

EFL University instructors' Perspectives on Social Media's Influence on Student Writing Skill

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Abstract

In the digital age, social media has become an integral part of daily life exerting a significant influence on various aspects of our society including education. This study investigates the impact of social media on the writing skills of students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at universities in Saudi Arabia. The research focuses on the perspectives of EFL instructors regarding how social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, affect students' writing abilities. A quantitative research design was employed, using a descriptive-analytical approach with a questionnaire distributed to 100 EFL instructors from various universities. The study's findings suggest that social media can enhance student motivation, provide diverse opportunities for writing practice, and foster creativity. However, it also reveals challenges related to the informal nature of social media communication, which can negatively affect adherence to formal academic writing standards. A significant majority of respondents acknowledged the positive effects of social media in enhancing engagement and writing quality through interactive activities and peer feedback. Nevertheless, concerns were raised about the potential promotion of informal writing styles and the need for targeted teacher training to mitigate these challenges. The study concludes by emphasising the importance of balanced integration of social media into the curriculum, suggesting that educators receive specific training to leverage its benefits while addressing its limitations. This research contributes to understanding the role of social media in shaping language proficiency among EFL learners and offers insights into developing effective teaching strategies that align with contemporary digital trends.

Keywords: Social Media, EFL (English as a Foreign Language), Writing Skills, Language Proficiency, Educational Technology.

1. Introduction

In today's world social media has become a part of life for people all over the world. Its impact extends to influence aspects of society including education beyond communication and entertainment. In the domain of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) where writing proficiency holds importance, it is very essential to explore the effects of social media on student

writing. This research undergoes into the perspectives of EFL university instructors on how social media affects students' writing skills aiming to illuminate both the benefits and challenges presented by the study results. Writing serves as a tool for communication, academic achievement and professional development. The ability to illuminate thoughts through writing enables individuals to convey ideas, engage with written material and actively participate in dialogues. Hence instructors are constantly seeking approaches to cultivate and enhance students' writing abilities.

Social media platforms have become channels for communication and interaction in today's world. Students use written language in ways such as sharing tweets on Twitter, posting updates on Facebook or creating captions on Instagram. This informal style of communication differs from writing standards leading to questions about its impact on students' writing skills. EFL university instructors face the challenge of blending practices with digital trends as they teach English to non native speakers. Through their teaching experiences they offer insights into how students' writing skill develops with the use of media. This research paper aims to explore these insights by surveying EFL instructors at universities in Saudi Arabia. By examining their opinions on how social media influences students' writing abilities, this study seeks to uncover the role of platforms in shaping language proficiency among learners. Furthermore, it aims to suggest teaching approaches that harness the advantages of media while addressing the obstacles faced in enhancing English language education in today's context.

Research Hypotheses

1. Integrating social media platforms into the curriculum enhances EFL students' writing skills by increasing motivation, providing diverse writing opportunities, and fostering creativity.
2. Social media engagement positively affects EFL students' writing quality and engagement by providing opportunities for interactive activities and peer feedback, despite the potential for promoting informal writing styles.
3. EFL students who frequently use social media for writing practice face challenges in adhering to formal academic writing standards, indicating a need for targeted teacher training.

Research Questions

1. How does the integration of social media platforms, such as YouTube videos and class blogs, influence EFL students' motivation, creativity, and opportunities to practise writing in various settings?
2. In what ways do social media platforms affect EFL students' writing quality, engagement, and style, particularly regarding the balance between informal and formal writing practices?
3. What challenges do EFL students face when transitioning from informal writing styles on social media to formal academic writing, and how can teacher training mitigate these challenges?

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Impact of Social Media on Communication Today

Social media platforms have completely transformed the way we communicate in the era. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and TikTok have not just changed how people interact but have also brought in ways of writing and communication styles. This section explores the influence of media on communication by examining its effects on language usage, writing norms and overall communication practices.

2.1.1 Transformation in Communication

Social media platforms enable communication allowing users to quickly share their thoughts, ideas and updates. This immediacy has given rise to communication standards and styles. According to Zheng et al in (2017) social media has established a "public," where individuals can engage in conversations, exchange content and interact with a wide audience. This shift from forms of communication to interactions has significant implications for language usage and writing approaches.

2.1.2 Emergence of New Writing Styles

The advent of social media has introduced various unconventional writing styles that deviate from traditional norms. For instance platforms like Twitter have popularised briefs. Often fragmented forms of communication due to their character limit (Miller, 2016).

Instagram and TikTok focus more on content giving importance to text which is usually presented in a simple or stylish way (Marwick, 2015). These modern approaches challenge writing norms by valuing conciseness, immediacy and visual attractiveness over structured writing.

The rise of language and abbreviations is an impact of social media on writing. Social platforms often promote the use of shortcuts and slang for effective communication. Studies have revealed that platforms like Facebook and Twitter are filled with acronyms ("LOL," "BRB") and informal language that may not follow grammar or spelling rules (Crystal, 2011). This shift towards writing has sparked debates about its effects on formal writing skills especially, in academic and professional settings.

Emojis and GIFs have become aspects of communication offering a new means to express emotions and feelings that traditional text may not capture fully (Miller, 2016). Research conducted by Marwick (2015) emphasises how these visual elements complement messages by adding depth and emotional context.

Emojis have the potential to improve communication by providing cues. There are concerns about how they affect formal writing and impact students grasp of standard writing norms.

The influence of media extends to language learning serving as both a resource and a challenge. While social media can expose learners to language usage and facilitate interactions with speakers it also presents difficulties due to its informal language style. This mix of language and new writing approaches on platforms can make it challenging for students to navigate between casual online communication and formal academic writing.

2.2 Social Media and Language Learning

Social media has become a part of our lives influencing how we learn languages. Studies show that social media platforms offer both advantages and challenges, for language learners. This section delves into the impact of media on language learning discussing how it provides practice opportunities, exposure to language and interactions with native speakers. It also touches on concerns about the language used on these platforms.

2.2.1 Language Practice Opportunities

Platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram present a variety of ways for learners to practise a language. Research by Suswati et al (2019) suggests that these platforms allow users to engage in real time conversations in contexts using the target language. For instance learners can join discussions, share updates and participate in written exchanges. Regular informal practice like this can help strengthen language skills and boost confidence in communication.

Furthermore studies indicate that social media encourages collaborative learning. Lemon, et al (2019) showcases how language learners utilise these platforms for group projects, resource sharing and feedback, from peers. Engaging with others in the media not only helps learners practice but also exposes them to a variety of dialects, slang and informal expressions which ultimately aids in building a deeper understanding of the language.

2.2.2 Exposure to Real Language Usage

A benefit of media is its role in exposing learners to genuine language usage. According to Purvis et al (2020) social media platforms mirror natural language use by incorporating expressions, slang terms and specific references. This exposure assists learners in grasping how language is utilised in contexts and enhances their ability to comprehend and produce language.

Moreover platforms like Twitter and Instagram provide up to the minute updates and discussions on events, trends and cultural happenings. As highlighted by Ansari & Khan, (2020) this lively environment rich with context allows learners to engage with contemporary language usage and cultural references that may not be typically covered in conventional language learning materials.

2.2.3. Interacting with Native Speakers

The media offers avenues for language learners to engage with native speakers. Platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and language exchange apps facilitate connections between learners and native speakers from parts of the globe. According to research conducted by Aloraini & Cardoso (2020) these interactions enable learners to hone their skills, receive feedback and gain insights into cultural subtleties. In language exchange groups individuals can connect with language buddies to practise together which can be very helpful. Research conducted by Pitaloka et al in 2020, suggests that these interactions can enhance learners' speaking skills and precision through real life language practice and cultural sharing experiences.

2.3 writing skills in EFL education

The significance of writing skills in EFL education Writing skills play a role in EFL education as they are vital for language proficiency. Proficient writing allows students to articulate ideas, clearly construct arguments and showcase their grasp of the language. According to Lundstrom

& Baker (2009) writing in EFL environments serves not as a means of communication but as a tool for academic evaluation and professional advancement. Strong writing abilities empower students to engage in discussions, partake in research and excel in global settings.

Apart from scenarios proficient writing skills are advantageous in social spheres. As highlighted by Harmer (2007) the capacity to write effectively can boost students' job prospects and career advancements by enabling them to produce reports, proposals and other business documents. Therefore fostering writing skills is an objective of EFL teaching.

2.3.1 Difficulties Encountered by EFL Learners

EFL learners face obstacles while honing their writing capabilities. One notable challenge is the disparity between formal writing styles. Many EFL learners tend to use language in conversations, which can impede their ability to write formally. The difficulty is increased by variations in writing norms across languages encompassing syntax, grammar and text organisation (Kroll, 2003).

Another hurdle arises from the ability to write fluently and coherently. EFL learners often struggle with structuring their thoughts and ideas in a manner, which can hinder their ability to produce organised texts (Weigle, 2002). Challenges like limited grasp of grammar rules and unfamiliarity with various text styles further compound these issues. Moreover EFL students may encounter obstacles concerning feedback and revising. Effective writing guidance necessitates prompt and constructive feedback; however students often find it challenging to comprehend and implement feedback due to their limited language proficiency or lack of familiarity with the revision process (Ferris, 2003).

2.3.2 Approaches Used by Instructors

To tackle these obstacles EFL instructors employ strategies. One prevalent method involves incorporating teaching, writing norms and genres. By offering instructions and examples to students instructors can assist them in grasping the requirements for types of writing tasks (Hyland, 2003). Furthermore structured writing assignments and guided practice sessions can aid students in enhancing their writing abilities (Graham & Perin 2007).

Engaging in peer review sessions and collaborative writing tasks also proves effective. According to Sharma (2019) receiving feedback from peers enables students to critically revise their work and make improvements. Tasks that involve writing encourage students to collaborate and exchange ideas. Enhance their writing abilities within a supportive setting.

Integrating technology into writing instruction can further enrich the learning experience. Utilising tools, like word processors, grammar checkers and online writing platforms provides students with resources and assistance. Research conducted by Zheng et al. (2017) suggests that incorporating technology into writing instruction can enhance students writing skills through feedback

2.3.3. The Impact of Social Media on Writing Proficiency

The influence of media on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' writing proficiency is a topic garnering increased attention. On one hand social media platforms offer opportunities for practising writing skills and exposure to language usage. Platforms such as Twitter and Facebook

provide spaces for writing practice that can aid in developing fluency and engaging with language trends. Conversely the casual nature of communication on social media presents challenges for writing development. The use of abbreviations slang terms and non standard grammar, in social media posts may contribute to the decline of writing skills (Hedayati et al , 2018). Switching from casual to writing settings can be tough, for students, which may affect their capacity to create professional content .

To address these difficulties teachers can make use of media in a manner. For instance educators could create tasks that involve media for practice while highlighting the distinctions between informal and formal writing tones. By instructing students on how to utilise media effectively teachers can aid them in honing adaptable writing abilities that are suited for both online and scholarly environments. collaboration.

2.4 Research on the Impact of Social Media on Writing Skills

The impact of media on the writing skills of students has become a topic of growing interest among scholars. An increasing amount of research is delving into how social media affects both the improvement and decline of writing abilities. This section delves into studies that shed light on how social media can have an impact on writing skills presenting both opportunities and challenges.

2.4.1 Positive Effects of Social Media on Writing Skills

Studies indicate that social media can offer opportunities for writing practice and enhance literacy skills through interactive and collaborative methods. For instance Zheng et al. (2017) point out that social media platforms can be tools for engaging students in writing activities. Their research underscores how platforms like Facebook and Twitter facilitate writing tasks, peer feedback and discussions that contribute to enhancing students' writing proficiency. These platforms enable students to write for audiences leading to increased motivation and engagement with writing assignments.

Likewise research conducted by AlShehri (2022) discovered that social media platforms provide students with chances to practice writing in settings ranging from blog posts to more formal academic exchanges. The interactive nature of media permits students to receive feedback from peers and educators creating a vibrant learning atmosphere. This feedback loop can assist students in honing their writing abilities and adjusting their writing style to situations.

2.4.2. Challenges and Considerations

Despite these advantages there are concerns surrounding the influence of the media on traditional writing skills. Ghanney et al (2017) highlights that the casual nature of social media communication, characterised by abbreviations, slang and emojis can have an impact on students' academic writing. According to Coiros research students who frequently interact with the media may develop writing patterns that prioritise conciseness and informality over grammar and formal structure. This transition can result in challenges when moving to writing settings that adherence to established writing norms.

Furthermore Ansari & Khan study (2020) delves into how media's focus on speed and immediacy could hinder students' capacity to engage in the revision processes crucial for academic writing.

Thorne suggests that the swift and often superficial nature of media exchanges might cause students to underestimate the significance of editing and profound analysis—skills crucial for producing top notch academic work.

2.4.3. Balancing Opportunities with Challenges

The findings indicate a necessity for instructors to find a ground between leveraging the advantages of media while tackling its potential downsides. As, per Zheng et al,(2017),it is suggested that integrating media into writing lessons can be beneficial when done with care. Teachers have the opportunity to create tasks that leverage media to improve writing abilities all while highlighting the distinctions between professional writing environments. By incorporating media in a manner that supplements writing training teachers can assist students in honing adaptable writing skills that align with both online and academic norms.

3. Methods

This study adopted a quantitative approach for data collection, involving the systematic collection and statistical analysis of numerical data. It utilised a descriptive-analytical research design, enabling the researcher to precisely describe a specific behaviour within a particular context and then analyse and interpret the findings.

3.1 Sampling

The researcher used a purposive sampling technique, also known as judgement sampling, which involves deliberately selecting participants based on specific qualities they possess. This non-random method does not rely on underlying theories or a predetermined number of participants. Essentially, the researcher identifies what information is needed and seeks out individuals who are knowledgeable or experienced and willing to provide the required information. In describing purposive sampling Palinkas, et al, (2003) suggested that the aim is to light up the study questions and the main concern here is information richness not representation. For this reason, the present field research used purposive sampling for the target group, instructors who teach English at different universities in Saudi Arabia to investigate their points of view about Social Media's Influence on Student Writing Skill. Thus, the sample universities were purposefully selected to cover governmental and private universities. The total number of the teachers in the selected universities is 100.

3.2 Tools

The questionnaire contained fourteen questions , which covered the research questions and the hypotheses; it contained a short introduction about the purpose of the questionnaire (APPENDIX A).It examined three key dimensions:

Effectiveness of Social Media Resources for Writing Skills

Influence of social media on Writing Skills

Difficulties Linked to Social Media Use

After the researcher's validation and the constructive suggestions of three assistant and associate professors, the teachers' questionnaire was subjected to rewording, omissions of unnecessary redundancies and clarity scrutiny. The refereed version was believed to be valid and appropriate

for the objectives and hypotheses of the study.

To test reliability, the questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 10 EFL teachers not involved in the main study. Their responses were analysed using Cronbach's alpha statistical test to measure internal consistency. The overall reliability coefficient was found to exceed 0.7, indicating acceptable reliability of responses across all items.

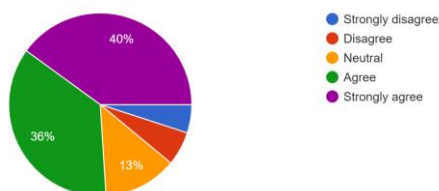
A five-point Likert scale was used for respondents to indicate their level of agreement/disagreement with each statement. This closed-response format was intended to provide reliable quantitative data for descriptive statistical analysis to identify key insights. The questionnaire served as a valid and reliable instrument to collect perceptions of interest from the target sample of university teachers teaching English as a foreign language. The descriptive-analytical approach was applied with SPSS statistical software to obtain accurate results to clearly identify the research problem.

4. Discussion of Results

4.1 Effectiveness of Social Media Resources for Writing Skills

1. Social media platforms offer resources for enhancing students writing skills, for example asking students to take notes from selected youtube videos.

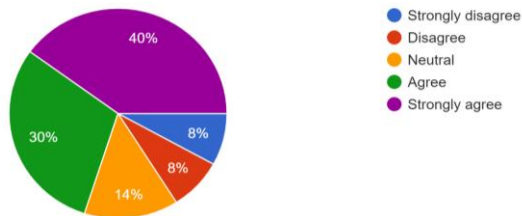
100 responses



The survey results show that a significant majority of respondents (76% combining "Strongly Agree" and "Agree") believe that social media platforms offer valuable resources for enhancing students' writing skills. This supports Hypothesis 1, as it suggests that instructors recognize the potential of social media to motivate students and provide diverse opportunities for writing practice.

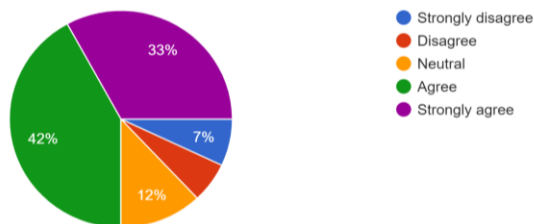
- **Increased Motivation:** The high percentage of agreement (76%) implies that integrating social media into the curriculum may motivate students by making learning more engaging and relevant. The use of platforms like YouTube for note-taking is seen as an innovative approach that could increase students' interest in writing tasks.
- **Diverse Writing Opportunities:** The variety of social media tools available can provide different contexts for writing practice. For example, students might engage in different types of writing, such as summarising videos, which can enhance their skills in various formats and styles.
- **Fostering Creativity:** The creative aspect of using social media, like crafting blog posts or comments, could also foster creativity in students' writing. The positive response in the survey indicates that teachers see these platforms as beneficial for encouraging a more creative approach to writing.

2. Social media have an impact on students' engagement with writing assignments.
100 responses



- Supporting Hypothesis 1, a combined total of 70% (40% strongly agree + 30% agree) of respondents agree that social media impacts students' engagement with writing assignments. This suggests that integrating social media could enhance motivation and provide diverse opportunities for writing practice, thereby supporting this hypothesis
- Again, 84% (40% strongly agree + 30% agree+ 14% neutral) of the respondents agree to some extent that social media affects engagement with writing assignments. This could indicate that the interactive nature of social media helps enhance engagement, aligning with the hypothesis.
- Considering hypothesis 3, the 16% of respondents who disagree (8% disagree + 8% strongly disagree) might reflect some awareness or concern that social media could negatively affect adherence to formal academic standards. However, the data strongly leans towards a positive impact on engagement, suggesting this is a less supported hypothesis based on these results alone.

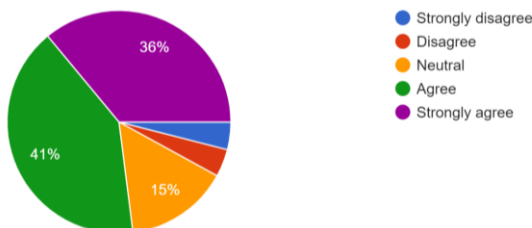
3- Integrating media into the curriculum boosts students' motivation to write.
100 responses



- A combined total of 75% (33% strongly agree + 42% agree) of respondents believe that integrating media (including social media) into the curriculum boosts students' motivation to write. This strongly supports Hypothesis 1, as it indicates that the use of media in the curriculum can indeed enhance motivation, which is a key factor in improving writing skills.
- Also, The results indirectly support Hypothesis 2. If media integration boosts motivation, it could lead to more engagement in writing tasks, which aligns with the idea that social media engagement can positively affect writing quality and engagement.

4.2 Influence of social media on Writing Skills

4- Students' use of media help them practice writing in various settings.
100 responses



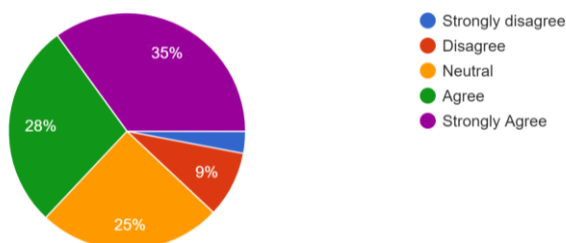
A combined total of 77% (36% strongly agree + 41% agree) of respondents believe that students' use of media helps them practise writing in various settings. This strongly supports Hypothesis 1, as it suggests that integrating social media into the curriculum provides diverse writing opportunities and potentially fosters creativity, thereby enhancing writing skills.

The high level of agreement (77%) also supports Hypothesis 2. The data suggests that social media engagement through various media helps students practise writing in different contexts, which could enhance writing quality and engagement.

Hypothesis 3: EFL students who frequently use social media for writing practice face challenges in adhering to formal academic writing standards, indicating a need for targeted teacher training.

The 8% of respondents (6% disagree + 2% strongly disagree) who do not believe that media use helps with writing practice might reflect a concern about the quality or formality of writing skills developed through social media. However, this is a small minority, and the data primarily reflects a positive view of social media's role in writing practice rather than challenges with formal standards.

5- Students who are active on media tend to become more creative in their writing.
100 responses



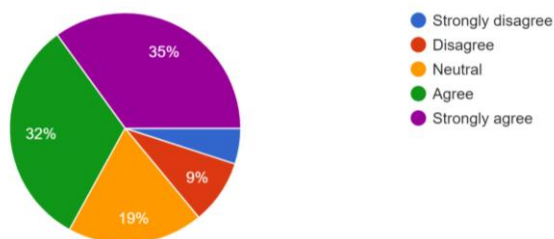
A combined total of 63% (35% strongly agree + 28% agree) of respondents believe that students who are active in the media tend to become more creative in their writing. This strongly supports Hypothesis 1, particularly the aspect of fostering creativity. It indicates that active engagement with media platforms may encourage creative expression, a key component of enhancing overall writing skills.

Hypothesis 2: Social media engagement positively affects EFL students' writing quality and engagement by providing opportunities for interactive activities and peer feedback, despite the potential for promoting informal writing styles.

While the survey results do not directly address the quality of writing or peer feedback, the positive response regarding increased creativity can be aligned with Hypothesis 2. Creativity can enhance engagement and the diversity of writing styles, indirectly supporting the idea that social media engagement could positively affect writing quality and engagement. A study by Grainger et al. (2006) demonstrates that creative writing tasks enhance engagement by invoking personal expression and imaginative exploration.

6- Students' writing quality has improved due to their engagement with social media platforms.

100 responses



A combined total of 67% (35% strongly agree + 32% agree) of respondents believe that students' writing quality has improved due to their engagement with social media platforms. This provides support for Hypothesis 1, suggesting that integrating social media into the curriculum could help improve writing skills through increased motivation and diverse opportunities for writing.

Hypothesis 2: Social media engagement positively affects EFL students' writing quality and engagement by providing opportunities for interactive activities and peer feedback, despite the potential for promoting informal writing styles.

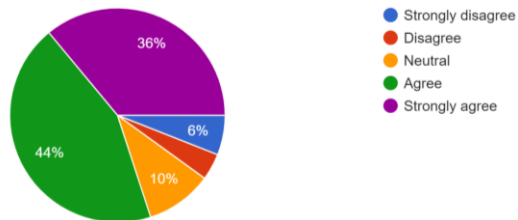
The high level of agreement (67%) directly supports Hypothesis 2. This data suggests that engagement with social media platforms is perceived to positively affect students' writing quality. The opportunity for interactive and diverse writing activities on social media aligns well with this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3: EFL students who frequently use social media for writing practice face challenges in adhering to formal academic writing standards, indicating a need for targeted teacher training.

The 14% of respondents (9% disagree + 5% strongly disagree) who do not believe that social media engagement improves writing quality could suggest some concerns about the effects of social media on formal writing standards. According to a study by Pitaloka, et al (2020). , the frequent use of informal language on social media platforms, such as slang, abbreviations, and emoticons, can bleed into academic writing. This concern is echoed by the 14% of respondents in the survey who disagree that social media improves writing quality, possibly due to fears that these informal habits could undermine the development of formal writing skills.

7- Social media has an impact on students' writing style.

100 responses



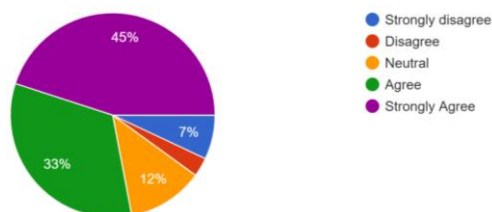
While hypothesis 1 focuses more broadly on writing skills, motivation, and creativity, the high agreement (80% combining "strongly agree" and "agree") that social media impacts students' writing style suggests that social media might indeed contribute to fostering creativity in writing styles, thereby supporting Hypothesis 1.

The survey results strongly support Hypothesis 2, as a significant majority (80%) agree that social media has an impact on writing style. This indicates that social media engagement influences writing style, which could encompass both improvements in engagement and potential shifts towards more informal styles, depending on the nature of the impact discussed by respondents.

The agreement that social media impacts writing style could also suggest that there are potential challenges with formal writing standards. Given that 10% are neutral and a total of 10% disagree (6% disagree + 4% strongly disagree), there may be concerns about the impact on formal academic writing. This could imply that while many see a positive impact, a significant number also see a potential negative impact, supporting the need for targeted teacher training as outlined in Hypothesis 3.

8- Social media provides valuable opportunities for peer feedback on writing assignments.

100 responses

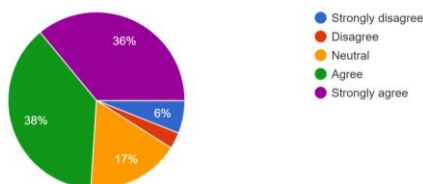


A combined total of 78% (45% strongly agree + 33% agree) of respondents believe that social media provides valuable opportunities for peer feedback on writing assignments. This strongly supports Hypothesis 1, suggesting that social media integration facilitates diverse writing opportunities and enhances student motivation and creativity through peer interactions.

Hypothesis 2: Social media engagement positively affects EFL students' writing quality and engagement by providing opportunities for interactive activities and peer feedback, despite the potential for promoting informal writing styles. On the other hand, the results strongly support

Hypothesis 2, with a significant majority recognizing the value of peer feedback opportunities provided through social media. This suggests that social media engagement is perceived to improve both writing quality and student engagement, aligning well with the hypothesis.

9- Social media tools offer opportunities for interactive and engaging writing activities in my classes. For example, I am building a class blog w...cs of interest while other students add comments.
100 responses



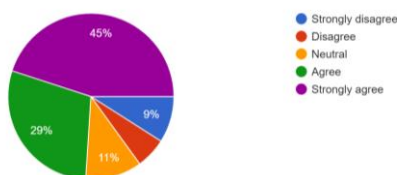
A combined total of 74% (38% strongly agree + 36% agree) of respondents believe that social media tools offer opportunities for interactive and engaging writing activities in their classes, such as through a class blog. This strongly supports Hypothesis 1, as it demonstrates that social media can enhance motivation and provide diverse opportunities for creativity in writing.

Hypothesis 2: Social media engagement positively affects EFL students' writing quality and engagement by providing opportunities for interactive activities and peer feedback, despite the potential for promoting informal writing styles.

This survey result also supports Hypothesis 2, with a large majority affirming that social media facilitates engaging and interactive writing activities. The ability to interact through social media likely enhances students' engagement and the quality of their writing by incorporating peer feedback and collaborative learning.

4.3 Difficulties Linked to Social Media Use

10- Social media promotes informal writing styles that are not suitable for academic purposes.
100 responses



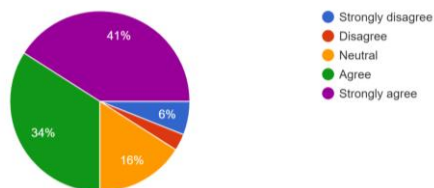
- Although a significant majority (74% combining "strongly agree" and "agree") believes that social media promotes informal writing styles not suitable for academic purposes, this response contradicts the assumption in Hypothesis 1 that social media integration universally enhances writing skills. The promotion of informal writing styles might inhibit the development of formal academic writing skills, posing a potential conflict with the curriculum's objectives.
- According to Turner and Hicks (2011), the frequent use of casual language, abbreviations, and internet slang on platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook can negatively affect students' formal writing. These platforms often encourage brevity and spontaneity, which

may conflict with the structured and analytical nature of academic writing. This aligns with the concerns of the 74% of survey respondents who believe that social media promotes informal writing styles not suitable for academic purposes.

- Davies and Merchant (2007) suggest that engaging in informal writing on social media can help students develop a flexible approach to writing, which could be beneficial in adapting to different academic and professional contexts. However, this view contrasts with the 74% of respondents who perceive social media as promoting non-academic writing styles, highlighting the need for a balanced approach in integrating these tools into the classroom.
- The concerns of the 74% of respondents reflect a broader apprehension within the educational community, emphasising the need for carefully designed interventions that balance the benefits of social media engagement with the demands of academic rigour.

This response strongly supports the caveat in Hypothesis 2 that acknowledges the potential for social media to promote informal writing styles. While 74% agree that social media encourages informal styles, this can be seen both as a challenge to academic writing standards and an opportunity for fostering more relaxed and creative forms of expression.

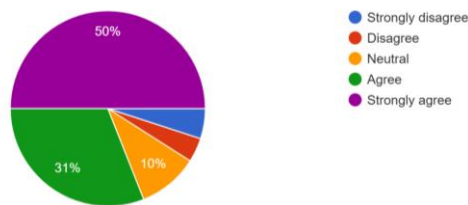
11- Many students find it challenging to switch from the informal writing style used on social media to the formal standards expected in academic settings.
100 responses



- The majority of respondents (75% combining "strongly agree" and "agree") indicate that it is challenging for students to switch from the informal writing styles used on social media to formal academic standards. This challenges Hypothesis 1, as the integration of social media might not uniformly enhance writing skills if it hinders students' ability to adapt to formal writing expectations.
- To address the challenge that students face when switching from informal writing styles on social media to formal academic standards, instructors could implement structured activities that explicitly focus on the differences between informal and formal writing. Research suggests that such targeted instructional interventions can effectively bridge the gap between these writing styles. Research by Godley et al. (2015) highlights the importance of explicit instruction in different writing registers. By analysing social media posts and identifying their informal features, such as slang, abbreviations, and conversational tone, students can better understand the characteristics that differentiate informal writing from formal academic writing. This approach is supported by the work of Vygotsky (1978), who emphasised the role of explicit, guided learning in helping students internalise new concepts, such as formal writing conventions. This response both supports and challenges Hypothesis 2. It supports the part of the hypothesis acknowledging the

potential promotion of informal writing styles. However, if these styles conflict with academic standards, this might limit the positive effects on writing quality in formal academic contexts, posing a significant challenge. On the other hand, this result strongly supports Hypothesis 3, with a substantial majority acknowledging the challenges students face in switching from informal to formal writing standards due to their engagement with social media. This suggests a significant need for targeted teacher training to help students navigate these challenges.

12- Social media usage may influence students' grammar and spelling practices in writing.
100 responses

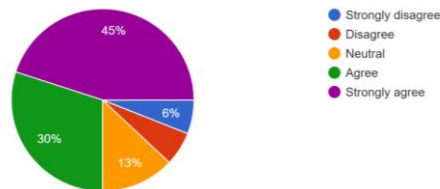


While integrating social media into the curriculum may boost motivation and creativity, the fact that 81% of respondents (50% strongly agree and 31% agree) believe that social media usage could negatively impact grammar and spelling practices challenges the notion that it effectively enhances overall writing skills. This finding suggests that although social media provides diverse opportunities for writing, it may also encourage habits that are unsuitable for academic writing.

Hypothesis 2 posits that social media engagement positively influences EFL students' writing quality and engagement by offering interactive activities and peer feedback, even though it may promote informal writing styles. The survey results partially support Hypothesis 2, acknowledging that while social media engagement enhances interaction and engagement, it can also lead to the adoption of relaxed grammar and spelling practices. This highlights the dual nature of social media's impact—boosting engagement while potentially compromising formal writing standards.

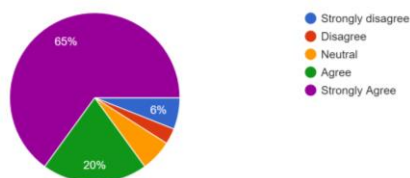
Furthermore, the survey results strongly support Hypothesis 3, with a significant majority perceiving social media usage as negatively affecting grammar and spelling. This suggests that students may struggle to adapt informal writing habits acquired through social media to formal academic standards, underscoring the need for targeted instructional interventions to address these challenges in teaching.

13- Relying heavily on media for writing practice might cause students to overlook details when it comes to academic assignments.
100 responses



While social media may boost motivation and creativity, 75% of respondents (combining "strongly agree" and "agree") believe that heavy reliance on social media for writing practice could cause students to neglect important details in their academic assignments. This suggests a potential downside, where the thoroughness and attention to detail necessary for academic writing might be compromised, thereby challenging the assumption of an unqualified positive impact proposed in Hypothesis 1. Additionally, this finding challenges Hypothesis 2 by suggesting that, although social media can engage students and offer interactive learning opportunities, it might also lead to a lack of attention to detail in academic writing. This could diminish the overall quality of writing, despite the benefits of increased engagement and peer feedback. The survey results provide strong support for Hypothesis 3, indicating that an over-reliance on media for writing practice may lead to overlooking essential details, which is a critical issue when adhering to formal academic writing standards. This underscores the necessity for targeted teacher training to address these specific challenges and improve students' ability to maintain academic rigor in their writing.

14- Teachers should receive training on how to effectively use social media to enhance students' writing skills.
100 responses



The strong consensus (85% combining "strongly agree" and "agree") that teachers should receive training on effectively using social media in writing instruction supports Hypothesis 1. This suggests that with appropriate training, educators could enhance the positive effects of social media on writing skills, such as boosting motivation, providing diverse writing opportunities, and fostering creativity.

The widespread belief in the need for teacher training also aligns with Hypothesis 2. It highlights the benefits of social media in writing education while acknowledging that training could help address challenges, such as the promotion of informal writing styles, thereby ensuring that social media is used to effectively enhance writing quality and student engagement.

Furthermore, this survey result directly supports Hypothesis 3. The recognition that teachers require specific training to effectively integrate social media into writing instruction indicates an awareness of the difficulties students may encounter in meeting formal writing standards due to informal writing habits developed on social media. This underscores the importance of targeted training to assist teachers in guiding students to reconcile their informal social media writing practices with the formal demands of academic writing.

5. Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight the dual impact of social media on EFL students' writing skills. On the positive side, social media platforms are seen as valuable tools that can enhance motivation, creativity, and engagement in writing activities. A significant majority of the

instructors surveyed agreed that integrating social media into the curriculum could provide diverse opportunities for students to practise writing in various contexts, thereby improving their overall writing proficiency. This supports the hypothesis that social media engagement positively influences writing quality by providing interactive activities and peer feedback. However, the study also reveals significant challenges. A considerable proportion of respondents expressed concerns that the informal writing styles prevalent on social media could undermine students' ability to adhere to formal academic writing standards. This suggests a need for targeted teacher training to help students navigate the differences between informal and formal writing and to maintain academic rigour. Furthermore, the study underscores the necessity of carefully balancing the use of social media in educational settings, leveraging its benefits to enhance engagement and creativity while mitigating its potential downsides. The conclusion emphasises the importance of continued research into effective teaching strategies that integrate digital tools while maintaining the standards of formal academic writing. Future studies should explore additional methods to address the challenges identified and further investigate the long-term effects of social media on language proficiency and academic writing skills among EFL learners.

6. Recommendations

- a) **Implement Structured Integration of Social Media in Writing Curriculum:** Educators should carefully integrate social media platforms into the writing curriculum in a structured manner. This could involve creating specific tasks that highlight formal writing styles while allowing students to explore creative and informal expressions. By using platforms like blogs, YouTube, and Twitter in a controlled and guided way, students can enhance their writing skills in various contexts while maintaining a balance between creativity and adherence to academic standards.
- b) **Provide Targeted Teacher Training on Social Media Use:** To address concerns regarding the impact of informal writing styles from social media on academic standards, institutions should offer targeted teacher training. This training should focus on equipping instructors with strategies to help students navigate the transition between informal social media writing and formal academic writing. Teachers should be able to create exercises that differentiate these styles and guide students in applying appropriate language for different contexts.
- c) **Balance Engagement with Formal Writing Development:** While social media can boost student engagement and creativity, educators must ensure that students do not neglect essential aspects of formal academic writing. Assignments should be designed to balance the informal nature of social media with the structured demands of academic writing. This can be achieved by incorporating reflective tasks that encourage students to critically assess the differences between informal online communication and academic writing, ensuring academic rigor is maintained.

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APPENDIX A

EFL University Instructors' perspectives on the Influence of social media on Student Writing Abilities

Thank you for taking part in our study. Your input will aid in our understanding of how social media affect students' writing skills within the EFL domain. Please share your thoughts on each statement based on your experiences and observations. The survey employs a Likert scale with options ranging from "Disagree" to "Agree".

University/ College Name _____

1. Social media platforms offer resources for enhancing students' writing skills, for example asking students to take notes from selected youtube videos.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
2. Social media have an impact on students' engagement with writing assignments.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
3. Integrating media into the curriculum boosts students' motivation to write.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
4. Students' use of media help them practice writing in various settings
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
5. Students who are active in the media tend to become more creative in their writing.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
6. Students' writing quality has improved due to their engagement with social media platforms.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree

- Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
7. Social media has an impact on students' writing style.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 8. Social media provides valuable opportunities for peer feedback on writing assignments.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 9. Social media tools offer opportunities for interactive and engaging writing activities in my classes. For example, I am building a class blog where students can take turns writing posts on topics of interest while other students add comments.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 10. Social media promotes informal writing styles that are not suitable for academic purposes.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 11. Many students find it challenging to switch from the informal writing style used on social media to the formal standards expected in academic settings.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 12. Social media usage may influence students' grammar and spelling practices in writing.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 13. Relying heavily on media for writing practice might cause students to overlook details when it comes to academic assignments.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 14. Teachers should receive training on how to effectively use social media to enhance students' writing skills.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree