

## The Influence of Social Media Platforms on Writing Skills for Students in Foreign Language Learning in Higher Education

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### ABSTRACT

**Background.** In the era of foreign language learning in the 21st century, where society is increasingly connected through technology, social media has become a crucial aspect that plays a role in developing students' writing skills. Society 5.0, which focuses on digital connectivity, has had a significant impact on the learning paradigm, raising questions about the influence of social media as a learning tool. Social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, provide a digital environment rich in information and language interaction.

**Purpose.** This research aims to better understand the complexity of the relationship between social media and students' writing skills in the context of foreign language learning in higher education. Through a quantitative approach using survey methods, this research can provide an in-depth understanding of social media usage patterns and their impact on students' writing skills.

**Method.** This research applies survey and questionnaire methods to measure the impact of social media use on foreign language students' writing skills, with a focus on Arabic and English. The research sample involved 40 students, and data analysis used the Miles and Huberman method to understand the relationship and impact.

**Results.** Participation in forums or foreign language groups on social media shows that students use these platforms as a forum for communicating, exchanging information, and discussing learning topics. As many as 100% of respondents had participated in such forums, indicating high student interest in collaborative activities via social media. As many as 36 out of 40 respondents felt that social media had influenced their formal writing style. These influences can range from adaptations to sentence structure to word choice, creating variations in formal writing style.

**Conclusion.** Research shows that the majority of students (32 respondents) agree that social media can be an effective learning tool in foreign language learning. However, 8 respondents stated they were neutral, showing variations in perceptions of the effectiveness of social media as a learning tool.

### KEYWORDS

Foreign Language Learning, Social Media Platforms, Writing Skills

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### INTRODUCTION

Foreign language learning is experiencing a significant transformation in the digital era, along with the emergence of 21st century learning concepts and the vision

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of Society 5.0 which is increasingly integrated with technology (Qutub et al., 2023). Social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, are becoming an integral element in students' daily lives, forming a rich and dynamic digital environment (Inderawati et al., 2019). This phenomenon creates new challenges and raises curiosity about the impact of social media on students' writing skills, especially in the context of foreign language learning in higher education.

In the era of Society 5.0, which emphasizes the integration of technology into everyday life to improve society's welfare, the role social media is becoming increasingly important (Guo et al., 2023). Social media is not only a platform for interaction, but also a source of information, learning and collaboration (Ahmed et al., 2019). Therefore, understanding how the use of social media can influence students' writing skills is relevant in facing the challenges of 21st century learning.

The existence of foreign language content on social media opens the door to enriching students' language skills. This not only covers linguistic aspects, but also introduces them to cultural diversity and norms of written communication in a foreign language (Setyono & Widodo, 2019). In this context, this research explores more deeply the impact of social media use on foreign language learning, specifically focusing on students' writing skills.

The importance of understanding the impact of social media on writing skills is not only related to language learning, but also to students' preparation to communicate openly (Moses & Mohamad, 2019). formal in an increasingly connected society. Social media plays an integral role in shaping writing styles and conventions, indispensable elements in formal communication (Zhou et al., 2021). Therefore, this research aims to dig deeper into how interaction on social media can shape students' writing skills and how this correlates with their preparation for formal communication in academic and professional environments.

With changes in the learning paradigm, where social media not only as a means of entertainment but also as a learning tool, it is hoped that this research can provide a deeper understanding of the contribution of social media in foreign language learning in higher education (Sobaih et al., 2020). In line with the vision of Society 5.0 which emphasizes harmonization between human life and technology, this research seeks answers to the important question of how social media can be optimized to enrich students' writing skills, create a learning environment that is innovative and relevant to today's needs (Leng et al., 2022).

This research was conducted to provides a clearer picture of the extent to which social media influences students' writing skills and how interactions on these platforms can create dynamics in the context of foreign language learning. These influences include aspects such as writing style, use of grammatical rules, and choice of words, which may change with the intensity of interaction on social media.

The study addresses the increasing integration of commercial social media into formal learning settings, particularly focusing on platforms like Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat, and WhatsApp, which have garnered significant attention among youth but remain understudied in scholarly literature. While popular social services such as Facebook and Twitter have been extensively explored for their educational benefits, this research aims to fill the gap by analyzing the pedagogical affordances of the mentioned platforms in higher education. A total of 46 studies are reviewed, revealing a substantial focus on WhatsApp, especially in the Middle East and Asian regions, particularly in second and foreign language learning contexts. However, there is a notable scarcity of research on Instagram, Pinterest, and Snapchat. The study emphasizes that the implementation of pedagogical affordances in social media is still partial and varies across platforms. Overall, the geographical distribution of studies mirrors the preferences of the general

population for these services, indicating a need for further exploration of the educational potential of diverse social media platforms (Manca, 2020).

This comprehensive review examines 87 key studies, predominantly published between 2009 and mid-2018, that investigate the formal and informal utilization of social media, encompassing blogs, wikis, and social networking, in the context of second and foreign language teaching and learning (L2TL). The scope of the review extends to educational platforms like Livemocha and Busuu, as well as popular sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Positioned within the trajectory of social media development and the history of social computer-assisted language learning (CALL) research, the synthesis of these studies reveals recurring themes. Notably, social media is recognized for fostering intercultural, sociopragmatic, and audience awareness, shaping language learner and user identities, and cultivating specific literacies. The review combines the presentation of focal pieces with an exploration of inherent challenges, concluding each section with a summary and implications for future research and practical application (Reinhardt, 2019).

This comprehensive review explores the scientific literature on social media as a language learning environment within the timeframe of 2008 to 2019. The survey, conducted on over 1,600 journals from the Scopus database, analyzed 396 documents through bibliometric analysis. The findings highlight exponential growth in this field over the past 12 years, with indications of continued progress. While scientific output is concentrated in the top ten countries, the review also reveals a broad geographical distribution. Covering the 17 most popular social media platforms, the qualitative analysis demonstrates overwhelming evidence of the positive impact of social media on language learning and teaching. Notably, high-profile platforms such as Facebook, Skype, WhatsApp, and Twitter attract significant attention from language learning scholars due to their versatile communication affordances, widespread reach, and large user bases. The paper concludes with implications for the adoption of social media in language learning and suggests directions for future studies (Barrot, 2022).

Based on previous research, the use of social media in foreign language learning has become a major concern. The first study used a quantitative survey method to measure the impact of social media on foreign language students' writing skills. The second study highlights specific social media platforms, with WhatsApp dominating attention, while the third study highlights the exponential growth of interest in this topic. The positive conclusion regarding the positive impact of social media provides a foundation for further research, which could explore the effectiveness of social media in improving the formal writing style of foreign language students in higher education (Bardus et al., 2020). It requires focusing on different platforms and their impact to gain a deeper understanding.

This research is important because it creates a deeper understanding of the transformation of foreign language learning amidst digital flows. Students are no longer only exposed to formal learning in the classroom, but are also involved in online communities that can shape their writing skills. Thus, this understanding can provide insight into designing more adaptive and effective learning strategies.

The emergence of this research is in line with changes in learning paradigms and developments in information technology. The aim of this research is to explore the extent to which the use of social media can be an effective learning tool, provide insight into formal writing styles, and detail its impact on the writing skills of foreign language learning students in higher education. Thus, it is hoped that this research can make a positive contribution to our understanding of the relationship between social media and foreign language learning in the digital era.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research will apply a quantitative approach with survey methods as the main approach in measuring the impact of social media use on foreign language students' writing skills (Reinhardt, 2019). The research object will involve all foreign language students, with the main focus on answers from students who use Arabic and English. A total of 40 students will be taken as research samples. The survey method will be carried out by compiling a questionnaire that includes questions related to the use of social media and its impact on writing skills. The questionnaire will be distributed via the Google Forms platform and shared via the foreign language student WhatsApp group.

The research process will begin by detailing the questionnaire questions according to the research objectives and conceptual framework. After the questionnaire is complete, the researcher will create a Google Forms form as a tool to collect data from respondents. The form link will be shared via WhatsApp groups joined by foreign language students. The collected data will later be analyzed using the quantitative data analysis method developed by Miles and Huberman ("Qualitative Data Analysis," 2020).

Data analysis will include steps such as classification and coding of data, then organizing the data in tables or graphs to understand the patterns that emerge. Next, the data will be interpreted and connected to Miles and Huberman's theoretical framework to identify the relationship and impact of social media use on students' writing skills. This method will provide an in-depth understanding of the extent to which social media influences students' writing skills in the context of foreign language learning in higher education.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Social Media

Social media is a digital phenomenon that encompasses a variety of online platforms and applications that enable users to interact, share content and engage in online communications (Aichner et al., 2021). It creates a virtual space where individuals or groups can connect, collaborate, and participate in the exchange of information, ideas, and experiences. Social media involves elements such as websites, applications, discussion forums, blogs, and social networks that enable users to convey messages, images, videos, or thoughts quickly and globally (Bayrakdar et al., 2020).

Social media has various functions and characteristics that shape its unique dynamics (Podgórski et al., 2020). This includes the ability to create personal or business profiles, share content in real time, provide comment and response features, and allow for the creation of communities based on specific interests, demographics, or goals. This platform also offers a diversity of content forms, including text, images, audio, and video, thereby creating a rich multimedia experience (Grewal et al., 2021).

Social media acts as a primary means for social interaction and interpersonal networking in this digital era (Swart et al., 2019). Users can establish and maintain relationships with friends, family, coworkers, and even strangers. Additionally, social media plays an important role in disseminating information, mobilizing public opinion, and facilitating campaigns or social movements (Leong et al., 2020). By providing a platform for self-expression and identity formation online, social media influences the way individuals view themselves and the world around them.

Social media use has a significant impact on culture, communication, and social interaction. On the one hand, social media provides opportunities for learning, collaboration and global engagement. On the other hand, the emergence of issues such as privacy, disinformation and digital

addiction pose challenges and need to be responded to wisely (Ognibene et al., 2023). With constant changes in technology and user habits, social media continues to evolve and have a profound impact on the way we interact and share in modern society.

Then a social media platform refers to a digital structure that facilitates online interaction and content exchange between users. It involves websites and applications that allow users to share information, opinions and experiences in the form of text, images and videos (Drus & Khalid, 2019). By providing a connected environment, social media platforms have become important places for individuals to form social networks and participate in online communities.

Concrete examples of social media platforms include Facebook, where users can share life moments, interact with friends, and join interest groups special. Twitter provides a medium to convey thoughts in short messages to a wider audience (Duncombe, 2019). Instagram focuses on sharing visual experiences through photos and videos. LinkedIn offers a professional platform for building and expanding business networks. TikTok provides users with the experience of sharing creative short videos with a global audience.

The main goal of the social media platform is to facilitate communication and interaction between individuals. By providing a space for users to share, create and participate in content, the platform helps build and strengthen social connections. Additionally, social media platforms are used by companies and organizations to achieve marketing goals, increase brand visibility, and interact with customers (Shawky et al., 2019).

The use of social media platforms has changed the way we communicate and interact, opening up opportunities for exploration of ideas, collaboration, and cultural exchange (Mention et al., 2019). Despite providing significant benefits in expanding social networks, several negative impacts have also emerged, including privacy issues, false information debates, and digital addiction. Therefore, it is important to understand and manage these impacts to ensure healthy and beneficial use of social media platforms.

## Writing Skills

In the contemporary era marked by technological developments and globalization, writing skills are becoming increasingly important as the main means of conveying thoughts, ideas and information (Gallagher, 2023). This skill not only involves choosing the right words, organizing sentence structures logically, and applying grammatical rules, but also requires adaptation to the dynamics of social and technological change. In the context of foreign language learning in the current era, writing skills are not just a technical aspect related to the alphabet and basic grammar (Levina et al., 2021). On the contrary, this is a manifestation of the ability to adapt to the culture and norms of written communication that continue to develop in an increasingly connected world.

The process of writing skills today is also influenced by the flow of information that is fast and easily accessible via the internet (Szymkowiak et al., 2021). Individuals who are skilled in writing are not only able to produce effective writing but can also manage and compile information from various sources. Writers who are proficient in this skill can adapt their writing style to the characteristics of digital readers who tend to be fast, concise, and interactive (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2023). Therefore, the ability to adapt writing to a format suitable for the digital era is a crucial element of writing skills.

In relation to foreign language learning, a deep understanding of the culture and norms of written communication is becoming increasingly important in this era of globalization (Onishchuk et al., 2020). Writers who understand the cultural context of the language they are studying can produce writing that is more contextual and competitive at the global level. Writing skills, therefore,



are not only applied as a form of personal communication, but also as a tool for participating in an increasingly closely linked global dialogue (Biletska et al., 2021).

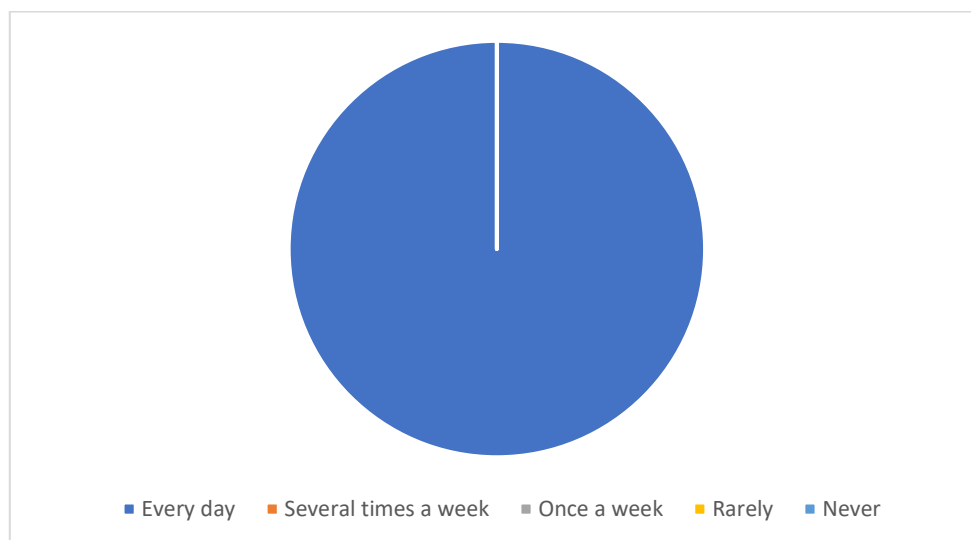
Thus, writing skills are not only purely technical skills, but are also a reflection of an individual's ability to adapt to changing times. The emphasis on a deep understanding of cultural context and the ability to process information in the digital era establishes writing as an essential skill that has a long-term impact on successful communication and interaction in an ever-evolving global society (Borges et al., 2021).

Examples of writing skills include writing in-depth essays, formal letters, or scientific articles. A skilled writer is able to produce cohesive text with the use of varied language and correct grammar (Sa'adah, 2020). In a foreign language context, examples of writing skills include the use of appropriate vocabulary, accurate sentence structure, and creative development of ideas in accordance with the norms of the language being studied.

The main goal of writing skills is to convey messages or information effectively to readers. In an academic context, writing skills goals may involve developing analytical, synthetic, and argumentative skills. In a foreign language context, the goals of writing skills may include enriching understanding of language structure, building fluency in expressing oneself, and expanding communication skills in the language being studied. Through developing writing skills, individuals can produce writing that meets linguistic standards and enriches global discourse.

### Results of Distributing Questionnaires

After conducting in-depth research, the researchers distributed questionnaires to students who were or had studied languages, both English and Arabic. With several questions with the first question, How often do you use social media (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) in your daily life? With the following answer options: Every day, Several times a week, Once a week, Rarely and Never. With the following answer:



**Figure 1.** How often do you use social media (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) in your daily life?

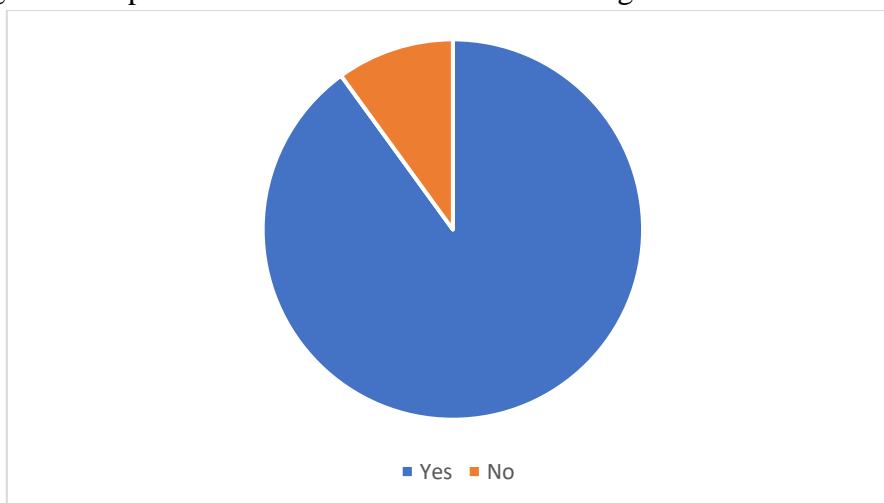
Based on the results of research conducted by distributing questionnaires to students who are or have studied languages, both English and Arabic, the initial question asked was about the frequency of use of social media in daily life. A total of 40 respondents stated that they use social

media every day. These results reflect the high level of involvement of students with social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram in their daily routines.

This high frequency of social media use may reflect the significant role of social media in students' daily lives. It can be assumed that social media platforms have become the main means for them to connect with friends, obtain information, and engage in various online activities. This intense engagement can have an impact on their communication and information consumption patterns, and can open up opportunities for researchers to better understand the relationship between social media use and writing skills in language learning contexts.

It is important to note that a high frequency of social media use is not always means positive or negative impact on writing skills. Therefore, after identifying social media usage patterns, future research can explore how these usage patterns relate to students' writing abilities. Thus, the results of this questionnaire can be an interesting starting point for exploring the relationship between social media use and writing skills among language learning students.

Next question Do you use social media for academic purposes or foreign language learning? With the following answer options: Yes and No. With the following answer results:



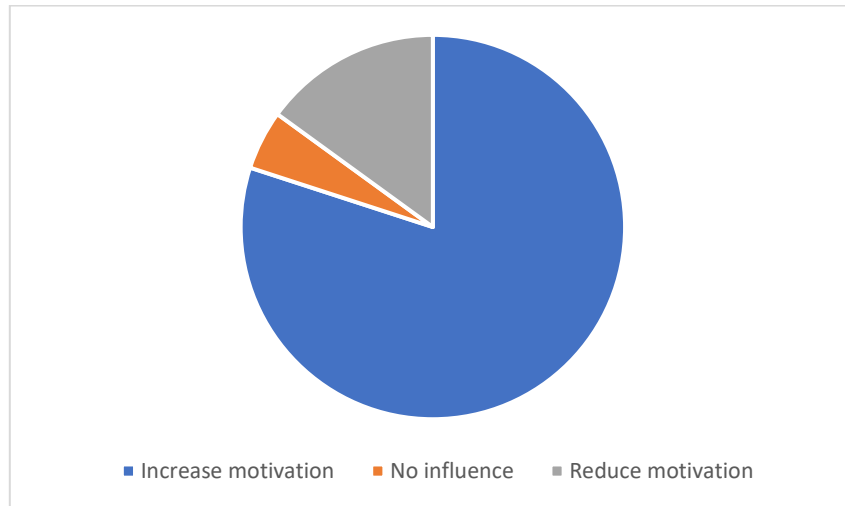
**Figure 2.** Do you use social media for academic purposes or foreign language learning?

After identifying the frequency of use of social media in daily life, the research continued with questions regarding the use of social media for academic purposes or foreign language learning. Of the 40 respondents, 36 people stated that they used social media for this purpose, while the other 4 people did not use it for academic purposes or foreign language learning.

These results illustrate that the majority of respondents see added value in using social media as a tool. in an academic or language learning context. Using social media for this purpose can include a variety of activities, such as joining online study groups, following educational accounts or pages, or even participating in foreign language forums available on social media platforms.

However, there is a small number of respondents who do not use social media for academic purposes is also interesting to investigate further. Some factors that may influence this decision may involve personal preferences, social media usage policies implemented by the institution or learning program, or even technical constraints. These results can provide a basis for further research to understand the motivations and barriers to using social media in the context of language learning or academic needs among students.

Next question, How does social media influence your motivation to write in a foreign language? With the following answer options: Increase motivation, No influence and Reduce motivation. With the following answer results:



**Figure 3.** How does social media influence your motivation to write in a foreign language?

After exploring the use of social media in academic life, research highlights the impact of social media on students' motivation to write in a foreign language. Of the 40 respondents, 32 people stated that using social media increased their motivation to write in a foreign language. These results reflect the positive potential of interaction with social media in stimulating students' interest and enthusiasm to actively participate in writing activities.

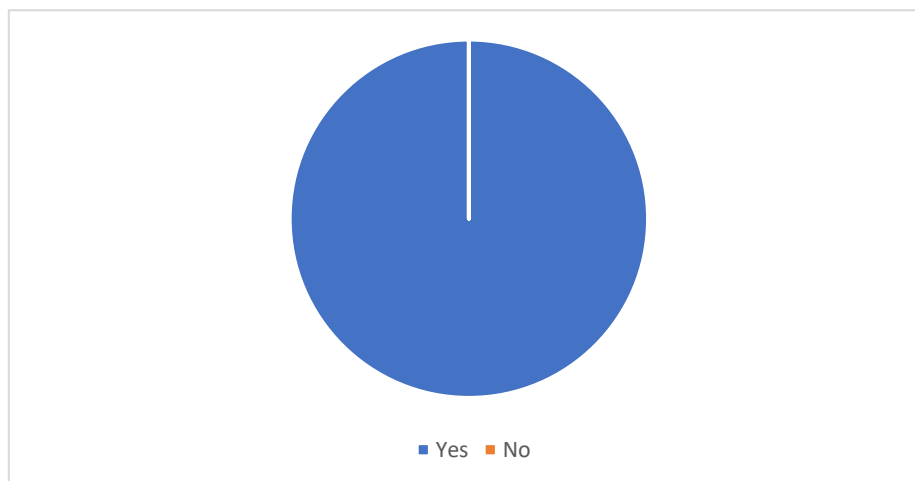
However, it should be noted that there were 2 respondents who stated that the use of social media did not have a significant influence on their motivation to write in English. foreign. This may indicate that social media is not always the main determining factor in motivating students to write, and that their motivation is influenced by various other factors outside the scope of social media.

Meanwhile, 6 respondents revealed that the use of social media actually reduces their motivation in writing in a foreign language. The reasons behind this negative impact may involve distraction from unrelated content, adverse social comparisons, or even stress that may arise from interactions in cyberspace.

Thus, these results highlight the complexity of the impact of social media on the motivation to write in a foreign language among student. Understanding these variations in response can be the basis for educational institutions and teachers to design more contextual and supportive approaches in utilizing social media as a learning tool.

Next question, Have you ever participated in foreign language forums or groups on social media? With the following answer options: Yes and No. With the following answer options:





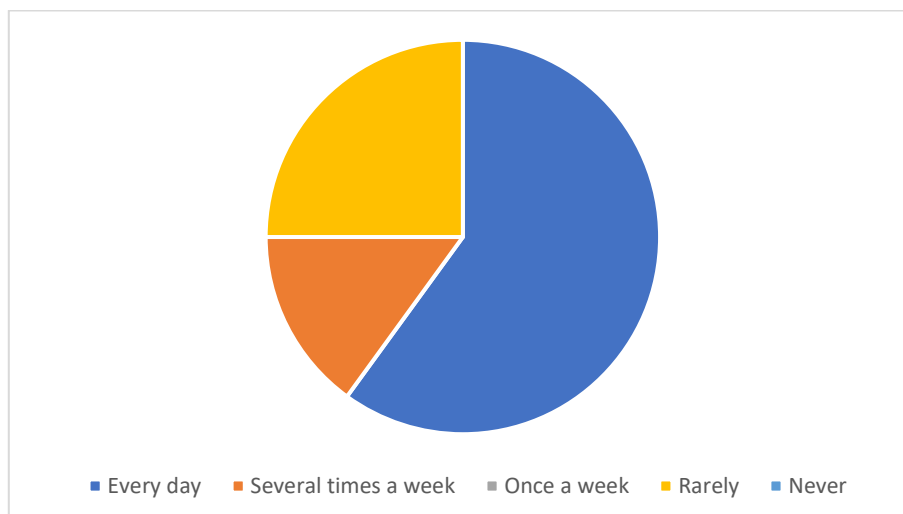
**Figure 4.** Have you ever participated in foreign language forums or groups on social media?

After exploring the impact of social media on writing motivation, the research continued with questions regarding student participation in foreign language forums or groups on social media. Of the 40 respondents, all of them stated that they had participated in foreign language forums or groups on social media, with most of them minimally participating via the Zoom and Google Meet platforms during online lectures.

These results reflect the high level of student involvement in collaborative activities via social media. Participation in foreign language forums or groups can give students the opportunity to communicate with fellow language learners, exchange information, and discuss topics related to their learning. In particular, the use of platforms such as Zoom and Google Meet shows that students are adapting social media to maintain connectedness and collaborate virtually, especially during online learning periods involving physical distancing policies.

It is important to note that active participation in foreign language forums on social media can provide valuable learning experience. Apart from improving communication skills in a foreign language, this can also broaden cultural horizons and build social networks that support learning. Thus, these results open up the potential to further explore the benefits and challenges of participation in foreign language forums in digital learning environments.

Next question, How often do you read posts in a foreign language on social media? With the following answer options: Every day, Several times a week, Once a week, Rarely and Never. With the following answers:



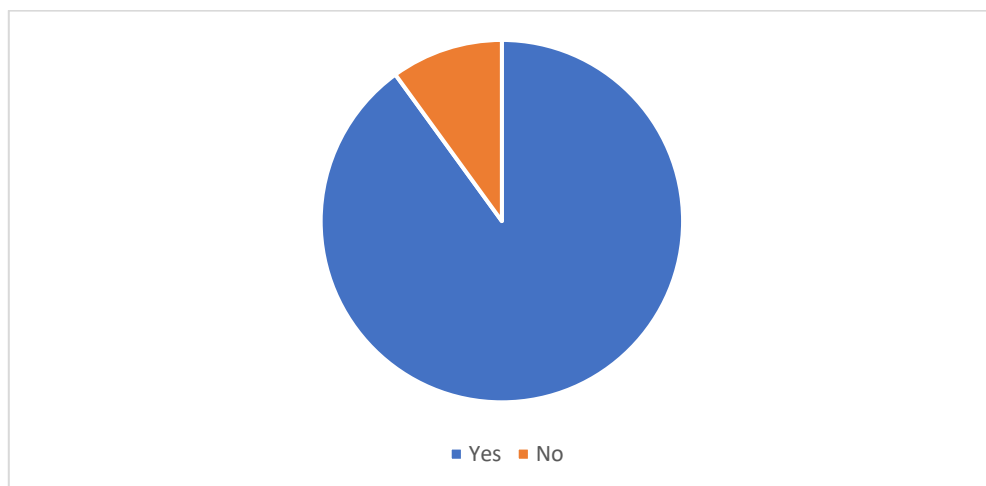
**Figure 5.** How often do you read posts in a foreign language on social media?

After exploring aspects of participation in foreign language forums, the research continued with questions regarding the frequency of reading articles in foreign languages on social media. Of the 40 respondents, 24 people stated that they read writing in a foreign language every day. Meanwhile, 6 people stated that they did it several times a week, and 10 people rarely read articles in foreign languages on social media.

These results indicate that the majority of respondents have a high level of involvement in reading articles in foreign languages in the social media environment. The significant daily frequency reflects the role of social media as a source of relevant and interesting foreign language content for students. This also shows that social media can be an effective channel for increasing exposure to foreign languages, enriching understanding of language structure, and facilitating contextual learning.

However, the presence of a number of respondents who rarely read writing in foreign languages offers additional insight. This can be influenced by personal preferences, learning focus that is more focused on certain activities, or perhaps time constraints. Further exploring the reasons behind different reading frequencies can provide deeper insight into students' preferences and needs regarding the use of social media in language learning contexts.

Next question, Do you feel that your use of social media has influenced your formal writing style? With yes and no answer options. With the following answer results:



**Figure 6.** Do you feel that your use of social media has influenced your formal writing style?

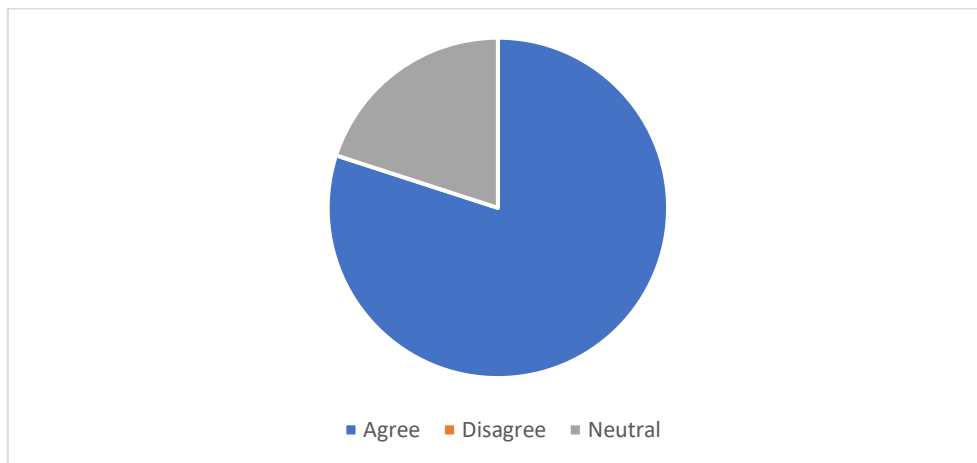
After investigating the aspect of frequency of reading writing in a foreign language on social media, the research continued with questions regarding the influence of social media on students' formal writing style. Of the 40 respondents, 36 people stated that they felt that the use of social media had influenced their formal writing style, while the other 4 people did not feel any significant influence.

These results illustrate that the majority of students acknowledged the impact of using social media on their formal writing style. These influences can vary, involving adaptations to sentence structure, word choice, or even a tendency to use informal terms often encountered in social media interactions. This influence may also involve the use of a more relaxed and expressive writing style, depending on the norms encountered in the social media environment.

However, the small number of respondents who did not feel influenced suggests that the impact of social media on formal writing style may be individual. Some students may be better able to separate their formal and informal writing styles, while others may be more inclined to adopt styles they frequently encounter in online interactions.

It is important to remember that the influence of social media on formal writing styles is not always negative. Some students may integrate creative and expressive elements from social media into their formal writing style in innovative and appropriate ways. Therefore, these results provide a starting point for further research in understanding the role of social media in shaping students' formal writing styles.

The next question, Do you agree that the use of social media can be an effective learning tool in foreign language learning? With answer options: Agree, Disagree and Neutral. With the following answer results:



**Figure 7.** Do you agree that the use of social media can be an effective learning tool in foreign language learning?

After investigating the influence of social media on formal writing styles, the research involved questions regarding students' perceptions of the potential of social media as a foreign language learning tool. Of the 40 respondents, 32 people agreed that the use of social media can be an effective learning tool, while 8 people said they were neutral.

These results show that the majority of students recognize the potential of social media as an effective learning tool in the context of foreign language learning. This recognition may be related to their positive experiences in participating in foreign language forums or groups, reading writing in a foreign language, or feeling that it had a positive impact on their writing motivation.

However, the presence of a number of neutral respondents indicates that there are variations in students' perceptions of media effectiveness social media as a foreign language learning tool. Some students may view social media as a useful source of information, while others may consider other factors such as quality of content, time invested, or personal learning preferences.

It is important to note that a neutral view does not necessarily indicate disagreement. Conversely, it may reflect uncertainty or a need for more information before making a decision. Therefore, these results may open the door for further research to further explore the factors that influence students' perceptions of the effectiveness of social media as a foreign language learning tool.

## CONCLUSION

The results of the seven question questionnaire regarding the use of social media and foreign language learning among students show an interesting picture. The majority of students (40 respondents) intensively use social media every day, with the majority of them (36 people) admitting that social media influences their formal writing style. More than that, the majority of students (32 people) agreed that social media can be an effective learning tool in foreign language learning. This is supported by their active participation in foreign language forums on social media and the high frequency of reading articles in foreign languages on these platforms. However, there were a number of respondents who stated that the use of social media did not affect their motivation to write in a foreign language, showing a diversity of views in this regard. These conclusions suggest that social media plays a significant role in foreign language learning, but its impact varies and requires a deeper understanding of individual and contextual factors.

## AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Look this example below:

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.

Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; In-vestigation.

Author 3: Data curation; Investigation.

Author 4: Formal analysis; Methodology; Writing - original draft.

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