



# An Analysis on the Use of Social Media Platforms to Enhancing Writing Skills Among Higher Education Students in University of Mataram

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**Abstract:** Writing skills include improving critical thinking skills, deepening understanding of material, developing communication skills, and improving overall self-esteem. Writing helps to hone their analytical, synthesizing, and evaluating skills, and trains them to convey ideas systematically and effectively. The research aimed to explore students' experiences and attitudes towards learning to employ social media websites as tools for developing their writing skills with particular focus on vocabulary enhancement, coherence, and grammaticality. This research used a case study design, the student's perception of social media utilization was obtained by using a set of questionnaires and interviews. Qualitative research method was adopted, and purposive sampling was utilized to enlist 15 undergraduate students who were actively using social media for writing-related activities. This research specifically analyzes the role of social media platforms such as Twitter/X, Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok as tools to support students in enhancing their English proficiency, particularly in writing. The data analysis followed the interactive model involving the three main stages : data reduction, data display, and verification. The findings revealed that the students actively used social media platforms to enhance their writing in English. The high frequency of social media used, with 53.3% of students spending more than three hours daily on these platforms primarily for learning purposes, demonstrates the observational learning process in action. This research reveals positive perspective towards the use of social media, distinct platform preferences that align with different aspects of the theoretical framework. Instagram emerges as the most popular platform (40%), followed by Twitter/X (26.7%), TikTok (13.3%), and Facebook (13.3%). The students frequently use platforms such as Instagram, Twitter/X, TikTok, and Facebook for writing-related activities. Instagram was the most commonly used platform, followed by Twitter/X. These platforms are preferred because of their interactive and visual nature, which provides opportunities for both creative expression and peer engagement.

**Keywords:** English Writing Skills, Social Media, Language Learning, Higher Education.

## Introduction

Social media has become an integral part of everyday life in this digital era (Abdel-Aziz, et al., 2016). They serve not only as communication tools but also as platforms for sharing information, collaborating, and building social networks (Okonkwo & Awad, 2023). The development of social media has brought about significant changes in the way humans interact and communicate (Azzaakiyah, 2023). The concept of social

media-based learning refers to the use of social media platforms as tools to support the learning process. In this context, social media is not only used as a means to convey information but also as a space to build active and participatory learning communities (Rahman, 2021).

One of the key potentials of social media in education lies in its ability to promote student engagement through interactive and collaborative learning (Ansari & Khan, 2020). Features such as comment sections, group chats, hashtags, and user-

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generated content allow students to express their ideas, provide feedback to peers, and participate in discussions beyond the classroom (Magnifico, et al., 2018). Some studies have highlighted various ways in which social media can be utilized in the educational context. For example, According to Junco *et al.* (2011), the use of social media platforms like Twitter/X can increase student engagement in class discussions, facilitate collaboration among students, and improve understanding of taught concepts. Studies also highlight that the use of blogs, discussion forums, and specific social media groups can increase motivation to learn and student engagement in the learning process.

According to Smith and Brown (2022) The platform's personalized content algorithm further supports independent learning by recommending videos that match the user's proficiency level and interests. These platforms not only provide accessible and engaging resources but also promote self-directed and interactive learning, which is essential in developing English skills independently.

The role of social media in modern society is significant, as these platforms have become the primary source of information, entertainment, and social interaction for millions of people worldwide. The impact of social media has also been the subject of intense debate, with some people concerned about the spread of fake information, misuse of personal data, and negative effects on mental health and interpersonal relationships Shahbaznezhad *et al.* (2021). According to Alharthi *et al.* (2020), the presence of social media enables users to engage in a wide range of online activities, including sharing personal experiences, accessing information, and building communities based on shared interests.

Beyond brevity, Twitter/X also supports critical thinking and reflection through its thread feature, where users can connect multiple tweets to develop a longer argument or narrative. This enables students to engage in structured writing, presenting ideas step by step in a coherent flow (Anggraini, et al., 2023). One pertinent study is by Zeng and Gopez (2025), which reviews the use of TikTok as a teaching tool in applied writing courses in China. The study discusses how TikTok's short-form video format encourages students to engage in concise and purposeful writing, enhancing their ability to convey messages effectively within limited time frames.

Instagram, originally designed as a photo-sharing platform, has evolved into a multifaceted social media tool that enables users to create content through images, videos, captions, and interactive features. One of the most direct connections between Instagram and writing development lies in the caption field, where users are encouraged to describe, narrate, or express thoughts

related to their visual content. Crafting effective captions requires users to practice descriptive and expressive writing, often with attention to tone, audience engagement, and clarity skills that parallel those taught in formal writing instruction (Maulana, et. al., 2023). Facebook, as one of the most established and widely used social networking platforms, provides users with diverse opportunities for written communication. Through status updates, users are encouraged to share thoughts, experiences, or opinions in written form, which fosters the practice of narrative and reflective writing (Halijah & Alpiyana, 2022).

Many studies have identified negative correlations between the amount of time spent on social media and students' academic performance (Gianchiglia, et al., 2018). Constant exposure to notifications, online distractions, and irrelevant content can reduce students' concentration, productivity, and retention of learning material Suherdi (2021). Additionally, the habit of multitasking switching between academic tasks and social media use has been linked to lower academic outcomes and decreased cognitive efficiency Rahmawati et al. (2020).

Social media bridges the gap between formal and informal learning. Students can access educational content anytime, interact with educators beyond the classroom, and follow subject-specific communities that extend their learning. This flexibility supports lifelong learning and helps learners personalize their educational journey. Manca and Ranieri (2016) showed that students who used Twitter for classroom discussions were more engaged and achieved higher academic outcomes than those in traditional settings, demonstrating the platform's value in fostering academic participation.

According to Thohir (2021), educational technology including the use of social media has introduced innovative ways for students to interact with learning materials beyond traditional classroom settings. It promotes self-directed learning by providing access to a wide range of content, perspectives, and real-time information. Zamzam (2020) emphasizes that writing proficiency reflects the writer's ability to organize thoughts and express them with precision and consistency. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), writing becomes even more challenging due to linguistic and cultural differences. Therefore, writing instruction must be supported by practical activities and exposure to various types of texts to help students internalize language patterns and develop fluency.

Strong writing abilities enhance students' confidence in expressing their ideas. When students can write effectively, they are more likely to participate in

academic discussions, publish their research, and engage in broader scholarly dialogue. A study by Patel and Nguyen (2021) found that students who received structured writing support demonstrated greater academic confidence and were more willing to contribute to classroom discourse.

The emotional consequences of social media use, such as fear of missing out (FOMO), online peer pressure, and anxiety, can further impact students' mental well-being and motivation to study (Twenge, 2019). This contrast between the potential benefits and the growing negative impacts highlights a critical issue: while social media can support learning, its unregulated use may harm students' academic achievement. Understanding how students balance these opposing effects is therefore a crucial starting point for this research, which seeks to examine how social media actually influences writing skill development among university students (Ansari, 2020).

This research sets clear boundaries regarding its content and context. It specifically addresses the role of social media platforms such as Twitter/X, Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok as tools to support students in enhancing their English proficiency, particularly in writing. It explores how these platforms are utilized by students to access educational content, practice language skills, and engage in independent learning.

This study contributes to the existing body of literature on technology-enhanced language learning by examining the role of Social Media in developing writing skills among language learners.

## Method

As it is a case study method, the student's perception of social media utilization was obtained by using a set of questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaires were used to collect general information from a large number of students about their habits and opinions in using social media for writing. The interviews provided deeper insights into students' personal experiences and perceptions through open-ended questions. Thus, by combining questionnaires and interviews, the research aimed to gain a comprehensive understanding of students' perceptions and actual practices in using social media to enhance their writing skills.

The research was conducted at the English Education Program of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Mataram. The setting was chosen due to the accessibility of participants and the relevance of the academic environment to the study's objectives. As one of the institutions that incorporates digital technology in its learning processes, the

University of Mataram provided an appropriate context to explore how social media platforms were used by students to support English writing development.

The Population of this research consisted of 15 undergraduate students enrolled in the English Education Department at the University of Mataram. The English Education Department at the University of Mataram included students from different academic years, ranging from first-year to fourth-year students. A structured questionnaire was distributed to collect data on students' frequency of Social Media use and their perceptions of its effectiveness in writing. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended and open-ended questions to obtain qualitative insights.

The open-ended questions allowed respondents to express their opinions and experiences in greater detail. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected students to gain deeper insights into their experiences with Social Media as a writing tool. The interviews allowed researchers to explore students' attitudes, challenges, and strategies for using Social Media to enhance their writing skills.

The data collected in this study were analyzed using qualitative methods to identify patterns, themes, and relationships in students' experiences with social media as a writing tool as follows: 1. Analysis of Questionnaire Data (Preliminary Contextual Data), 2. Analysis of Interview Data (Primary Source of Findings), 3. Data Display and Conclusion Drawing.

## Findings and Discussion

The research is limited to students in the English Education Program at the University of Mataram and is centered on their perceptions, preferences, and experiences in using social media as a medium for improving their English writing skills.

The findings of this research are presented and reveal how students use social media platforms to support their writing skill development. Based on data collected from questionnaires and interviews involving students from the English Education Program at the University of Mataram.

**Table 1.** Type of Social Media Platforms Used

No	Social Media platforms frequently used	Frequently	Percentage
1	Instagram	6	40%
2	Twitter/X	4	26.7%
3	TikTok	2	13.3%
4	Facebook	2	13.3%
5	Others	0	0%
	Total	15	100%

The findings also show that Instagram is the most frequently used social media platform among students, with 40% of them actively using it. This is followed by Twitter/X (26.7%), TikTok (13.3%), and Facebook (13.3%).

**Table 2.** Aspect of Writing Skills Improved Through Social Media

No	Aspects of Writing Skills improved through Social Media.	Frequently	Percentage
1	Vocabulary enhancement	6	40%
2	Sentence structure improvement	4	26.7%
3	.More engaging writing	3	20%
4	Better idea organization	2	13.3%
5	No improvement	0	0%
	Total	15	100%

The findings indicates that vocabulary enhancement is the most improved aspect of writing through social media, with 40% of students reporting this benefit. This is followed by improvements in sentence structure (26.7%), more engaging writing (20%), and better idea organization (13.3%).

**Table 3.** Types of Writing in Social Media

No	Activities usually do on Social Media	Frequently	Percentage
1	Writing captions/posts in English	6	40%
2	Reading English posts/articles	4	26.7%
3	Commenting in English	3	20%
4	Writing threads/articles	2	13.3%
5	Others	0	0%
	Total	15	100%

The findings indicate that the most common writing activity on social media is writing captions or posts in English (40%), followed by reading English posts or articles (26.7%), commenting in English (20%), writing threads or articles (13.3%), and others (0%).

### Findings from interview

Interview data reinforces these findings. Respondent 7 stated, "Social media has influenced my writing skills in a positive way... especially when writing captions or joining discussions." Respondent 13 noted

that posting in English and receiving corrections in the comments helped improve their accuracy.

Interview responses support this trend. Respondent 12 said, "I follow various English quote pages on Instagram and Twitter..." which helped expand vocabulary. Respondent 14 mentioned learning grammar tips from memes. These responses show how platform features contribute to language acquisition.<sup>1</sup>

The research questions are addressed through a comprehensive analysis that demonstrates how these digital platforms facilitate writing development through multiple interconnected mechanisms. The data reveals that 80% of respondents engage with social media for writing improvement purposes, providing a definitive affirmative answer to this question. The high frequency of social media use, with 53.3% of students spending more than three hours daily on these platforms primarily for learning purposes, demonstrates the observational learning process in action.

### Students' Use of Social Media to Enhance English Writing Skills

The data reveals that 80% of respondents engage with social media for writing improvement purposes, providing a definitive affirmative answer to this question. This finding strongly supports Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), which emphasizes that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modeling within social contexts. The high frequency of social media use, with 53.3% of students spending more than three hours daily on these platforms primarily for learning purposes, demonstrates the observational learning process in action.

Students are actively engaging with authentic English content, observing successful writing models, and attempting to reproduce effective communication strategies in their own posts and interactions. This process occurs through several specific mechanisms: students systematically follow native English speakers, influencers, and content creators whose writing styles they admire, carefully analyzing their use of vocabulary, sentence structures, and rhetorical strategies. Students then consciously experiment with these observed techniques in their own content creation, testing new vocabulary items, sentence patterns, and stylistic approaches they have encountered. This imitation process is particularly evident when students adopt trending phrases, hashtags, or writing formats that they observe gaining positive engagement from their target audience.

The authentic nature of social media content provides students with real-world examples of effective communication, allowing them to witness how successful writers navigate different social contexts,



manage informal versus formal registers, and employ culturally appropriate expressions that resonate with specific communities. The high adoption rate and sustained use indicate that students perceive these platforms as both useful and easy to use for writing development. The fact that students voluntarily engage with social media for educational purposes without formal institutional requirements suggests that the perceived usefulness of these platforms significantly influences their technology acceptance and continued engagement.

### Types of Social Media Platforms and Their Contributions

The study reveals distinct platform preferences that align with different aspects of the theoretical framework. Instagram emerges as the most popular platform (40%), followed by Twitter/X (26.7%), TikTok (13.3%), and Facebook (13.3%). This distribution supports the Digital Literacy Theory's emphasis on multimodal composition, as Instagram's combination of visual and textual elements requires students to develop integrated communication skills that incorporate various media formats.

The preference for Instagram and Twitter/X particularly validates Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985), which suggests that learners acquire language most effectively when exposed to comprehensible input slightly beyond their current competence level. These platforms naturally provide authentic, varied input through captions, posts, and comment sections that expose students to informal yet genuine English usage. The character limitations on Twitter/X specifically support the development of concise, focused writing skills, while Instagram's caption feature encourages more descriptive and narrative writing practices (Chauhan & Bharati, 2025).

The finding that comments, mentions, and replies constitute the most helpful features (73.3%) for writing improvement strongly reinforces Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Through these interactive features, students engage with peers and more experienced users who provide scaffolded learning opportunities. The collaborative nature of these interactions transforms writing from a solitary activity into a social construction of knowledge, perfectly embodying the principles of social constructivism outlined in the theoretical framework.

### Mechanisms of Writing Skill Enhancement

The study reveals multiple interconnected mechanisms that validate and extend the theoretical framework. The finding that 80% of students reported improvement in their writing skills, with vocabulary

enhancement being the most significant area of development (40%), strongly supports both Social Learning Theory and Input Hypothesis principles. Through continuous exposure to diverse vocabulary and expressions on social media, students engage in incidental learning that gradually expands their linguistic repertoire.

The improvement in sentence structure (26.7%) and idea organization (13.3%) validates the constructivist learning approach, where students actively construct their understanding of effective writing through trial, feedback, and revision. The immediate feedback available through likes, comments, and shares creates a responsive learning environment that encourages continued engagement and refinement of writing skills. This feedback mechanism supports Bandura's self-efficacy theory, as positive responses increase students' confidence in their writing abilities and motivate continued practice.

The motivational impact of social media, with 80% of students reporting increased motivation to write in English, validates Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (2005). When students engage in authentic communication with real audiences on social media, they develop a clearer vision of their Ideal L2 Self, strengthening their motivation to improve their writing skills. The authentic and immediate nature of social media interactions enhances their learning experience and reinforces their commitment to language development. The finding that 73.3% of students occasionally or often transition to writing longer, more formal pieces demonstrates the transfer effect predicted by the theoretical framework. This progression suggests that the informal practice gained through social media writing serves as a foundation for more complex academic writing tasks (Hyland & Jiang, 2017).

### Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion presented in the book, the following conclusions can be drawn. The students actively used social media to enhance their English writing skills. More than half of the participants reported using social media for over three hours daily, indicating its deep integration into their daily routines. The students frequently use platforms such as Instagram, Twitter/X, TikTok, and Facebook for writing-related activities. Instagram was the most commonly used platform, followed by Twitter/X. The social media enhances writing skills by providing a dynamic space for regular, low-pressure writing practice. Features such as comments, captions, and character limits push students to write clearly and concisely.

social media enhances writing skills by providing a dynamic space for regular, low-pressure writing practice. Features such as comments, captions, and character limits push students to write clearly and concisely. Students reported improvements in vocabulary, sentence structure, and idea organization. Moreover, the interactive feedback from peers motivates them to revise and refine their writing, supporting the development of audience awareness and writing autonomy.

Further studies are recommended to explore the long-term impact of social media writing on students' academic writing proficiency. Researchers might also compare the effectiveness of different platforms or examine how gender, discipline, or proficiency level influence students' engagement with social media writing. Moreover, mixed-method approaches or longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into how digital writing habits evolve over time and impact formal language development.

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