultaneously, academic policies increasingly emphasize the importance of digital literacy and the integration of media-based learning strategies into curricula. The effective use of media content can play a crucial role in developing both linguistic and CCs, making it compulsory to understand how to integrate it into language education.

In response to these developments, the present research investigates the way media content contributes to the improvement of linguistic and CCs in English language learning [5], [6]. Particularly, the study explores whether the level and duration of media use are related to linguistic competence and examines the impact of English proficiency level and gender on this relationship. The study is conducted at Korkyt Ata Kyzylorda University and focuses on the role of media content in effective intercultural communication and the improvement of linguistic competence [7], [8]. Accordingly, this study investigates the influence of media content use on students' linguistic and CCs. Specifically, it examines the relationship between the level and duration of media use and the development of these competences, exploring whether English proficiency level and gender affect this relationship.

There's growing academic interest in the use of media in English-language education, particularly for improving linguistic proficiency [9]. Various studies have shown that the use of authentic materials (movies, websites, and interactive applications, helps improve vocabulary, listening, pronunciation, and communication skills) [10], [11]. In particular, large-scale empirical evidence shows that multimedia-based instruction significantly enhances students' performance in reading, writing, listening and speaking [11]. Moreover, empirical findings show that involvement in interactive activities such as video making and digital forums improves fluency and grammatical accuracy, decreases anxiety, and increases learners' motivation [12].

However, this positive consensus is tempered by research that shows that the frequency of media exposure, in isolation, does not guarantee language growth. Rather, some authors suggest that the quality of the materials and the learner's active participation are far more important factors [13], [14]. This viewpoint disputes the notion that higher exposure levels naturally yield better results, underscoring the critical role of deliberate instructional design and well-organized learning tasks instead.

Beyond linguistic progress, scholars frequently investigate the role of media content in shaping cultural and intercultural capabilities. Studies suggest that authentic media can expose students to critical norms, social values, and linguistic subtleties, fostering cultural awareness and sensitivity [15], [16]. In particular, studies on audiovisual formats such as film and television programs have shown their potential for helping learners decode cultural contexts and navigate intercultural interactions [17]–[19]. Conversely, some experts warn that unguided media consumption may lead to superficial interpretations or reinforce cultural stereotypes, highlighting the irreplaceable role of teacher guidance and critical analysis [20].

The capacity of media content to enhance intercultural capabilities is reinforced by literature emphasizing the value of contextualized, interactive educational settings. Classroom experiments demonstrate that pairing authentic media consumption with collaborative discussion tasks results in measurable gains in both language mastery and intercultural awareness [21]. Furthermore, when tailored to students' specific academic or professional trajectories, media resources can also facilitate the growth of specialized vocabulary and metacognitive abilities [22].

Social media and digital networks are another critical point of media integration in language education. Studies have demonstrated that platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and online gaming provide students with authentic linguistic input, interactive communication channels, and environments conducive to both independent and cooperative learning [23], [24]. However, researchers mention some disadvantages, such as cognitive distraction, exposure to non-standard vocabulary or slang, and a possible decrease in grammatical accuracy [25], [26]. These insights underscore the importance of building digital literacy to engage with online content productively and meaningfully.

From a theoretical standpoint, the influence of media resources on language acquisition can be conceptualized through multiple overlapping frameworks [27]. First, media influence theory highlights how

consistent exposure to authentic input drives the language learning process [28], [29]. Secondly, the framework of intercultural communicative competence posits that blending linguistic proficiency with cultural awareness is vital for successful interaction. Finally, digital literacy theory emphasizes that students must possess the skills to critically analyze and interact with digital media to optimize their educational gains [30].

Despite a vast body of literature, current research offers mixed conclusions regarding the extent to which media content influences linguistic versus cultural proficiencies [31], [32]. While numerous investigations document substantial positive impacts, others argue that outcomes depend heavily on contextual variables, including instructional methods, students' profiles, and the specific medium employed [13], [19], [23]. These contradictions highlight a clear gap for additional empirical studies that methodically analyze media integration in higher education and disentangle the precise relationship between media use and student achievement. On the whole, prior scholarship establishes that media content possesses immense potential to develop both language skills and intercultural growth, provided it is incorporated into the curriculum via structured, pedagogically sound approaches [10], [12], [19], [21], [23]. To this end, the current study aims to enrich the existing literature by providing new empirical evidence on how media content directly influences students' linguistic and cultural capabilities.

2. METHOD

2.1. Research design and justification

This study used a quantitative cross-sectional research design to explore the influence of media content on students' development of linguistic and cultural competencies. A quantitative approach was chosen because it will enable objective measurement of the relationship between variables and facilitate replication of findings. The cross-sectional survey design enabled data collection at a single point in time, providing a snapshot of students' linguistic and CCs and media use at Korkyt Ata Kyzylorda University.

2.2. Participants and sampling strategy

Participants were selected using a non-probability convenience sampling technique, targeting undergraduate students at the Institute of Humanitarian and Pedagogical Studies. The final sample comprised 216 students (N=216). As illustrated in Figure 1, the sample was predominantly female (n=161; 74.5%) compared to male (n=55; 25.5%).

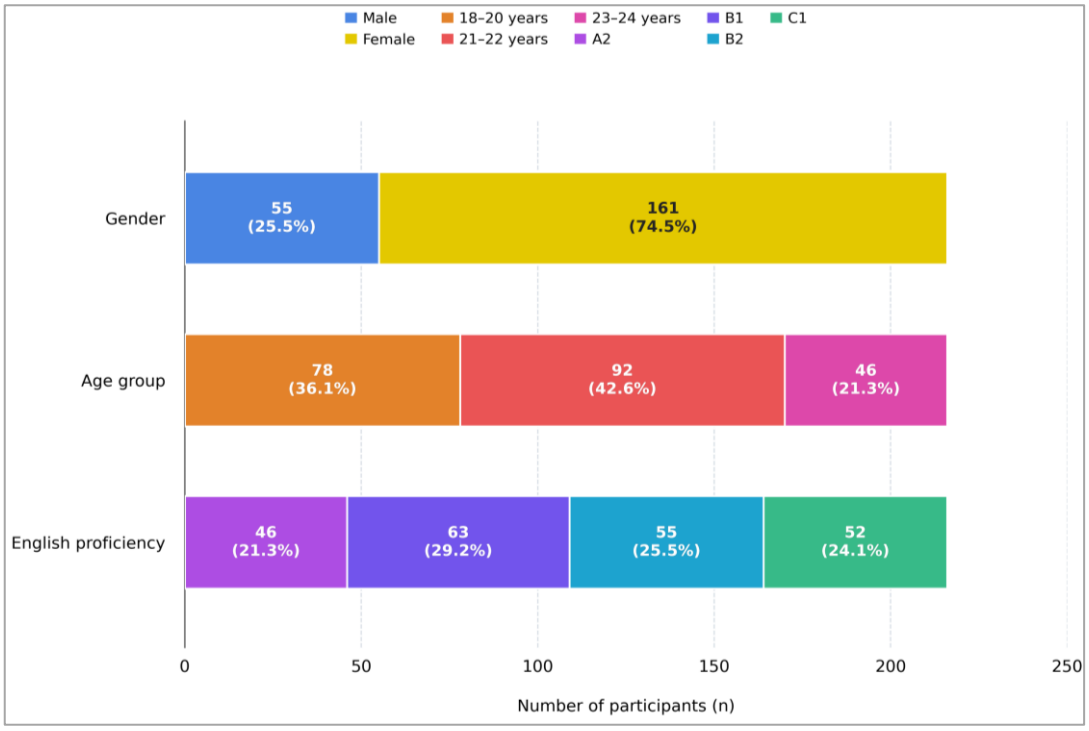


Figure 1. Distribution of students participating in the study by gender, age, and English language level. Note: percentage (%) is the proportion in the total sample

In terms of age, the largest group was 21–22 years (n=92; 42.6%), followed by 18-20 years (n=78; 36.1%) and 23–24 years (n=46; 21.3%). Proficiency levels were distributed across the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) scale to allow for comparative analysis: B1 (n=63; 29.2%), B2 (n=55; 25.5%), C1 (n=52; 24.0%), and A2 (n=46; 21.3%). This sample size is statistically sufficient for performing robust correlation and multiple linear regression analyses.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of students participating in the study by gender, age group, and English proficiency level. The majority of the sample was female (n = 161; 74.5%), while male students numbered 55 (25.5%). This figure indicates that the proportion of female students in the humanities at higher education institutions is high.

By age group, the majority of participants were grouped into the 21-22 age group (n=92; 42.6%). Students aged 18-20 accounted for 36.1% (n=78), and those aged 23-24 accounted for 21.3% (n=46). These data indicate that the age structure of the study sample is typical of undergraduate students.

The analysis by English language level indicates that participants were relatively evenly distributed across levels. Level B1–29.2% (n=63), level B2–25.5% (n=55), level C1–24.0% (n=52), and level A2–21.3% (n=46). Such a balanced structure provides the necessary opportunity for a comparative analysis of differences in English language levels and a reliable assessment of the impact of media content on linguistic and cultural competencies. The level of English proficiency of the respondents was determined based on levels A2, B1, B2, and C1 according to the CEFR scale.

2.3. Instrumentation and operationalization

The research instrument was a structured online questionnaire consisting of three core scales: language competence (LC), media content usage (ME), and CC. All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree). To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by experts in language education and applied linguistics. A pilot study was conducted to refine the wording and clarity of items. Internal reliability was assessed in Jeffreys's amazing statistics program (JASP) using McDonald's Omega, which is preferred over Cronbach's alpha for its accuracy in multidimensional scales. The results demonstrated acceptable internal consistency for all variables: ME; ω=0.84, LC; ω=0.88, and CC; ω=0.82.

As shown in Table 1, the questionnaire structure assessed LC, ME, and CC on a five-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree). Each competency was covered by several indicators, and their mean values (LC_mean, ME_mean, CC_mean) were then calculated. For each construct, composite scores were calculated by averaging participants' responses across the corresponding questionnaire items. Higher scores indicated higher levels of media engagement, linguistic competence, and CC.

Table 1. Structure of the questionnaire used in the study

Dimension	Code	Question content
Use of media content (ME_mean)	ME1	I use media content such as videos, podcasts, and films to learn English.
	ME2	Media content helps me learn English in a more interesting and engaging way.
	ME3	I learn new English words and expressions through media content.
	ME4	Through media content, I hear English used in a natural (authentic) context.
	ME5	I watch or listen to English-language media content outside of class time.
Linguistic competence (LC_mean)	LC1	Listening to and watching media content has improved my English listening skills.
	LC2	As a result of using media content, my English vocabulary has increased.
	LC3	I feel more confident than before when speaking English.
	LC4	I understand English texts better than I used to.
	LC5	I make fewer mistakes when forming sentences in English.
CC (CC_mean)	CC1	Through media content, I understand the lifestyle and cultural characteristics of English-speaking countries.
	CC2	I am able to notice and understand different cultural differences.
	CC3	I consider norms of politeness when communicating with people from other cultures.
	CC4	Media content has increased my interest in other cultures.
	CC5	I am learning to respect different cultural perspectives and viewpoints.

2.4. Data collection and ethical considerations

Data were collected online through the university's institutional communication channels. Participation was entirely voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents after they were informed of the study's purpose. Participants' anonymity and the confidentiality of their responses were maintained throughout the research to reduce response bias. The study complied with the ethical guidelines of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Korkyt Ata Kyzylorda University.

2.5. Data analysis procedures

Statistical analysis was performed using JASP. The procedure followed a five-stage protocol to ensure scientific accountability:

- Descriptive statistics: calculation of means (M), standard deviations (SD), and distribution limits for all variables.
- Assumption testing: prior to analysis, distributional normality was assessed via Shapiro-Wilk tests, and homogeneity of variance was verified using Levene's test for analysis of variance (ANOVA). The Shapiro–Wilk test indicated that the distributions of the principal variables did not significantly deviate from normality ($p>.05$). Levene's test also confirmed the homogeneity of variances across comparison groups ($p>.05$), supporting the suitability of parametric statistical analyses.
- Comparative analysis: one-way ANOVA with Fisher's least significant difference (LSD) post hoc tests was used to evaluate differences in competences across gender and CEFR proficiency levels.
- Correlation analysis: Pearson's coefficients were calculated to identify the strength and direction of relationships between variables.
- Predictive modelling: a multiple linear regression model was constructed to determine the predictive effect of media usage on linguistic competence. Multicollinearity diagnostics (variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance indicators) were calculated to ensure the model's validity and stability.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The insights gained from this investigation expand current theoretical frameworks by both validating their fundamental tenets and delineating an under–explored boundary condition. The theory of media influence proposes that language acquisition is stimulated by rich-in-context and purposeful exposure, but it rarely differentiates between the quantity and quality of exposure as independent predictors. This study adds to the theory by providing empirical evidence that it is the level of learner engagement (ME_mean), rather than the duration of weekly exposure (Media_Hours_per_Week), that has the true predictive power. This would suggest that future researchers and educators should operationalize "meaningful exposure" as a function of active engagement rather than time elapsed. This refinement takes media influence theory from a broad qualitative statement to a testable, quantitative distinction between two variables that were previously combined. To achieve these insights, data evaluating the influence of media on students' cultural and linguistic proficiencies were processed via JASP and evaluated across multiple phases. Initially, descriptive statistics were used to outline the cohort's characteristics. Next, ANOVA and post hoc tests were used to evaluate potential differences associated with gender and English proficiency levels. Finally, correlation analysis mapped the interactions between variables, culminating in a linear regression model designed to isolate the predictors of linguistic competence.

The findings of this study provide useful information on the effect of media content on the development of linguistic and CC in English education. In general, the data suggest that students have relatively strong linguistic, media, and cultural competencies, which means that media tools have already been integrated into their study habits. However, in addition to these macro-level trends, the statistical analysis reveals several interesting patterns that merit further examination.

Most notably, the degree of engagement with media content was the strongest predictor of linguistic proficiency. This outcome aligns with prior literature emphasizing the value of active interaction with authentic target-language input [10], [12]. It indicates that learners who actively engage with media materials-rather than merely consuming them passively-tend to achieve greater language mastery. Theoretically, this dynamic aligns with media influence theory, which isolates context-rich exposure as a prime catalyst for language acquisition.

Conversely, the sheer amount of time spent on media consumption had no statistically significant impact on linguistic competence. While this outcome might seem, counterintuitive given prior literature connecting greater exposure to better language proficiency [11], it is entirely consistent with studies arguing that material quality and cognitive processing depth matter far more than duration alone [13], [14]. This underscores that merely inflating media exposure is inadequate; instead, structured, deliberate interaction with the medium is what drives the learning process.

Furthermore, the data revealed a critical pattern regarding baseline English language proficiency. Although variations across lower proficiency tiers were statistically negligible, students at the C1 level exhibited substantially higher linguistic competence. This disparity likely stems from the advanced learners' superior capacity to decode authentic media, interpret nuanced contextual cues, and deploy language across varied communicative contexts. This observation aligns with existing research that positions a learner's initial proficiency level as a key mediator in the success of input-driven instructional methods [19], [21].

The results showed no significant effect of gender on the relationship between media use and linguistic competence. This suggests that access to and engagement with media are similar across genders, providing comparable opportunities for language development. Viewed through the lens of intercultural competence, the data confirm that media resources serve as a crucial foundation for cultural literacy and awareness. Interacting with authentic multimedia permits students to observe firsthand the cultural expectations, societal values, and discourse styles that comprise intercultural communicative competence [15], [16]. Nonetheless, as established in prior scholarship, the utility of this exposure depends heavily on students' capacity to critically analyze the media they consume, underscoring the foundational role of digital literacy skills [23], [26].

Overall, the findings of this study emphasize that the impact of media content on language learning is determined not solely by frequency of use but also by the quality of interaction, learner engagement, and the contextual relevance of materials. Therefore, greater emphasis should be placed on designing pedagogically meaningful media-based learning activities that promote both linguistic development and intercultural understanding. Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to characterize the language, media, and cultural competencies of the study participants by gender, as seen in Table 2. Data were fully included for all variables, and no missing values were identified.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of linguistic, media, and CCs in terms of gender differences

Statistic	Descriptive statistics					
	LC_mean		ME_mean		CC_mean	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Valid	55	161	55	161	55	161
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	3.916	3.973	3.971	4.040	3.978	3.938
Std. deviation	0.384	0.416	0.332	0.325	0.465	0.389
Minimum	3.200	3.200	3.000	3.400	2.800	3.200
Maximum	4.800	5.000	4.600	5.000	4.800	4.800

The mean LC (LC_mean) of female students was slightly higher (M=3.97, SD=0.42) than that of male students (M=3.92, SD=0.38). In both groups, LC was relatively high, with values ranging from 3.20 to 5.00. The low standard deviation indicates a uniform distribution of LC indicators. Regarding the level of media content use (ME_mean), female students had a higher mean (M=4.04, SD=0.33), while male students had a slightly lower mean (M=3.97, SD=0.33). Female students demonstrated slightly higher mean scores in LC_mean (M=3.97, SD=0.42) and ME_mean (M=4.04, SD=0.33) than male students. The mean value of male students in terms of CC (CC_mean) was slightly higher (M=3.98, SD=0.47) than that of female students (M=3.94, SD=0.39). However, this difference is considered insignificant. At the same time, the higher standard deviation in the male group indicates a heterogeneity in the levels of CC.

The descriptive statistics revealed that levels of language, media, and CC were high for both men and women, with no obvious gender differences. These data indicate the need for a deeper analysis of the impact of variables such as the level of media content use on language and cultural competencies, rather than the gender factor. The results obtained are considered an empirical basis for the correlation and regression analyses conducted in the next stage.

Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to determine the characteristics of students' linguistic, media, and CCs by English language levels (A2, B1, B2, C1). As shown in Table 3, data were fully covered across all levels, and participants were fairly evenly distributed across levels. There were 63 students at level B1, 55 at level B2, 52 at level C1, and 46 at level A2.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of linguistic, media, and CCs by English language levels

Statistic	Descriptive statistics											
	LC_mean				ME_mean				CC_mean			
	B2	B1	A2	C1	B2	B1	A2	C1	B2	B1	A2	C1
Valid	55	63	46	52	55	63	46	52	55	63	46	52
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	3.964	3.895	4.004	3.988	4.109	3.975	4.065	3.950	4.095	3.838	3.939	3.935
Std. deviation	0.429	0.385	0.356	0.456	0.350	0.284	0.277	0.373	0.407	0.376	0.438	0.385
Minimum	3.200	3.200	3.400	3.200	3.600	3.400	3.600	3.000	3.200	3.200	3.200	2.800
Maximum	4.800	4.800	4.800	5.000	4.600	4.600	4.800	5.000	4.800	4.800	4.800	4.600

The LC (LC_mean) indicators were relatively high at all levels. Students at level A2 showed the highest mean (M=4.00, SD=0.36), while students at level B1 had a slightly lower mean (M=3.90, SD=0.39). The results at levels B2 (M=3.96, SD=0.43) and C1 (M=3.99, SD=0.46) are similar, indicating that LC is stable across all levels. These data suggest that LC gradually increases with increasing English proficiency, but the differences are not clear-cut.

The highest mean score for ME (ME_mean) was observed among students at level B2 (M=4.11, SD=0.35). Students at level A2 also showed relatively high scores (M=4.07, SD=0.28). Although the level of media content use was slightly lower at levels B1 (M=3.98, SD=0.28) and C1 (M=3.95, SD=0.37), the fact that the mean values were above 3.90 in all groups confirms the widespread use of media resources in English. This result indicates that media content plays an important role in the learning process regardless of the language level.

In terms of CC (CC_mean), students at level B2 had the highest mean value (M=4.10, SD=0.41). The results at levels A2 (M=3.94, SD=0.44) and C1 (M=3.94, SD=0.39) were similar, whereas the mean for students at level B1 was relatively lower (M=3.84, SD=0.38). These data indicate that CC is closely related not only to language level but also to the level of interaction with media content.

The descriptive statistics indicate that regardless of English proficiency level, students exhibit high linguistic, media, and CC. Although the differences between levels are insignificant, certain trends emerge in indicators of media content use and CC. These results highlight the importance of conducting correlation and regression analyses to better understand the impact of media content on linguistic and CC.

An ANOVA was conducted to assess the statistical significance of the regression model predicting LC (LC_mean). According to Table 4, the proposed model is generally statistically significant ($F(5, 210)=42.147$, $p<0.001$). The regression sum of squares is 17.944, indicating that the independent variables in the model explain a significant portion of the variation in LC. The relatively low residual sum of squares (SS=17.881) indicates that the model fits the data well. The ratio of the mean square values also indicates the model's high predictive power. The results indicate that the variables ME (ME_mean), time spent consuming media content in English per week (Media_Hours_per_Week), and English language level (English_level) jointly have a statistically significant effect on students' LC.

The regression coefficients were analyzed to determine the influence of individual predictors on the regression model's prediction of LC (LC_mean). Table 5 shows the unstandardized and standardized coefficients, statistical significance, and multicollinearity indicators of the variables included in the model. According to the results, the level of media content use (ME_mean) is considered the strongest and most statistically significant predictor of LC ($\beta=0.714$, $t=14.344$, $p<0.001$). This indicator shows that as media content use increases, students' LC also increases significantly. At the same time, the 95% confidence interval (CI: [0.767; 1.012]) does not include zero, confirming that the influence of this variable is constant.

Table 4. ANOVA of the regression model for predicting linguistic competence

ANOVA						
Model	Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p
M_1	Regression	17.944	5	3.589	42.147	<0.001
	Residual	17.881	210	0.085		
	Total	35.825	215			

Note: M_1 includes ME_mean, Media_Hours_per_Week, English_level.
The intercept model is omitted, as no meaningful information can be shown.

Table 5. Coefficients of the linear regression model for predicting LC

Coefficients										
							95% CI		Collinearity statistics	
Model	Term	Unstandardized	Standard error	Standardized[a]	t	p	Lower	Upper	Tolerance	VIF
M_0	(Intercept)	3.958	0.028		142.517	<0.001	3.904	4.013		
M_1	(Intercept)	0.308	0.263		1.172	0.242	-0.210	0.827		
	ME_mean	0.889	0.062	0.714	14.344	<0.001	0.767	1.012	0.979	1.021
	Media_Hours_per_Week	4.613×10^{-5}	0.008	2.810×10^{-4}	0.006	0.995	-0.016	0.016	0.992	1.008
	English_level (B1)	0.051	0.055		0.939	0.349	-0.056	0.159	0.991	1.009
	English_level (A2)	0.080	0.058		1.366	0.173	-0.035	0.195		
	English_level (C1)	0.166	0.057		2.897	0.004	0.053	0.280		

[a]Standardized coefficients can only be computed for continuous predictors

The time spent consuming English-language media content per week (Media_Hours_per_Week) did not have a statistically significant effect on LC (p=.995). This result indicates that the qualitative characteristics and content level of media content are more important than the volume of use. When analyzing differences in English language proficiency, the C1 level had a significant positive effect on LC (B=0.166, t=2.897, p=0.004). However, the results for the B1 and A2 levels were not statistically significant (p>0.05). This indicates that students' LC at the high level did not improve significantly.

The results of the multicollinearity assessment showed that the tolerance indicators for all variables are above 0.97, and the VIF values are close to 1.01. This confirms that the model does not suffer from multicollinearity and that the regression estimates are reliable. The results suggest a crucial role for media content in the development of learners' LC. At the same time, higher levels of language proficiency (especially C1) are associated with a significant increase in LC.

Based on these empirical outcomes, several actionable strategies can be recommended for language educators. First, instructors should embed structured media analysis into their teaching routines, prompting students to critically analyze authentic audiovisual resources such as films, podcasts, and digital media. Such practices could involve guided debates, text-interpretation exercises, and reflective tasks focused on the cultural contexts of the media. Second, incorporating digital literacy instruction into the language curriculum is vital because it empowers students to navigate, evaluate, and use online resources intentionally. Finally, curriculum developers should design media-integrated learning environments in which digital assets are not merely supplementary but systematically mapped to learning goals to drive both language mastery and cultural sensitivity.

General descriptive statistics were calculated for the students' language proficiency, ME level, and time spent consuming English-language media content. As shown in Table 6, the mean language proficiency (LC_mean) was 3.96 (SD=0.41), indicating that students' English proficiency was generally high. The low standard error (SE=0.028) confirms that the mean value obtained is stable and reliable. The mean level of ME (ME_mean) was 4.02 (SD=0.33). This result indicates that students actively and systematically use English-language media content. The low standard error for this variable (SE=0.022) indicates that the sample size is sufficient and the average value is reliable.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics of the main variables

Descriptives				
Variable	N	Mean	SD	SE
LC_mean	216	3.958	0.408	0.028
ME_mean	216	4.022	0.328	0.022
Media_Hours_per_Week	216	5.382	2.487	0.169

The average time spent on English-language media content per week (Media_Hours_per_Week) was 5.38 hours (SD=2.49). This indicator shows that media content use varies among students; some use media resources significantly more often, while others use them less often. The standard error value (SE=0.169) indicates that the data are representative of the general sample.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine the influence of English language levels (A2, B1, B2, C1) on language proficiency (LC_mean). As shown in Table 7, there was no statistically significant difference in language proficiency across English language levels (F(3, 212)=0.792, p=.500). The effect size estimates also showed that the effect of language level was very small (η^2=0.011). This indicates that English level explains only about 1.1% of the variance in language proficiency. This means that most of the residual variance (SS=35.428) is due to factors other than language level.

To clarify differences in language proficiency indicators across English levels, a post hoc comparative analysis was conducted. Table 8 shows the results of pairwise comparisons for the English_level variable (A2, B1, B2, C1). The results of the post hoc (LSD) analysis showed that the differences in mean values between all levels were not statistically significant (p>0.05). In particular, the differences between levels B2 and B1 (p=0.801), B2 and A2 (p=0.959), B2 and C1 (p=0.989), B1 and A2 (p=0.516), B1 and C1 (p=0.617), and A2 and C1 (p=0.997) did not reach statistical significance.

Table 7. ANOVA of LC by English language level (one-way ANOVA)

ANOVA-LC_mean							
Cases	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p	η^2	η^2_p
English_level	0.397	3	0.132	0.792	0.500	0.011	0.011
Residuals	35.428	212	0.167				

Note: type III sum of squares

Table 8. Results of post hoc (LSD) analysis to compare differences in LC between English language levels

Post hoc comparisons-English_level					
English level (I)	English level (J)	Mean difference	SE	t	p_{tukey}
B2	B1	0.068	0.075	0.907	0.801
	A2	-0.041	0.082	-0.498	0.959
	C1	-0.025	0.079	-0.314	0.989
B1	A2	-0.109	0.079	-1.376	0.516
	C1	-0.093	0.077	-1.217	0.617
A2	C1	0.016	0.083	0.192	0.997

Note: p-value adjusted for comparing a family of 4

The main objective of the study was to determine the relationship between the use of English-language media content and students' linguistic and CCs, and to examine the characteristics of these indicators by gender and language level. The study's results allow us to draw several important theoretical and practical conclusions. The descriptive statistics showed that students' overall levels of linguistic, media, and cultural competencies are high. This data indicates that English-language media resources are widely used in modern education and deeply embedded in students' learning experience. The results obtained from the gender perspective indicated that the differences between men and women were insignificant. Although female students had slightly higher scores on linguistic and media competence indicators, these differences were not pronounced. Although male students had slightly higher indicators of CC, the standard deviation suggests that levels within this group were not uniform. Thus, we can see that gender is not the main factor determining students' competencies.

Descriptive and variance analyses conducted by English language levels also yielded significant results. The results of the one-way ANOVA indicated no statistically significant differences in language proficiency indicators across English language levels (A2, B1, B2, C1). This result may contradict the initial expectation, but it can be explained by the current educational situation. If English language proficiency is based on formal test results, it may be closely related to students' self-assessments, experiences, and media-related activities. The results of the post hoc analysis also fully confirmed this conclusion, revealing that the differences between levels were not statistically significant.

The most important results of the study concerned the regression analysis. The constructed linear regression model indicated that the level of media content use plays a decisive role in predicting language proficiency. The level of media content use (ME_mean) was the strongest and most statistically significant predictor of language proficiency. This result confirms that the influence of media content on language development is not merely an additional factor but rather a main driving force. English-language films, TV series, social networks, video materials, and online platforms provide opportunities to expand learners' language experience and develop LC in a natural environment.

It is particularly noteworthy that the weekly time spent consuming English-language media content did not have a statistically significant effect on LC. This result suggests that the qualitative features, content, and purpose of media use are more important than its quantitative indicators. That is, it is likely that using meaningful, linguistically complex, and interactive media resources is more effective than passively consuming content for extended periods.

In the regression model, only the C1 level showed a statistically significant positive effect on LC. This result indicates that students who have reached a high level of language proficiency significantly strengthen their language skills and self-confidence. The lack of significance for levels A2 and B1 once again confirms that LC is closely related not only to the formal level but also to learning experience and media-based activities.

The findings of this study can be further understood through the lens of existing theoretical frameworks. The strong predictive effect of media content use on linguistic competence can be explained by theories of media influence that emphasize the role of meaningful, context-rich exposure in language acquisition. From this perspective, it is not merely the frequency of media consumption, but the quality and cognitive engagement with content that facilitates language development. This may also explain why the duration of media exposure did not show a significant effect in the present study.

In addition, the results align with the concept of intercultural communicative competence, which suggests that authentic media materials provide learners with access to real-life cultural contexts, social norms, and communicative practices. Through such exposure, learners can develop not only linguistic skills but also cultural awareness and sensitivity. Furthermore, the findings can be interpreted within the framework of digital literacy, where the ability to critically engage with digital content plays a key role in learning outcomes. Students who actively interact with media resources are more likely to develop both language proficiency and the skills necessary to navigate diverse cultural and informational environments.

The results indicate the importance of the purposeful and systematic integration of media content into the methodology of foreign language education. At the same time, future studies are suggested to include a deeper analysis of qualitative characteristics of media content, such as types, content complexity, and interactivity. Research in this direction offers an opportunity to develop effective pedagogical models that foster linguistic and cultural competencies.

The findings of this study have important implications for curriculum design, teacher training, and educational policy. In particular, the results suggest that media content should be integrated into English language curricula in a more systematic and purposeful way, with a focus on the quality and pedagogical relevance of materials rather than merely increasing exposure time. For curriculum developers, this implies incorporating media-based tasks that promote both linguistic and intercultural competences. For teachers, the findings highlight the importance of developing digital media literacy skills in order to effectively guide students in engaging with authentic content. At the policy level, the results support initiatives to strengthen digital literacy and to integrate media education into language-teaching standards in higher education.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the impact of media content on the development of linguistic and cultural competencies in English language learning among university students. The findings demonstrate that media use is a significant predictor of linguistic competence, indicating that students who actively engage with media resources tend to achieve higher levels of language proficiency. In contrast, the amount of time spent consuming media content did not show a statistically significant effect, suggesting that the quality and meaningful engagement with media is more important than the duration of exposure. Furthermore, students with higher levels of English proficiency, particularly at the C1 level, demonstrated significantly stronger linguistic competence. In relation to the research objectives, the results confirm that media content plays a crucial role in supporting both linguistic and cultural development, while the effectiveness of media use depends on qualitative factors such as relevance, interactivity, and cultural context. Importantly, this study contributes to the existing literature by clarifying that structured, purposeful engagement with media content is more influential than mere exposure, thereby addressing inconsistencies reported in prior research. The study also found no significant differences by gender, indicating that the influence of media content is relatively consistent across student groups.

The findings have important implications for English language education. They highlight the need for a more systematic and pedagogically guided integration of media content into curricula. In particular, teachers are encouraged to design structured media-based learning activities, such as critical analysis of audiovisual materials, guided discussions, and tasks focused on interpreting cultural meanings. Curriculum developers should incorporate media content as an integral component of course design, ensuring alignment with learning objectives and intercultural learning outcomes. In addition, integrating digital literacy as a core element of language education is essential to support students' ability to critically evaluate and effectively use media resources. Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study was conducted within a single institutional context, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. In addition, the use of self-reported questionnaire data may introduce response bias, and the cross-sectional design does not allow for the examination of changes over time or causal relationships.

Future research should address these limitations by employing longitudinal and experimental research designs to better understand the causal and developmental impact of media content on language learning. Further studies may also explore different types of media content, levels of interactivity, and instructional strategies, and involve more diverse samples across multiple educational settings. Such research would contribute to the development of more effective, culturally responsive, and digitally enriched models of English language teaching.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

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C : **C**onceptualization
M : **M**ethodology
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R : **R**esources
D : **D**ata Curation
O : Writing - **O**riginal Draft
E : Writing - Review & **E**diting
Vi : **Vi**sualization
Su : **Su**pervision
P : **P**roject administration
Fu : **Fu**nding acquisition

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Authors state no conflict of interest.

INFORMED CONSENT

We have obtained informed consent from all individuals included in this study.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

The research involving human participants was conducted in accordance with all relevant national regulations and institutional policies and followed the ethical principles of the Helsinki Declaration. Participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous, and all participants provided informed consent prior to participation. The study procedures were approved by the institutional ethics committee of Korkyt Ata Kyzylorda University.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The authors confirm that the data supporting the findings of this study are available within the article through tables, figures, and detailed analysis. Additional information related to the dataset can be obtained from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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