



English Language Learning via Social Media: Writing Skills Development

Sandugash Abdyrakhimova

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Education and Humanities
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

SDU University

Department of Language Teacher Education

June, 2025

Thesis Advisor:

PhD., SDU associate professor,

Saule Tulepova

SDU University

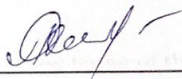
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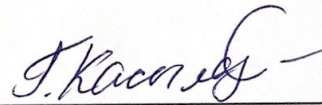
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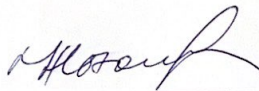
Approved by:



PhD., Assoc. Prof SDU, Saule
TULEPOVA
Thesis supervisor



Phd., Doctor Gulzhaina
KASSYMOVA
Committee Chair



PhD., assistant professor
Akmarzhan NOGAIBAYEVA
Department Chair

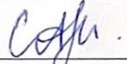
PhD., associate professor Zhainagul DUSEBEKOVA
Dean, Faculty of Education and Humanities



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Name



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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The dissertation acknowledgements section is where you thank those who have helped and supported you during the research and writing process. This includes both professional and personal acknowledgements. The dissertation acknowledgements should usually be no longer than one page.

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English Language Learning via Social Media: Writing Skills Development

Abstract

The explosive growth in social media has transformed the way learners engage with language outside school, but there is little empirical data showing its effect on writing accuracy. The thesis research question is whether the accuracy of writing of Kazakhstani students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) can be improved through the incorporation of Instagram-based free-writing activities. A quasi-experiment lasting 2 months was conducted with 34 A2-level students studying the level of B1 (Experimental = 17; Control = 17), using convenience sampling. Both groups wrote a timed, paper-based essay as a pre-test and another one as a post-test in 8 weeks. The Experimental group shared two posts of 50-100 words per week on personal Instagram accounts and engaged with comments during the intervention, whereas the Control group completed the regular syllabus without any extra writing. Grammar, spelling and preposition mistakes were identified in all essays; the total number of errors was the primary outcome measure. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare improvement scores (pre-test minus post-test errors) between groups. Descriptively, the Experimental group had higher mean decreases in total mistakes compared to the Control group, and the highest improvements were found in the spelling accuracy. However, Mann-Whitney findings showed no statistically significant differences in total improvement, post-test performance, or any single error category. Although the results did not yield statistically significant results that Instagram writing is more effective than traditional approaches in enhancing short-term accuracy, the fact that the mean gains were always higher in the Experimental group indicates some practical advantages that should be pursued in future research. The paper points to the necessity of longer treatments, bigger samples, and mixed-methods designs to be able to grasp motivational and qualitative aspects of social-media-mediated language learning.

Әлеуметтік Желі арқылы Ағылшын Тілін Үйрену: Жазу Дағдыларын Дамыту

Аңдатпа

Әлеуметтік медианың қарқынды өсуі оқушылардың мектептен тыс тілді меңгеру тәсілін өзгертті, бірақ оның жазудың дәлдігіне әсерін көрсететін эмпирикалық дәлелдер аз. Диссертациялық жұмыстың сұрағы – ағылшын тілін шет тілі (EFL) ретінде үйренетін қазақстандық студенттердің жазу дәлдігін Instagram негізіндегі еркін жазу әрекеттерін енгізу арқылы жақсартуға бола ма? 2 айға созылған квази-эксперимент А2 деңгейіндегі В1 деңгейінде оқитын 34 оқушымен (Эксперименттік = 17; Бақылау = 17), ыңғайлы іріктеуді қолдана отырып жүргізілді. Екі топ та 8 апта ішінде алдын ала тест ретінде, ал екіншісін кейінгі тест ретінде уақытпен белгіленген, қағазға негізделген эссе жазды. Эксперименттік топ жеке Instagram аккаунттарында аптасына 50-100 сөзден тұратын екі жазбамен (пост) бөлісті және бір біріне түсініктеме (коментарий) жазды, ал бақылау тобы әдеттегі оқу бағдарламасын ешқандай қосымша жазбаларсыз аяқтады. Барлық эсселерде грамматикалық, орфографиялық және предлогтық қателер анықталды; қателердің жалпы саны нәтиженің негізгі өлшемі болды. Mann-Whitney U тесті топтар арасындағы жақсарту көрсеткіштерін (тест алдындағы минус тесттен кейінгі қателер) салыстыру үшін пайдаланылды. Сипаттамалық Тұрғыдан Алғанда, Эксперименттік топта Бақылау тобымен салыстырғанда жалпы қателіктердің орташа төмендеуі жоғары болды және емле дәлдігінде ең жоғары жақсартулар анықталды. Алайда, Манн-Уитнидің нәтижелері жалпы жақсартуда, тестілеуден кейінгі нәтижелерде немесе қателіктердің кез-келген санатында статистикалық маңызды айырмашылықтарды көрсетпеді. жалпы жақсартуда, тестілеуден кейінгі нәтижелерде немесе қателіктердің кез-келген санатында статистикалық маңызды айырмашылықтарды көрсетпеді. Нәтижелер Instagram-да жазудың қысқа мерзімді дәлдікті арттырудың дәстүрлі тәсілдеріне қарағанда тиімдірек екендігі туралы статистикалық маңызды нәтижелер бермесе де, Эксперименттік топта орташа нәтиже әрқашан жоғары болғаны болашақ зерттеулерде іздену керек кейбір практикалық артықшылықтарды көрсетеді. Бұл диссертациялық жұмыста әлеуметтік медиа арқылы тілді үйренудің мотивациялық және сапалық аспектілерін түсіну үшін ұзағырақ процедуралар, үлкенірек үлгілер және аралас әдістерді әзірлеу қажеттілігі көрсетілген.

Изучение английского языка через социальные сети: Развитие навыков письма

Аннотация

Стремительный рост социальных сетей изменил то, как учащиеся взаимодействуют с языком вне школы, но существует мало эмпирических данных, свидетельствующих о его влиянии на точность написания. Вопрос диссертационного исследования заключается в том, можно ли повысить точность письменной речи казахстанских студентов, изучающих английский как иностранный (EFL), за счет внедрения бесплатных занятий по написанию текстов в Instagram. Был проведен квазиэксперимент продолжительностью 2 месяца с участием 34 студентов уровня А2, изучающих уровень В1 (Экспериментальный = 17; контрольный = 17), используя удобную выборку. Обе группы написали по одному эссе на бумаге в качестве предварительного теста, а еще одно - в качестве посттеста через 8 недель. Участники экспериментальной группы опубликовали два поста по 50-100 слов в неделю в личных аккаунтах Instagram и комментировали их во время занятия, в то время как участники контрольной группы выполнили обычную программу без каких-либо дополнительных записей. Во всех эссе были выявлены грамматические, орфографические ошибки и ошибки в написании предлогов; общее количество ошибок было основным критерием оценки результатов. U-тест Манна-Уитни использовался для сравнения показателей улучшения (до прохождения теста за вычетом ошибок после прохождения теста) между группами. В целом, в экспериментальной группе было отмечено более значительное снижение общего количества ошибок по сравнению с Контрольной группой, и наибольшее улучшение было обнаружено в точности написания. Однако результаты Манна-Уитни не выявили статистически значимых различий в общем улучшении, производительности после тестирования или в какой-либо отдельной категории ошибок. Хотя результаты не дали статистически значимых результатов о том, что запись в Instagram более эффективна, чем традиционные подходы, для повышения краткосрочной точности, тот факт, что средние показатели всегда были выше в экспериментальной группе, указывает на некоторые практические преимущества, которые следует использовать в будущих исследованиях. В статье указывается на необходимость более длительных процедур, больших выборок и разработки смешанных методов, чтобы иметь возможность понять мотивационные и качественные аспекты изучения языка с помощью социальных сетей.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

Nowadays, people cannot overemphasize the significance of mastering writing skills in the context of the worldwide web and high stakes career. EFL writers, who are the focus of this study, recognize the importance of the writing skill in their general language acquisition and communicative efficiency. However, conventional approaches to teaching writing do not capture the students and sustain the interest necessary for them to progress in writing skills. This has led educators and researchers to look for new approaches which would appeal to the modern learner's generation interest and practices (Wang & Troia, 2023).

One of them is the application of social media as the means of improving students' results in writing. Research has pointed the social media such as Facebook, Twitter and creative arts such as English writing in Instagram in giving ESL learners a chance to engage in meaningful and authentic communication, self-promoting and feedback (Yunus et al., 2019). Also, the platforms develop a sense of belonging and togetherness to support each other, which will help to improve the students' motivation (Pitaloka et al., 2020). The feeling of being part of a group and receiving encouragement is important in maintaining learners' progress and their confidence in writing.

Moreover, the social media brings the feature of flexible and personalized learning models. Students can get a lot of resources, lectures, class partners, and materials at their fingertips 24/7 unlike in traditional classroom learning (Kumar & Nanda, 2022). These platforms facilitate the active independent learning and are effective to engage learners with different learning needs, these platforms make them addition to the ESL education.

1.2 Aim of the Study

The aim of the thesis is to explore the effectiveness of social media (Instagram) in developing English as a foreign language learners' writing skills.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

- To determine the impact of writing Instagram posts on the accuracy of written English among students.
- To examine and compare the quality of writing between Instagram-based essays and traditional pen-and-paper essays among English language learners.
- To assess changes in writing proficiency (focusing on grammar, spelling, and vocabulary) in essays written by English language learners on Instagram, as evaluated by educators.

1.4 Research questions

Question 1: How does the use of Instagram posts contribute to the development of writing skills in English language learners?

Question 2: What is the impact of using Instagram on developing the writing skills of EFL learners?

1.5 Research Problem

Traditional pen-and-paper methods, while widely used, often fail to engage English language learners effectively and also tied to the settings of the classroom (Vie, 2007). Social media platforms like Instagram, known for their high user engagement and interactive nature, offer untapped potential for enhancing writing skills. However, the impact of Instagram on students' writing performance remains underexplored, especially in the context of Kazakhstani EFL learners at the B1 proficiency level. This study addresses this gap by investigating whether

Instagram can improve writing accuracy more effectively, providing insights into innovative practices for language learning.

1.6 Hypothesis

If Kazakhstani EFL students learning the B1 level use Instagram to practice writing through regular posting, then their grammar accuracy and spelling in paper-based essays will improve significantly compared to students who do not engage in additional writing practice.

1.7 Topicality of research

The increasing integration of social media into daily life presents an untapped opportunity for educational methodologies, particularly in language learning. Instagram, with its vast, interactive platform, offers a unique environment for engaging English language learners and enhancing their writing skills. This research is timely as it explores the potential of Instagram to improve writing accuracy among Kazakhstani EFL students at the B1 level, an area that has seen limited study despite the platform's widespread popularity.

1.8 Novelty of the Study

There is, therefore, going to be a dearth of literature on how the teaching and learning of writing can be facilitated by the use of Instagram in the Kazakhstani context. Further, extant research does propose several influential frameworks along with related constructs; however, much of this work has not been corroborated through experimentation, pointing to a critical extant research shortfall of empirically grounded insights. This research seeks to fill this gap by designing a research study that assesses the use of Instagram in improving writing skills among the Kazakhstani EFL students.

1.9 Significance of the Study

This research will greatly contribute to improving the knowledge on the application of the social media to teaching English writing in Kazakhstan context, which has been inadequately explored

in the region. In this respect, the study reveals the features of using Instagram as an educational tool and therefore unveils fresh approaches in the realm of EFL writing development. This is especially helpful in understanding how to relate with students based on their digital habits, which may well alter the face of conventional teaching methods and offer information that could be useful internationally.

1.10 Procedure

A quasi-experimental research design tested the effects of Instagram-based writing practice on English language learners' spelling and grammar accuracy in their written work. Two matched groups of first- and second-year EFL students at SDU University in Kazakhstan participated in this study while taking the same General English language course. Every participant demonstrated A2 proficiency while actively working towards achieving B1 level proficiency. The researcher chose her participants using convenience sampling because these groups were available.

Each participant provided their consent to participate prior to the start of the intervention. The participants in both groups wrote their pretests as paper-based essays about casual topics that personally interested them. The pretest functioned as a baseline assessment tool to measure students' grammar and spelling competencies.

The research divided participants into two distinct groups: experimental and control after conducting the pretest. Experimental group students needed to establish new private Instagram accounts for research purposes and follow both their peers and the researcher who functioned as a connection mediator. The experimental group of students posted captions in English language twice per week during eight weeks of intervention leading to sixteen total posts. Each student contributed informal captions that showed their everyday experiences, thoughts or routines to their Instagram account and they could interact with each other through comments. The

researcher tracked student participation while making sure students met their assigned posting requirements.

The control group maintained their standard educational activities without participating in additional writing tasks throughout the observation period. A paper-based posttest similar to the pretest format was administered to all participants when the one-month intervention ended. The analysis of collected essays from testing phases revealed grammar accuracy and spelling improvements and their comparison between experimental and control groups.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to Social Media and Language Learning

2.1.1 Overview of Social Media in Education

In the context of the current trends in educational process, the integration of social networks into the educational process is becoming more common. Under this category, Williams (2022) gives detailed analysis on this shift by raising the background on the development of social media from social uses only to the current usage on education. In an attempt to capture the attention of so called 'digital natives,' educators have a natural tool at their disposal that is social media, which fits well with the interactive multimedia approach that students carry into the classroom.

However, the application of such a technology is not without some difficulties since there are many of them. Some of the reasons why there is resistance from the institutions includes issues to do with e-professionalism, privacy and the academic integrity (Williams, 2022). Nevertheless, current situations tell that social media could help improve the educational participation and education access, it can be concluded that with proper training and the development of policies for the use of such tools integration into educational systems is possible.

Education through the use of social media has receive a lot of attention among the higher learning institutions. Another important study, published by Junco, Heiberger and Loken (2011) showed that those students who use twitter, especially in the academic environment, improve their results. From their study, the authors noted that the organized purposeful activities within the twitter, the discussion and projects raised the interaction level of student and instructors, that in turn, created correlation with good grade (Junco et al., 2011). This study also recognizes the efforts of social media in the establishment of an enhanced learning outcome that is more engaging.

Nonetheless, the approach has down sides as evidenced by the following controversies despite the positive outcomes suggested by Junco and others. Writing about the educational value of Twitter, Tang and Hew (2017) offer a critical research of the educators' attitudes with the focus on the bipolar spectrum. While some consider the platform relevant to increase the level of participation by adding the real-time communication modes, others believe that having distractive components is the negative impact of the platform on students. Tang & Hew identify that there are two potential extremes in using of Twitter in training and teaching, and Masters' suggestion that this media can improve the approaches when it is integrated based on specific instructional strategy which reduces possible interferences (Tang & Hew, 2017).

Moreover, the adoption of social media by academic staff may be ranged rather differently depending on the outlooks of professional risk and the tendencies for mingling of the private and the professional sphere. To this, Purvis, Rodger, and Beckingham (2016) pointed that for some of the educator, social media is a creative tool to transform the teaching and learning in classroom while for others is a disturbance or a threat to the educational practice. This study also focused on how these educators are willing and motivated to use social media for teaching provided that they have governmental support and Professional Development. The authors propose pre and in-service training, which would cover mobile learning benefits and risks, so that the educators could fully harness social media, as stated by Purvis et al. (2016).

These works, in general, provide a clear picture how SM integrated into higher education. There are many research studies, which corroborate the use of such social media platforms such as Twitter in supporting learning achievement however it is pertinent to point out that effectiveness of such tools depends heavily on such moderating variables such as educators' attitudes and perceptions and such issues as policies of an organisation. Therefore whether a particular higher learning institution should adopt the use of social media in their learning system should consider

the advantages that comes with it and the possible risks and then formulate policies that may suit the use of social media.

Concerning Instagram, evaluations of Instagram as a complementary medium in teaching English to university students are researched by Erarslan (2019). With permission from Instagram, this mixed-method research used surveys, an experimental task, and interviews to measure students' engagement and achievement facilitated by interactive features of Instagram. Erarslan points to the most apparent phenomenon of social media and sees the potential of using it for education and for foreign languages in particular. Consequently, the study showed that, although the site was built for social purposes, interaction through Instagram was capable of supplementing and enrich language learning in contexts that were beyond the classroom (Erarslan, 2019). This finding is supported by other literature that highlighted learning aspect of social media (Manca & Ranieri, 2016). Two hundred and nineteen students participated in the survey, eighty students participated in the controlled experiment where activities on Instagram were incorporated into their English lesson plans. This methodological approach enabled the research to map the potential of this social media and demonstrate how IG helped to enhance the acquisition of language knowledge, especially vocabulary and syntactic recognition. By the same token, Erarslan's research demonstrate that, indeed, Instagram can play a powerful role in shaping the process of language acquisition. In terms of motivation and engagement of students, results found an increased level of interaction due to ordinary features of the chosen platform. In addition, the experimental group, who experienced language learning tasks through Instagram, showed of significant differences in language achievement from a control group (Erarslan, 2019). These results are in support of the engagement theory in educational technology, which supports learners' interaction and participation in achieving better learning (Kearsley & Shneiderman, 1998).

Facebook in particular has been acknowledged for improving learning outcomes, or otherwise learning processes for that matter, including those in language learning. Klimova and Pikhart (2020) characterized studies focused on the utilization of Facebook in enhancing writing of EFL learners. Using some of the studies analysed above, they affirm the educational value of Facebook. Using a systematic approach, the authors reviewed the findings of research articles drawn from the Web of Science and Scopus databases on the effects of Facebook use on EFL written composition. According to their studies, it is evident that Facebook enhances student's writing skills in terms of ideas presentation, the use of better appropriate words and improvements in students' group work. These enhancements have been made possible by the nature of the platform; which involves real-time interaction hence real peer feedback. From a cognitive and linguistic point of view, that implies that Facebook provides the kind of practice which is helpful in developing important phases of the writing process: analysis, synthesis, evaluation. It also facilitates use of language knowledge and effectively sharpen the students' grammar, syntax and discourse abilities through properly timed interactions. The incorporation of Facebook into EFL instruction might be useful, especially where other teaching approaches seem to dampen the learning experience. This approach is in sync with today's student's personalities in terms of communication and engagement making learning more informative and fun. Considering the fact that, current literature supports the role of Facebook in language learning, Klimova and Pikhart (2020) therefore called for research which analyses education settings of different types, and investigate relatively long term effects of the application on language competence. The following future research could extend existing literature and enhance current approaches to education, while also identifying other possible advantages of adopting social media in educational environments.

2.1.2 Role of Social Media in Language Learning

Social media has progressively become an essential tool to use in the teaching and learning of languages in informal and integrated learning (Reinhardt, 2019) It can be described from various perspectives; motivation, interaction and as an enabler for group learning.

Most of the social media platforms include Facebook, Instagram, You-tube among others make it easier for learners to access diverse and more enhancing resources. Such platforms increase motivation because the presented materials are usually more interesting than traditional educational ones. For example, students can engage with videos, and podcasts or articles, which will come in handy when learning a particular language, so that they do not lose interest and keep on learning (Miller, 2024; Sabila & Dewi, 2024). These studies show that the learners operating via social media demonstrate greater motivation and enthusiasm concerning language learning than utilizing traditional methods (Muftah, 2022; Nasution, 2022).

The positives are that through the use of social media learners are able to engage with their fellow learners and practice with the native speakers. This interaction enables learners practice real life communication skills and self confidence in the use of the language learnt. Group discussions, sharing and solving, are some of the most important processes intrinsic to the learning of languages irrespective of the media used (offline or online) and that is where platforms help out (Sabila & Dewi, 2024; Zheng et al., 2023). For instance, students can engage in synchronous chats or asynchronous discussion forums, which make real-life conversations in speaking and writing tasks (Muftah, 2022; Nasution, 2022).

The activities carried out on the social media platform are real and allow the students use the language appropriately. The content which creates a context and hooks the attention of the learners in present through posts, comments, and multimedia shared by various users in the

world. This exposure not only enhances the learners' lexical ground but also enhances the learners' awareness of cultural connotations that are dredged to the language (Sabila & Dewi, 2024; Nasution, 2022). However, social media facilitates context-based learning where credit students learn in a context that allows them to apply or practice what has been learnt, which strengthens the learning (Sabila & Dewi, 2024; Miller, 2024).

However, as with any sort of integration of social media into learning, there are certain problems associated with the integration of social media into language learning. Problems that are likely to affect learning include; barriers like the kind of information that is available in the internet.

However, there is also awareness interruption and addiction, because there is a lot material unrelated to educational activities in these platforms (Sabila & Dewi, 2024; Muftah, 2022). In addition, it is crucial to address the aspects within such environments learners need to learn to filter out such information (Miller, 2024).

2.2 Digital Language Learning Theories

2.2.1 Computer-Assisted Language Learning

Computer-Assisted Language Learning popularly known as CALL is a rather unique interface of language education and technologies and comprises the utilization of computer and any allied engineering in language learning. Providing an overview of the major works contributed to the field literature in this area of study, this paper identifies and discusses theoretical and empirical antecedents, current practical applications and avenues for future research.

The framers of CALL learned many theories of learning and the constructivism has been adopted mostly while framing CALL. Levy (1997) opines that CALL should be grounded on learning theories that center on active activities of the learner and these are well supported by calls technology. As Warschauer & Healey (1998) elsewhere do the same, remarking that CALL environments afford constructivist learning paradigms through the facilitation of authentic, tasks

and interactions. Moreover, Chapelle (2003) has described certain standards for CALL as regards the language learning potential, learner characteristics, meaning orientation, realism, positive feedback, and effect on learner independence.

Thus from a pragmatic perspective, CALL has gone through a number of existing stages according to development of technology and learning approaches. Bax (2003) describes these as three main stages: These are behavioristic confrontation, communicative avoidance, and integrative CALLs. Each stage means transition from well-defined mechanical drill and practice activities to less formal transmission gadgetry and communicative as well as integrative assignments like multimedia, internet and the like. In Hubbard (2009), the author explains why teacher education in call is crucial since to integrate technology into language teaching, teachers have to possess technical skills and pedagogical content knowledge about when this technology can be effectively used.

Newer technologies that have found their way into CALL in the recent past include; mobile applications, virtual reality, and artificial intelligence. According to Godwin-Jones (2018), this is true and adds that what is now becoming popular is the mobile assisted language learning (MALL), which allows learning to take place outside classroom. More to the point, Stockwell & Hubbard, (2013) examine the extent to which technology mobile devices can enhance language learning arguing that the devices have the ability of encouraging learners to practice with sustained intensity during extra class time.

However, CALL encounters a number of problems. Blake (2008) talks about the digital divide and fixed technology acquisition thus causing variation of equity on CALL. Further, Reinders & White (2016) insisted on the need to use better methods in aptitude of the CALL to capture the efficacy and consequences of technology-supported second languages learning.

2.2.2 Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is a progressive sub-discipline of instruction in Second Language Acquisition which uses mobile platforms in teaching languages. This paper aims to present the state of knowledge about MALL to the reader overviews its theoretical foundations, applications, and the trends in its development.

MALL has adapted with the help of mobile technology where conventional methods for the learning and teaching environments have undergone changes due to ongoing access of learning and communicating based on mobile devices. It is theoretical in nature and may use Vygotsky's sociocultural theory as a framework because learning occurs in social context aided by the capacity of mobile technology to be incorporated into everyday learning activities (Vygotsky, 1978).

MALL uses simple and comprehensive applications starting from vocabulary to more elaborate interactional applications. Both Stockwell (2010) and Burston (2015) observe the flexibility that is afforded by the use of mobile applications in delivering unique learning interaction, and instant assessment beyond formal teaching environment.

The existing literature also shows that MALL can enhance multiple language skills such as; Vocabulary, Grammar, and Communicative skills (Thornton & Houser, 2005; Sung, Chang, and Yang 2015). Research finds it useful to incorporate MALL in daily learning activities in order to improve students' learning engagement and recall.

2.3 Impact of Social Media on Writing Skills Development

2.3.1 Process Approach in Writing Development

During the late 1960s to early 1980s, the process approach made a big impact on teaching writing in classrooms, both for native and non-native speakers. Theorists such as Emig (1971), Murray (1980) and Graves (1983) argued against judging writing only by its correct final

product. They believed that composing involves going back and forth between steps, using their minds a lot, and finishing with publishing their work. This view of writing as problem solving was explained by Flower and Hayes (1981) with their cognitive process model, which described how people plan, translate, and review their work in writing. Under such a paradigm, the teacher helps students improve their writing by supporting them in making several drafts and reflecting on their purpose and who they are writing for, not by marking a final piece of writing.

Research done at the beginning in mainstream L1 classes offered evidence for the approach, but it also pointed out its shortcomings. Based on twenty-nine studies of various grades, Graham and Sandmel (2011) found that teaching writing through steps and examples tends to increase the overall quality of student writing, with a small, but real, effect of 0.34. Several syntheses (Gillespie & Graham, 2014; Australian Education Research Organisation, 2022) have also found that the greatest results are achieved when students are taught writing strategies, are encouraged to set goals and can evaluate their own progress. However, these reviews note that unless writers with language problems and those learning English at lower levels get extra help with grammar, genre analysis, and accurate writing, they usually do not make the same progress.

This criticism is especially true in English-as-a-Foreign-Language contexts, where students must be given a lot of support in grammar and how to communicate in English. Those who started using the process approach in EFL argued that its focus on students' choices, teamwork and true communication encouraged students, although some qualitative studies pointed out that students often simply edited their work instead of rethinking what they wrote (Vanderpyl, 2012). The mixed outcomes are also confirmed by quantitative studies. There is evidence from Alsamadani (2010) and Gong, Wang and Paul (2023) that in general, process-focused instruction improved students' overall ability to communicate, but they did not see significant improvements in

grammatical accuracy unless there were explicit lessons in language included at certain moments in the cycle. Badger and White's (2000) solution is to bring together the student-centred ideas of process writing with specific analysis and modelling of genres; classroom studies indicate that this style can guide students in using creative language while still focusing on form (Hyland, 2003).

New features offered by digital tools and social media fit each step in the process cycle.

Websites such as blogs, wikis, Facebook and Instagram allow writers to make, revise and publish their work for real readers and get immediate responses from other users. The present thesis investigates learning English by writing on social media, so research on Instagram is very important. In their study (Avivi and Megawati, 2020), secondary students in Indonesia were asked to make and edit Instagram captions for four weeks as part of recount writing. Those following the process-based approach scored much higher in writing than those who took part in traditional classroom drafting without sharing or editing their work publicly. According to Prasetyawati and Ardi (2020), individuals in their study found that posting online increased their attention, made them feel like they were speaking to real people, and motivated them to review and improve the language they used. All in all, these studies imply that social media can support the publishing stage and offer much useful feedback for future improvements.

Even so, such factors may point out issues students encounter in managing the structure of language. Because learners may believe that 'likes' are a sign of success, they could make many superficial changes to their writing. Because conference sessions take a lot of time, teachers now have to review both student drafts and public discussions. The literature often suggests three approaches: offering explicit lessons on difficult language issues when they matter most; making students review each other's work by focusing on meaning and quality, not just emotions; and

showing what is expected for assessment based on how effectively and accurately the students revise.

In light of this, the thesis uses a two-month-long experiment to put the process approach into practice with A2-level EFL students on Instagram. They chose photos and topics, made captions, got feedback from others and fixed their posts, and finally shared them with their audience. Since the design featured posts across eight weeks, this allowed for many practice cycles, and classroom-based assessment of essays before and after allowed another way to see how much progress was made. According to the research discussed, the design studied should improve fluency, understanding the audience, and organising the speech when used with additional teaching of prepositions, verb tenses, and cohesive connections. The chapter proposes that linking process writing through social media with language support works best for developing writing skills in today's digital world.

2.3.2 Collaborative Writing and Peer Interaction

The update of the social media as a tool in class has improved collaborative writing as well as peer assessment practices among students from the traditional learning practices. Based on the reviewed literature, this paper focuses on the role of social media in collaborative writing and peer communication with learners, and its influence on the learning of writing skills.

The various sites like Facebook and Google Docs have come out to be very useful in the improvement of collaboration in learning. It has been found out that these technologies support peer connectivity in order to share communication and resources within a short time. For instance, Ukwishaka & Aghaee (2020) observed that students of Linnaeus University used Facebook for scheduling group meetings and discussions making collaborative learning even

more productive. Non-bored accessibility of social media keeps students active on projects, and since collaboration is a continuous process, students must remain active all the time.

However, the features of social media, including chats, group sections, and file-sharing options, undergird a range of interaction types necessary for collaborative composing. Through drafts and peer assessment, students can swap the papers and contribute to each other's work, which in turn improves the whole writing process and promotes students' togetherness feelings (Ukwishaka & Aghaee, 2020; Ansari & Khan, 2020). Not only does this interaction foster collaboration but the ideas and scenarios students get to solve when in groups assists them develop critical thinking skills.

The effect of peers feedback in the writing process is well established. The use of SNS in collaborative writing aspires to offer learners the opportunity to participate in meaningful discussions regarding material that they are composing. Chen and collaborators (2023) and Li (2023) inspect that interactions with peers result in better writing outcomes because students get to express themselves and get feedback from peers. As illustrated by Chen and her colleagues, during peer feedback, the learners are more likely to attend to the global features of a text, the how and why of writing rather than the what, the how often (2023).

Likewise, the current writing technologies such as Google Docs has also been found to improve the collaborative writing experience. These tools allow real time editing and commenting even when students are collaborating physically from different places. This feature not only helps expand the potential pool of collaborators for mutual work but also creates a basic sense of responsibility from the participants while contributing to a group document {Li, 2023}. That the people are allowed to use different resources from the internet during group assignments also

helps in honing the individuals' writing skills since resource apoligise of use on language use and style is readily available.

Hence, the incorporation of collaborative peer feedback can be explained sociocultural theory and process writing theory. According to van Lier (2013), sociocultural theory holds that learners acquire meaning through social engagement, so, peer feedback affords learners an opportunity to socially construct meaning of other people's language. Process writing theory, in particular, considers the act of writing to be cyclic and to involve collaboration as one of the essential mechanisms by which knowledge is created. From this viewpoint, it is critical to state that peer feedback is beneficial not only in enhancing the quality of written products but also in enhancing the level of learning due to increased content engagement (Chen et al., 2023).

Further, the research has shown that motivation and confidence support that is associated with affective dimension improves via collaborative interaction in social media. Participation within a group reduces social pressure made related to writing tasks hence promoting risk-taking among students when writing (Li, 2023; Chen et al., 2023). These emotional supports which are normally given via the video conference or through the chat are especially important for the language learners that may rarely feel confident in their writing skills.

However, there are problems or an issue that are associated with the use of social media in collaborative writing. Problems like; equal or unequal distribution of work among the group members and the fact that social media open platforms make members easily distracted (Ukwishaka & Aghaee, 2020; Ansari & Khan, 2020). Moreover, there are cultural aspects that affect the ways that students can give feedback; some learners may feel uncomfortable about giving criticisms to other learners fearing that they may offend the other person (Chen et al.,

2023). Hence, faculty members need to avoid such tendencies whenever they incorporate the use of social media in collaborative writing projects.

Autonomous writing in form of comments, posts and messages, and online chats, in general through social network interfaces has become a part of Language Use for many learners. This literature review focuses on how informal writing, such as the type carried out on the flows, improves writing speed and precision and in identifying how the features of social media enhance the learning of language.

2.3.3 Informal Writing and Language Practice

Sociocultural perspective of language learning assumes that language is learnt in social context and that tools of social and cultural communication can facilitate learning (Vygotsky, 1978) hence informal writing on social media.. Moreover, in the present context of SM, the concept of “communities of practice” (Lave & Wenger, 1991) is appropriate because language learning also happens within social networks that can be developed through the elaboration of joint interests and activities.

It is useful to learn languages in social networks because they create a fantastic, attractive, and lively context for language practising. Ito et al. (2009) explain how everyday technologies – including social media – provide site for learning that is interest-driven and socially situated. In the informal writing present on social media platforms, Warschauer (1999) indicates that seeing how a language is used more often and at the spur of the moment as an effective fluency enhancing activity. Similarly, in a study that Ellison et al (2011) college students who actively participated on the social networks reported enhanced flow/ frequency of writing which supports the opinion that the interactive components of those platforms may effectively teach learners to practice language more frequently.

As for the advantages of SM from the perspective of fluency, there is clear agreement that fluency does improve where SM is involved. Thus, Taguchi et al. 2013 pointed out that the case of frequently using informal writing on social media sites results to inadequate establishment of non-standard language habits if formal education is not incorporated. Nonetheless, research by Stevenson and Liu (2010) has shown that the comments from the friends on the social media enhance accuracy because learners correct each other, thereby creating a culture that is informed by correct language acquisition.

Nonetheless, this paper seeks to explore the challenges that are associated with the use of social media for language learning. Thus, while chatting and using abbreviations which can be easily met in social networking sites, the child can weaken their writing skills. Moreover, social media feedback can be considered as having mixed quality and learning value depending on the type of feedback given (Manca & Ranieri, 2016).

Teachers interested in using social media into language learning should try to combine the formal and the informal learning approaches. Thorne and Reinhardt (2008) have incorporated social media into language curricula as a way of offering learners social interaction with the language while at the same time ensuring that they receive formal learning support. This way students can get the positive aspects of social networking without at the same time, getting the wrong ideas regarding the formation of their language skills.

2.3.4 Social Media as a Platform for Corrective Feedback and Autonomy

SM networks help learners to interact with the other learners and instructors in a more informal style of communication leading to motivation and reduced anxiety in language practice as discussed by Blattner and Fiori (2009). These platforms afford constant feedback, which is also an important feature of language learning, as the learners can correct mistakes as they make them

(Shintani, 2016). Using the ideas of Kartchava and Nassaji (2022) in only MALL they also state that timely feedback as well as rich context plays an important role for language learning.

Impact on Learner Autonomy

The freedom that comes with social media makes the learners take full responsibility of their learning. Learners themselves can control the amount of time spent on the particular language learning activities via the interactive and participatory features of social media and consequently be able to learn the targeted language in context-constrained meaningful linguistic practice (Lai & Zhao, 2020). This autonomy is not only for selecting what to learn or study, but it is also selecting the ways of applying the feedback received in order to enhance the language proficiency actively.

2.3.5 Social Media Tools and Platforms for Writing Skill Development

These micro blogging and the use of captions in social sites such as Instagram and twitter have become critical in improving language skills, most probably in maker of students to compel them to write simple and to the point. The small character capacities of these platforms require short and effective messages that are useful in education, where compact and meaningful information is valuable.

In addition, the use of these platforms offers the feedback from the actual audience due to increased interactivity, which is very helpful in the process of language acquisition. As Ellison et al. (2011) have mentioned, responses from the peers and the rest of the community not only activate learners but also provide the range of prognosis that can be quite helpful in developing the learners' writing skills even more. This social interaction enables a responsive interactional space that can facilitate enactment of language use and subsequent feedback or correction for the student.

As explained by Manca and Ranieri (2016), peer feedback is central to this kind of learning model. Due to the friendly nature of social media, users are able to correct each other regarding their errors and this hereby improves learning outcomes as well as fosters learners' community. Such environments foster language use that is correct and appropriate for the context of the interaction.

Teaching and learning with Instagram Captions as a writing skill development tool for students learning English as a Second Language (ESL) has elicited considerable interest in the current literature in the field of education. As an example, with reference to the specified deficit within the framework of microblogging, Instagram can be of great benefit for language learners since it stimulates users to compose brief texts containing few concentrated concepts. Research shows that reading, as well as commenting on, other people's Instagram captions increases multiple aspects of writing, namely, the lexical, syntactic, and textually.

Nugroho and Rahmawati (2024) provides studies revealed that Instagram has a positive effect on students' practical writing skill in ESP. Indonesian students majoring in Sharia Banking were involved in their study, and they established that the application of Instagram for writing exercises not only corrected grammatical errors but also increased students' self-confidence when writing. This is because learners can engage in interactions with the other learners or instructors through this system and get feedback for self-correction immediately.

In addition, Dasuki and Sulistyningrum (2024) also systematically reviewed the literature that showed how the Instagram caption can be used as learning content. According to their assertions, they felt that writing captions helps students learn grammar more actively and consciously than other conventional activities involving writing, and particularly writing captions promotes students' engagement with grammatical features, such as subject-verb agreement and tense use.

The process of providing captions is not that easy; before completing these captions, learners are

able to consider the English word usage and construction, making the general mechanics more detailed in their minds.

Another advantage of using Instagram for writing is motivational as well. Aljumah (2012) contributed on the fact that the social media environment is informal, this makes tension associated with traditional writing daunting and time consuming be eliminated thus enabling the students to test language in the course in an informal manner. Such impressions of freedom promote a proper daily or any other more frequent practice of creating texts necessary for language learning. Also, Listiani's (2016) research also concluded that students using captions on Instagram improved significantly in writing skills; therefore, Instagram significantly enhances students' writing process.

In addition, as a result of the collaborative work, accomplished through Instagram, students interact with their peers, which is crucial for language acquisition. Mansor, & Rahim, (2017) also note that smart applications such as Instagram produce possibilities for real interactions among students. These interactions not only benefit in language acquisition, but also helps create a positive environment for learners that assists them in sharing their ideas safely and contribute to that of their fellow learners.

2.4 Challenges and Limitations of Using Social Media for Writing Skills

The use of social media in teaching English for Second Language learners has its pros and cons. As with Facebook, twitter and Instagram that can complement language learning through the various fun tools, it is visible that they also have looming drawbacks that are not favourable to the ESL students' writing skills development. One of the archetypes of disruption taken from the literature is distraction in the context of social media. In a study conducted by Dasuki and Sulistyningrum (2024), students are more likely to be distracted by non-learning content or notification which disorients them from performing a language learning task. This distraction can

cause poor attention and accomplishment in writing practice since the learners are flooded by interesting content to engage in.

However, the content of language resources shared on social networks is often not of high quality. ESL learners often come across information that is unreliable or grammatically incorrect and such information misguides them throughout their learning process (Alnujaidi, 2016). Such fluctuating pitching calls for scrutiny when assessing materials posted on these sites since learners may be negatively influenced by wrong usage of language or improper tone. Due to the increased content on the internet most of it is fake making it hard for the students to find true educational material.

A second factor is that current social media users, specifically teenagers, do not have access to well-defined rules and courses on those platforms. Referring to Savasci (2013), the author pointed out that there is no well-defined progression pattern to allow students to monitor crucial skills' advancement. Inasmuch as learners do not have specific goals, or the educators do not support and encourage them when they are in the learning process, the learners are likely to get lost; this decreases their willingness to complete writing tasks. In addition, the use of peer feedback which may be valuable in certain circumstances may cause misunderstanding in that the peers may not have adequate linguistic proficiency to offer useful feedback.

Moreover, timely emerged issues such as privacy and security issues that are related to social media utilisation can limit the participation of the learners in online learning communities.

Several learners have concerns towards submitting their work with other people's access based on negative assessment or privacy infringement (Hernandez & Flórez, 2020). Such hesitancy can reduce chances of group writing and interaction that are important in the developmental of learning writing skills.

2.5 Existing Gaps in the Literature

Education longitudinal research is essential for determine long-term outcomes in terms of social media usage effect on writing skills, however there is a significant deficit of such investigations.

It was noted that most of them present cross-sectional data meaning that upon everyday practise, skills or learning change over time and thus actual learning trajectories are not presented.

Following Warschauer (2010), it can be criticised that the interactions of technological and writing competencies over time are poorly captured and constrain the promotion of knowledge about how the skills obtained for CMC environments lead to succeeding academic and occupational writing skills. In addition, Baron (2008) emphasises that cross sectional data prevent drawing the distinction between short term changes and lasting changes in literacy levels.

Also, the state of the research specifies a deficiency in examining the effects of the various SNSs on various forms of writing skills. Even ordinary platforms like twitter and face book, not to mention new emerging platforms such as not snapchat or Tiktok, have been explored less as to how they can be used to promote effective writing or as tools for education (Greenhow and Lewin, 2016). This raises a question of how one platform with its set of affordances and constraints might or might not impact one aspect of writing over another, for instance, how writing with the kind of precision seen in an academic paper might be different from the kind of writing done in creative writing where aesthetics really counts.

The variation of learner characteristics in prior research also forms limitations. Most of the literature reviewed here concentrates on the young students or youths in school setting with little emphasis on working professionals or the mature learners (Manca and Ranieri, 2016). Further, there is a geographical bias with an overemphasised focus on learners within the North American and European setting. Interestingly this area still remains untouched in countries such as

Kazakhstan in which virtually no studies have been carried out, particularly those that would use experimental approaches to inform the general effects of social media on writing skills particularly within this cultural and linguistic backdrop.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

3.1 Research Design

A quasi-experimental research design was used to study how English language learners performed in grammar and spelling accuracy after using Instagram for writing practice (Cook & Campbell, 1979; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The experimental group received Instagram caption writing assignments for two months yet the control group maintained their normal curriculum throughout the study period (Avivi & Megawati, 2020).

A paper-based pretest and posttest essay served to evaluate the intervention's effects on both groups (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012). The researchers analyzed the written texts to measure advancements in grammar and spelling then used this data to evaluate the writing tool effectiveness of Instagram as a supplementary writing platform (Reinhardt, 2019).

3.2 Participants

The research was carried out at SDU University in Kazakhstan, using Classroom-based convenience sampling, sometimes called “intact group”, to select participants as the researcher had these groups available and instructed them at the time (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A total of 34 students from a variety of academic disciplines participated in the study. All participants were first- and second-year university students whose native tongue is Kazakh. These students were grouped in a General English course for learners with study level B1. The course was conducted five times a week, for a duration of fifty minutes each, during the 15 week spring semester in the year 2025.

3.2.1 EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Table 1.

Information about the participants of the Experimental group

Participant	Gender M/F	Age	Year of study	Program	Faculty
EG01	F	18	1	Mathematics	Engineering
EG02	M	18	1	Information Systems	Engineering
EG03	M	19	2	Information Systems	Engineering
EG04	F	18	1	Statistics and Data Science	Engineering
EG05	M	19	2	Statistics and Data Science	Engineering
EG06	F	19	2	Information Systems	Engineering
EG07	F	18	1	Management	Business School
EG08	F	18	1	Information Systems	Engineering
EG09	M	18	1	Information Systems	Engineering
EG10	M	18	1	Information Systems	Engineering
EG11	M	18	1	Management	Business School
EG12	F	18	1	Information Systems	Engineering
EG13	F	18	1	Chemistry- Biology	Education and Humanities
EG14	M	18	1	Information Systems	Engineering
EG15	M	19	2	Information Systems	Engineering
EG16	M	18	1	Informatics	Engineering
EG17	M	19	2	Information Systems	Engineering

3.2.2 CONTROL GROUP

Table 2

Information about the participants of the Control group

Participant	Gender M/F	Age	Year of study	Program	Faculty
CG01	M	19	2	Information Systems	Engineering
CG02	F	19	2	Informatics	Engineering
CG03	M	18	1	Mathematics	Engineering
CG04	M	18	1	Mathematics	Engineering
CG05	M	19	2	Information Systems	Engineering
CG06	F	18	1	Statistics and Data Science	Engineering
CG07	F	19	2	Statistics and Data Science	Engineering
CG08	M	19	2	Informatics	Engineering

CG09	F	18	1	Physics- Informatics	Education and Humanities
CG10	M	19	2	Statistics and Data Science	Engineering
CG11	M	19	2	Information Systems	Engineering
CG12	F	18	1	Information Systems	Engineering
CG13	F	18	1	Foreign Language: Two Foreign Languages	Education and Humanities
CG14	M	19	2	Mathematics	Engineering
CG15	F	18	1	Statistics and Data Science	Engineering
CG16	M	19	2	Foreign Language: Two Foreign Languages	Education and Humanities
CG17	F	19	2	Mathematics	Engineering

To observe the ethical considerations, all the participants signed and provided written informed consent before they began the study (American Psychological Association [APA], 2020). Some learners declined to participate in this research study. The students were grouped by their English learning ability whereby they were given a placement test when they were enrolling at the university. This placement procedure helped in putting all the participants in the correct groups in terms of skills; this gave the study a standard starting point.

The experimental group consisted of 17 students who had been assigned to use Instagram as an innovative approach to improve their writing (Krutka & Carpenter, 2016). On the other hand, the control group, which also comprised 17 students, did not engage in any additional writing activities outside of their regular coursework. The researcher taught both groups in order to eliminate the variation in teaching strategies which might affect the results (Johnson & Christensen, 2019). This structured design allowed researchers to make a direct comparison between the effectiveness of Instagram-based writing activities and the absence of supplementary writing practice, and consider the findings as a contribution to the discussion on

the role of technology in the development of writing proficiency among EFL learners (Reinhardt, 2019).

3.3 Data Collection Methods

This study employed a combination of classroom-based essay writing and online writing practice and used freewriting style (Elbow, 1973). Freewriting was chosen as the major tool of writing in the present study as it is compatible with the aims stated, namely to develop the foreign language writing fluency and to evaluate the grammatical mistakes (Nation, 2019). They complement the Instagram-based modality employed in the experimental group and offer a meaningful, non-stressful activity to both groups. Besides its functionality for the study, freewriting offered a useful database to examine the value of social media sites in developing the writing skills of ESL learners as suggested by other authors (Hwang, 2010).

To collect data, pretest and posttest essay tasks were administered to both the experimental and control groups. At the beginning of the study, all participants completed a written essay in the classroom (See Appendix A,C). The same procedure was repeated after the two-month intervention period (See Appendix B,D). These tests were conducted under teacher supervision to ensure consistent testing conditions and eliminate the possibility of external assistance (Graham & Harris, 2019). Each essay was written within a 50-minute time limit, and students were not allowed to use dictionaries, translators, books, or any other reference tools. The essay topics were casual and familiar, encouraging a freewriting approach.

For the experimental group, Instagram served as the main writing platform during the intervention period (Vurdien, 2020). Students created private Instagram accounts and followed each other, along with the researcher, to build a closed digital learning community (Townsend &

Wallace, 2016). They were required to publish two posts per week over eight weeks, resulting in a total of sixteen posts. These posts were written in their free time, each ranging from 50 to 100 words, and students chose their own topics. The posts were also created through freewriting without external aid. To promote interaction, students were encouraged to comment on their peers' posts (See Appendix E).

3.4 Essay Topic Choice

The topics for the pretest and posttest essays were chosen by the researcher based on the intention of the study to enhance the writing fluency (Byrnes & Manchón, 2014). Both topics were chosen to be familiar, interesting, and relevant to the participants in order to find a way they could relate to the topics themselves. To reduce cognitive and experiential distance, these topics were chosen from students' most probable life scenarios, which led to the ideas' smoother flow. The topic of a pretest, "A Time You Overcame a Challenge", made students describe how they dealt with a particular challenge thus encouraging them to think and write a detailed description of a challenge that they have faced which involved use descriptive language, word grouping, time sequencing and emotional display. And the topic of a posttest 'The Best Day of Your Life (So Far)' focused on a happy day and why it was chosen as the best day so far, encouraging students to think, write and illustrate the day that made them happy by using descriptive language. These topics were general enough that any student could describe and still specific to provide direction for their input and lessen the amount of emotional attachment and the anxiety often linked with a writing assignment. In total, they were selected to allow the students to practice necessary kind of writing which included sequencing, reflecting, and analyzing while meeting the objectives of the study to compare Instagram with traditional paper-and-pencil writing.

Participants in the Instagram writing activity received unrestricted freedom to select whatever subject they wished for their captions. Students benefited from open-ended topic selection because it enabled them to create content about material that they found personally significant and engaging. Participating students needed to maintain academic appropriateness when selecting their content.

3.5 Data Analysis Methods

The researcher chose to use their own customized framework instead of established holistic or analytic writing rubrics to evaluate the students' writing (Polio, 2013). The evaluation framework analyzed only three distinct language error types. Students received evaluation for their writing based on three language areas: grammatical errors and spelling mistakes and incorrect preposition usage. An instructor counted each specific error type which appeared in both pretest and posttest written essays. The precise evaluation of language accuracy and longitudinal assessment were possible through this focused method.

A data analysis method compared the error counts in each category between pretest and posttest periods for both experimental and control groups. The research used the Mann-Whitney U test to statistically evaluate writing accuracy differences between the experimental and control groups through non-parametric methods which analyze independent sample comparisons (Field, 2018). The analysis revealed meaningful information about how Instagram-based writing activities influence learner grammatical and spelling advancement.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

This paper adhered to ethical considerations to meet research ethical guidelines and to safeguard the participants (British Educational Research Association [BERA], 2018). All participants

signed written informed consent (See Appendix F,G)(APA, 2020). First, students were read the description of the study and asked if they would like to participate. To the respondents who agreed to participate in the study, a consent letter was offered containing information about the study and participation in the study. The researcher then read all the contents of the agreement to the participants to avoid misunderstandings and the participants agreed and put their signatures on the document. Every participant was given a copy of the signed letter that stated and outlined the researcher's contact details; the researcher also had a copy of the same. The consent process was carried out through a consent letter which has been recommended by the ethics committee of the educational institution affiliated to the researcher.

To safeguard anonymity and confidentiality, strict measures were implemented. Access to the data was restricted solely to the researcher, ensuring that no one else could view the essays. To ensure the participants' identity was not disclosed, their essays were assigned numbers, and very private or very sensitive information will not be shown on this paper or presentation. These measures helped to maintain anonymity and confidentiality of the participants' information at the stages of conducting research.

All study-related Instagram accounts maintained private settings to safeguard participant privacy along with their emotional state (Townsend & Wallace, 2016). The research design restricted content accessibility to the experimental participants alongside the researcher himself. The limited access to a closed group platform enabled students to share personal experiences without fear while feeling comfortable which led to authentic and meaningful written content. The experiment was carried out within a controlled space which protected participants from outside judgement while upholding both ethical principles of privacy preservation and participant boundaries.

3.7 Limitations

When reviewing the results of the literature research concerning the development of the writing skills using social media, several methodological limitations were acknowledged which could affect the results. Firstly, sample diversity, as all participants are Kazakh, and the size of the sample is 34 students can be considered a disadvantage because these results cannot be generalized on the whole population of EFL students (Cohen et al., 2018). Also, technological access and skills are a limitation because different participants will have different levels of digital competence that will impact the manner and extent to which they can benefit from social media-based learning (Reinhardt, 2019). Furthermore, it is quite possible that some aspects of writing skills' development remain unmeasured or, at least, are not fully reflected in measurement tools and metrics used, so that even qualitative changes in students' writing may go unnoticed. The issues of methodology are essential for the analysis of results obtained in this research and assessing the generality of conclusions made.

CHAPTER 4

Results

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from a quasi-experimental study designed to evaluate the effect of Instagram-based writing practice on the writing accuracy of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners studying at the B1 level. The experiment was structured around two groups: an Experimental group that engaged in regular writing activities on Instagram and a control group that followed traditional classroom instruction. Over the course of two months, both groups completed pretest and posttest writing tasks, with their written output analyzed for mistakes in grammar, spelling, and prepositions.

The analysis began with an exploration of the data using descriptive statistics to provide a comprehensive overview of the performance of each group across the measurement period. This is followed by inferential statistical testing, specifically the Mann-Whitney U test, to determine whether the observed differences between groups were statistically significant. The chapter then offers a comparative analysis, reflecting on the practical and educational implications of the findings. The goal is to not only present the numbers but to situate them within the broader context of language education, digital learning, and writing pedagogy.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

4.2.1 Participant Overview

The study involved a total of 34 students, with the Experimental group comprising 17 students and the Control group comprising 17 students. All participants were drawn from the same

institution and were at a similar stage in their B1 level English language studies. This level is characterized by an ability to communicate simple ideas, write short texts, and understand basic grammatical structures, but with some errors typical for developing language learners. The recruitment process utilized convenience sampling, selecting students who were both accessible and willing to participate, which reflects common practice in classroom-based educational research.

No significant differences were observed between the groups in terms of initial language proficiency, age, or gender distribution. This relative homogeneity strengthened the comparability of the two groups and allowed the study to focus primarily on the intervention's impact rather than on demographic factors.

4.2.2 Pretest and Posttest Performance

The primary data collected in this study were the number of mistakes each student made in their pretest and posttest essays. Mistakes were categorized as grammar errors, spelling errors, and preposition errors. The "total mistakes" metric represented the sum of these three categories for each student (Table 3,4). All essays were produced under controlled classroom conditions, with students allotted the same amount of time and without access to external resources or assistance.

Table 3

Number of Mistakes made by the Experimental Group

Participant	Pretest Grammar Mistakes	Pretest Spelling Mistakes	Pretest Preposition Mistakes	PRETEST Total mistakes	Posttest Grammar Mistakes	Posttest Spelling Mistakes	Posttest Preposition Mistakes	POSTTEST Total mistakes
EG01	25	13	7	45	19	2	6	27
EG02	11	9	4	24	18	6	6	30
EG03	26	2	8	36	31	9	3	43
EG04	9	7	2	18	8	4	2	14
EG05	22	8	6	36	28	8	7	43
EG06	25	5	5	35	14	6	4	24
EG07	28	9	2	39	20	4	3	27
EG08	12	9	1	22	17	2	3	22
EG09	35	19	13	67	18	4	4	26
EG10	23	4	7	34	11	6	6	23
EG11	15	4	2	21	24	4	5	33
EG12	18	4	2	24	16	3	4	23
EG13	30	20	8	58	10	8	0	18
EG14	20	4	9	33	25	2	8	35
EG15	13	6	4	23	8	2	0	10
EG16	10	2	0	12	15	4	7	26
EG17	15	7	3	25	10	2	2	14

Table 4.

Number of Mistakes made by the Control Group

Participants	Pretest Grammar Mistakes	Pretest Spelling Mistakes	Pretest Preposition Mistakes	PRETEST Total Mistakes	Posttest Grammar Mistakes	Posttest Spelling Mistakes	Posttest Preposition Mistakes	POSTTEST Total Mistakes
CG01	27	9	4	40	25	5	5	35
CG02	16	5	1	22	17	6	8	31
CG03	15	15	6	36	12	7	2	21
CG04	16	4	2	22	20	2	5	27
CG05	29	8	7	44	32	9	6	47
CG06	19	12	8	39	23	17	10	50
CG07	43	8	10	61	48	4	1	53
CG08	29	10	5	44	12	8	1	21
CG09	19	12	3	34	7	1	1	9
CG10	16	2	2	20	12	1	4	17
CG11	7	11	4	22	9	4	1	14
CG12	22	13	3	38	18	8	4	30
CG13	19	6	8	33	15	8	7	30
CG14	26	6	5	37	24	12	1	37
CG15	25	7	4	36	31	1	7	39
CG16	45	5	10	60	29	8	14	51
CG17	8	0	3	11	6	8	2	16

4.2.2.1 Experimental Group

At the beginning of the experiment, Experimental group participants exhibited a mean total error count of 32.47 on the pretest essay. After two months of regular Instagram-based writing practice, the mean number of errors in the posttest essay dropped to 25.76. On average, Focus group students reduced their total mistakes by approximately 6.35 errors per person. When disaggregated by error type, the average reduction was 2.65 for grammar mistakes, 3.29 for spelling mistakes, and 0.76 for preposition mistakes. These results indicate that, descriptively,

the Focus group not only reduced their overall errors but did so across all major categories of writing accuracy measured in the study.

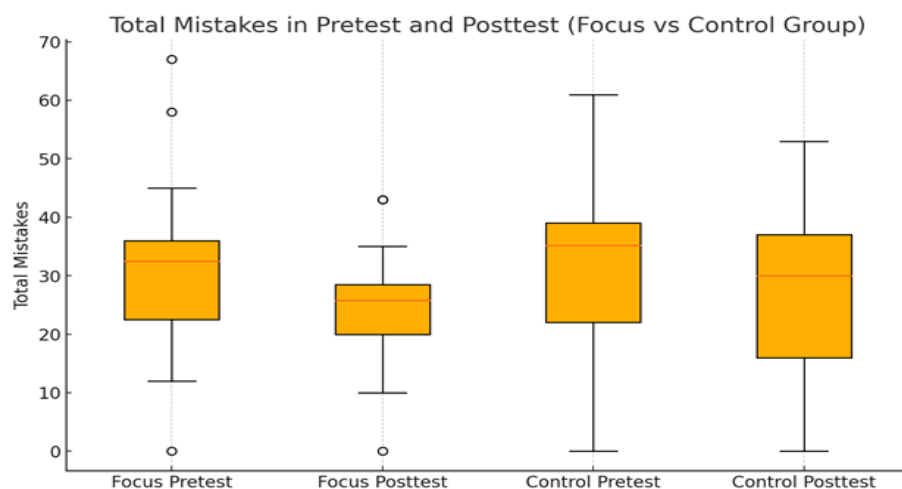
4.2.2.2 Control Group

The Control group started with a mean total error count of 35.23 in the pretest, and following two months of conventional classroom instruction, their posttest mean total errors were 31.05. The average improvement, measured as the reduction in total mistakes, was 3.58 per student. By error type, the Control group reduced grammar errors by 2.41, spelling mistakes by 1.41, and preposition errors by 0.35 on average. While improvement was observed in all categories, the gains were generally smaller than those seen in the Experimental group.

4.2.2.3 Data Visualization

To further illustrate the distribution and changes in performance, Figure 1 presents a boxplot comparison of total mistakes for both groups, pre- and post-intervention. The boxplot visually demonstrates reductions in total mistakes for both groups over time, with the Focus group showing a greater median reduction. However, the substantial overlap between the boxplots' interquartile ranges also points to a degree of variability within each group.

Figure 1



4.2.3 Patterns in the Data

The descriptive data suggest that both interventions—Instagram-based writing practice and traditional instruction—were associated with a reduction in writing mistakes. However, the Focus group consistently demonstrated greater average improvements across all measured categories. It is noteworthy that the greatest difference between groups was observed in the reduction of spelling mistakes, hinting that the informal, frequent writing practice on a social media platform may have been especially beneficial in this area. While preposition errors were less frequent overall, their reduction in both groups was relatively small, suggesting that this error type may be more resistant to improvement or less targeted by both instructional approaches.

It is important to interpret these mean improvements with caution. While the averages are higher in the Focus group, the range of individual scores within each group remains wide, as indicated by the spread of values in the boxplots. This spread suggests the possibility that certain individuals may have responded especially well (or poorly) to the intervention, a topic worthy of further qualitative exploration.

4.3 Inferential Statistics: Mann-Whitney U Test Results

In addition to descriptive comparisons, inferential statistics were employed to assess whether the observed differences between the groups were statistically significant or likely due to random chance. Given the sample size and the non-normal distribution of the error data, the Mann-Whitney U test was chosen as an appropriate non-parametric alternative to the independent samples t-test.

4.3.1 Rationale for the Mann-Whitney U Test

The Mann-Whitney U test is designed to compare the distributions of two independent groups. Unlike parametric tests, it does not assume a normal distribution of scores and is robust to the presence of outliers and skewed data—both common in small classroom-based educational studies. The test works by ranking all scores across both groups and then examining the sum of ranks for each group. If the groups truly differ, one would expect the ranks to be systematically higher or lower in one group compared to the other.

Table 5

Mann-Whitney U test comparing the Experimental group with the Control group

Measure	U statistic	p-value	Focus mean	Control mean
Total improvement	215	0.683892	6.352941	3.579832
Posttest total score	177	0.550772	24.408669	26.621849
Improvement grammar	140	0.890093	2.647059	2.411765
Improvement spelling	167	0.437475	3.294118	1.411765
Improvement preposition	151	0.834648	0.764706	0.352941

4.3.2 Test Results: Total Improvement

For the total improvement in writing accuracy (measured as the reduction in total mistakes from pretest to posttest), the Mann-Whitney U statistic was 215.0 with a corresponding p-value of 0.684. Although the Focus group achieved a mean improvement nearly twice as large as the Control group (6.35 vs. 3.58), the high p-value indicates that this difference is not statistically significant. In statistical terms, there is a 68.4% probability that such a difference could occur by random chance alone if the two groups were actually equivalent in the population.

4.3.3 Test Results: Posttest Total Scores

When comparing the groups' performance on the posttest essay alone, the Mann-Whitney U test yielded a statistic of 177.0 and a p-value of 0.551. Once again, while the Focus group had fewer

mean total errors on the posttest compared to the Control group, the difference was not significant at conventional thresholds (typically $p < 0.05$). This result further supports the conclusion that the intervention did not create a clear, statistically detectable separation between the groups in terms of final writing performance.

4.3.4 Test Results: Improvement by Error Type

Additional Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted for each specific error category. For grammar mistakes, the U statistic was 140.0 ($p = 0.890$), for spelling mistakes, U was 167.5 ($p = 0.437$), and for preposition errors, U was 151.0 ($p = 0.835$). Across all categories, the p-values remained well above the 0.05 significance level. These findings indicate that the differences observed in the descriptive statistics—favoring the Focus group—were not strong enough, given the sample size and variability, to be deemed statistically meaningful.

4.3.5 Summary of Statistical Significance

The lack of statistically significant results does not necessarily mean that the Instagram intervention was ineffective, but rather that any benefits detected in this particular study could plausibly be attributed to chance. In research, especially with small sample sizes, it is possible for interventions to show promising trends that do not reach significance due to insufficient statistical power or high within-group variability.

4.4 Comparative Analysis

4.4.1 Examining the Magnitude of Group Differences

A closer inspection of the group means reveals that, in absolute terms, the Focus group improved more than the Control group across every measured outcome. The average reduction in total mistakes was substantially greater for the Instagram group, suggesting that engaging in frequent, authentic writing outside of classroom constraints may support the development of writing

accuracy. The difference was most pronounced for spelling mistakes, where the Focus group's mean improvement (3.29 errors) was more than double that of the Control group (1.41 errors). While the differences in grammar and preposition errors were less dramatic, they nevertheless trended in favor of the Focus group. These results provide tentative support for the hypothesis that integrating social media writing into language instruction may offer unique benefits not captured by conventional classroom approaches.

4.4.2 Patterns of Variability

Notwithstanding these mean differences, the analysis also uncovered a considerable range of improvement within each group. In both the Focus and Control groups, some students showed marked improvement, others showed modest gains, and a few exhibited little or no change. The spread of scores—visible in both standard deviations and the interquartile range of the boxplots—suggests that individual learner differences, motivation, prior writing habits, and engagement with the intervention may all play important roles in determining outcomes.

Such variability complicates the task of detecting statistically significant differences, especially in modestly sized classroom samples. It also underscores the need for educational interventions to be flexible and responsive to the needs of individual students, rather than relying on a one-size-fits-all approach.

4.4.3 Observations from Individual Cases

Examining individual participants' data revealed interesting patterns. In the Focus group, some students who were highly engaged with the Instagram writing tasks demonstrated remarkable improvements in their writing accuracy. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the social aspect of posting and receiving feedback may have played a motivational role. Conversely, a small

number of Focus group participants showed minimal or even negative change, possibly due to inconsistent participation or external factors unrelated to the intervention. The Control group's improvements were more uniform, though typically smaller in magnitude, possibly reflecting the steady but less dynamic nature of traditional instruction.

4.5 Difference and Impact

4.5.1 Statistical and Practical Difference

While the Mann-Whitney U tests indicated no statistically significant differences, the practical difference—reflected in mean improvements—should not be overlooked. In classroom contexts, even modest gains can be educationally meaningful, especially for struggling learners or those at the threshold of a proficiency benchmark. The Instagram intervention's greater average improvement in spelling, for example, could suggest that informal digital writing platforms encourage learners to pay more attention to spelling conventions, either through repeated practice or increased exposure to peer feedback.

4.5.2 Potential Educational Impact

Although the statistical evidence falls short of confirming a robust causal effect, the numerical advantages observed for the Focus group highlight the potential for integrating social media into language instruction. The intervention's informal, low-stakes writing tasks may reduce learner anxiety, encourage experimentation, and foster habits of regular writing. For some students, the novelty and social engagement of Instagram posting may increase motivation to write and revise their work, contributing to incremental gains in accuracy.

It is also possible that digital writing, by exposing students to authentic language use and immediate peer or teacher feedback, provides a richer context for noticing and correcting errors.

The evidence from this study, while not conclusive, points to areas where further research and more sustained interventions could yield more dramatic results.

4.5.3 Challenges and Limitations

Several factors likely contributed to the absence of statistically significant differences. The most salient limitation is the relatively small sample size, which limits the statistical power of the study. In practical terms, this means that even if the Instagram intervention had a real, moderate effect, the study may not have been able to detect it as significant. Additionally, the high variability within groups—possibly due to differences in student motivation, background, or engagement—may have obscured group-level effects. The short duration of the intervention (two months) is another limitation. Changes in writing proficiency, especially at the level of grammatical accuracy, often require extended periods of practice. A longer intervention or more frequent writing assignments might have amplified the observed effects. Finally, the convenience sampling method, while practical, may have introduced selection biases, limiting the generalizability of the findings beyond the immediate classroom context.

4.5.4 Implications for Practice and Research

The findings from this study suggest that social media platforms like Instagram offer promising opportunities for supplementing traditional writing instruction. Even in the absence of statistically significant results, the pattern of mean improvements supports the inclusion of informal, digital writing tasks as a way to increase learner engagement and potentially accelerate writing development.

For practitioners, the key takeaway is that integrating digital literacies into language classrooms can create more dynamic, interactive, and student-centered learning environments. For

researchers, the study highlights the importance of robust research designs, larger sample sizes, and the inclusion of qualitative data to better capture the nuanced ways in which digital interventions affect language learning.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

This chapter has presented a thorough analysis of the impact of Instagram-based writing practice on the accuracy of EFL learners' writing. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to explore differences between the Focus and Control groups. While the Instagram intervention group demonstrated greater mean improvements in overall writing accuracy and in specific error categories, none of these differences reached statistical significance according to the Mann-Whitney U test.

The results suggest that, under the conditions of this study, Instagram-based writing practice was at least as effective as traditional instruction for improving writing accuracy, with indications of potentially greater benefits for some learners. These findings point toward the value of further research with larger samples and longer interventions, as well as the need for qualitative inquiry into students' experiences and attitudes.

The next chapter will discuss these results in relation to previous research, consider the broader implications for language teaching, and offer recommendations for both practice and future investigation.

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Appendix A

A pre-test essay written by a participant of an Experimental group

NAME/SURNAME _____

WRITING TASK/PRETEST

Write an essay on the following topic:

A Time You Overcame a Challenge

(Describe a difficult situation and how you handled it).

Word count: 150-200 words.

2 story comes to my mind. I would start from the first one. So, it was in autumn and winter ~~also~~ in the previous year. I successfully ~~won~~ won in the regional olympiad, and successfully ~~took~~ took ~~the~~ ticket to the next tour, the republic tour. My friends and I who won in the olympiad, decided to train together. Our coaches/trainers helped us, with house and ~~products~~, and we had been spending time together before ~~the~~ republic part. We ~~are~~ did our best, and ~~hardly~~ trained so hard. In January when we were in the Shymkent for training, I had to take January UNT ~~test~~, so I went to my ~~city~~, and passed ~~that~~ test, I got 114 points out of 140, but this test ~~was~~ was ~~not~~ for grand. So we continued training in Shymkent. We ~~spended~~ spent about 3 month there, every day we wake up early and practiced, to improve our skills, by the way we ~~are~~ participate to olympiad ~~to~~ programming, informally called informatics olympiad. I had participated in the olympiads since 2020, when I studied at the 9th grade. Unfortunately we had failed our olympiad, I got 104 points out of 600, and it's just funny. It was the last chance I had had. But it was very very good times, we ~~spended~~ spent time together with my friends.

The second story is about ~~the~~ the last UNT, I've never go to the courses for improving some subjects, or ^{courses for} specially practicing to the UNT, but I participated to the olympiads and trained hard ~~ly~~, so I always got high point at ~~the~~ my one my subject. At the end I got 125 points overall and successfully ~~entered~~ entered to SDU university that I wanted ~~so~~ ^{much}. I am very glad for it, and now I am a first year student at SDU.

Appendix B

A post-test essay written by a participant of an Experimental group

NAME/SURNAME _____

WRITING TASK/ POSTTEST

Write an essay on the following topic:

The Best Day of Your Life (So Far)

(Reflect on a day that brought you immense happiness and why it stands out as the best).

Word count: 150-200 words.

I didn't think about it before. However, I know one day that can pretend for this topic. I remember how I was happy on that day. When it happened, that day automatically became the best day of my life. I hope, I could describe that day, so you're interested in it. It was summer, 2nd June. The weather was very hot. I arrived to place in time, it was my second UNT. I was so nervous. Finally, the test starts, I was good prepared for test, so it was quite easy. At the end of test, ~~in display~~ I went out with a big smile on my face, because I got 125-points. I called my brother and told him about test. He said that it's a good news. I tried my best and as a result I could enroll to SDU. Now I'm studying here, I am very happy. I cannot describe these emotions that I feel then. I am writing this essay, just because of that day, that moment. After the test I went home, and my mom met me, and said that I was the best. I have chosen that day, because that day I overcame the challenge.

Appendix C

A pre-test essay written by a participant of a Control group

NAME/SURNAME _____

WRITING TASK / PRETEST

Write an essay on the following topic:

A Time You Overcame a Challenge

(Describe a difficult situation and how you handled it).

Word count: 150-200 words.

One of the most challenging times in my life was in 10-11th grade, when I needed to choose my future profession. It was very hard for me ~~because~~ ^{on} one side my parents recommended me (to be a doctor) some kind of professions like being a doctor, and ^{on} ~~in~~ ^{the} another side I didn't know how it ^{would} look like if I started working, I just can't imagine it.

For the first time my parents told me to be a doctor, I agreed with them, and started learning biology. After 3-4 months I realised that it's ^{was} not for me. I chose IT, for that in 10th grade my ^{would} parents bought ^{an} online course "daryn" for future 1 year, so I ^{would} learned physics, math, history and kazak language. But online course wasn't effective for me and I just wasted my time. In 11th grade we ^{got} ~~got~~ ^{out} the news that for IT we can choose ICT and math. I told to my parents that I want ~~to~~ ^{to} go ^{to} offline courses and they ^{do} ~~do~~ it. I started learning offline in November. ^{On} ^{January} VNT I got 94 points, ^{on} ^{March} VNT 98 p, ^{on} ^{the} first real VNT 102 p. and ^{on} ^{the} second real VNT 114 points. I was so grateful for my parents, they always help me with studying, with choosing the university. It was hard to start ⁱⁿ learning ICT from ^{beginner} ~~beginner~~ level in 11th grade, but I ^{did} ~~do~~ it and now I study at SDU university ⁱⁿ ^{an} ^{on} grant, so now (my ^{imagar}) I study for ICT teacher and it's very interesting for me.

Appendix D

A post-test essay written by a participant of a Control group

NAME/SURNAME _

WRITING TASK/POSTTEST

Write an essay on the following topic:

The Best Day of Your Life (So Far)

(Reflect on a day that brought you immense happiness and why it stands out as the best).

Word count: 150-200 words.

The best Day of My life

The best day of my life was in (2018.21) 21.07.2018. So far for this day we ~~was~~ travelled with my family. We visited many spots; mountains, ~~cities~~, shops local shops, and ~~took~~ souvenirs from Altai. I remember that ~~we~~ ~~took~~ (honey) very tasty local honey. So in 2018 we ~~was~~ ~~went~~ ~~in~~ border from Russia ~~to~~ Kazakstan. And the men who sit and ~~checked~~ ~~as~~ checked my mum, me and my little brother at last, he looked ~~to~~ ~~the~~ passport then ~~to~~ my brother again ~~to~~ the ~~passport~~. The man said that that day was my brother's birthday. It was very funny day, because all of the family members ~~forget~~ about the birthday. Finally we ~~find~~ ~~place~~ and ~~went~~ ~~to~~ a picknik for my brother. We got to the nearest city I don't remember which city, and ~~stayed~~ ~~in~~ hotel, so we went to small and played games. It was one of the best, interesting days (for now).

In conclusion one of the best days of my life was when we travelled ~~it was~~ very interesting and ~~we~~ ~~forget~~ about my brother's birthday, and went to small park.

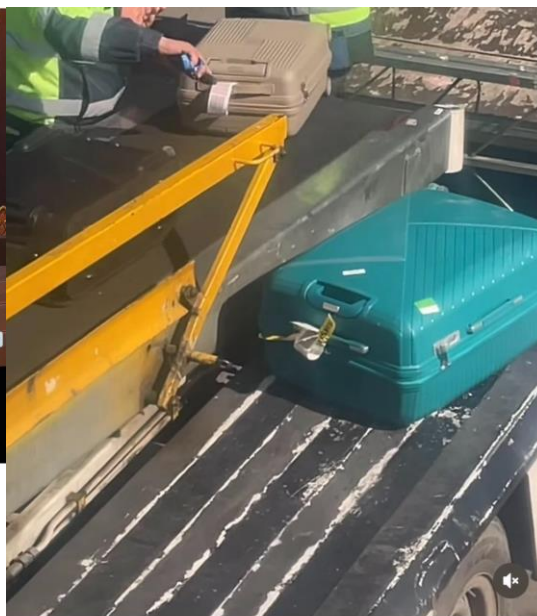
Appendix E

Instagram posts of the Experimental group participants



Liked by others

I wanna share about my fav game Genshin Impact. I started playing in 10th grade, so I have been playing for 3 years now. About story line, you play as the Traveler and searching for your lost twin. So on a journey you explore the world, meet different characters and events. There are 7 different regions. Each region has its own story and rulers. You collect powerful characters and use different elements in battle. The main goal is find your twin and uncover the truth about the world. My first 5 star character was Kamisato Ayato. I take him into every event and battle, he's my favorite. He uses hydro with a sword. He is head of the Kamisato Clan. In battle he uses fast water attacks. He loves tea and good food but he always ready for work. Soo do you have a fav game?



Liked by others

I filmed my suitcase when people put it into the plane. It was a little scary because my dad gave me some meat for my aunt. I visit her sometimes on weekends. Now I live in a dorm, but the city feels more comfortable. From the dorm its faster to go to university. Also we get dinner there and some nice things. But in the city I feel more free, maybe because there is no curfew. I'm not sure about it 😊😊





Liked by : [redacted]
I forgot to write the second post last week. Because my time in the village is going well. We celebrated the Nauryz. There was a competition between the school, hospital and kindergarten. The goal of the competition was to organize a concert to promote our traditions. There were also competitions in football, wrestling, arm wrestling and national games like altybakan.

In the background is a Roza Rymbayeva's song with a remix by Imanbek 😊



Liked by [redacted] others

[redacted] Today I want to share my favorite movies with you, called "The hateful eight". This movie may not for everyone, but it's definitely one of my loved movies. In my opinion the movie has very cool plot and perfectly shows the winter western atmosphere. The director of this movie is Quentin Tarantino, thats why the movie with very long and witty dialogue and also with charismatic characters. If you like this movie, I can also recomend these movies: Inglourious Basterds, The gentlemen, Snatch, Bullet train.

[redacted] I'll add it to my must watch list



Appendix F

Consent form for the participants of the Experimental group

SDU University Research Ethics Committee

Informed Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a research study entitled “**English Language Learning via Social Media: Writing Skills Development**”.

Research Purpose and Procedures.

This experiment should take approximately 8 weeks to complete in total.

Possible risks and discomfort related to participation in this research:

1. While the account is private, participants might still feel uneasy about sharing their writing, even with a closed group. Some may worry about peers judging their work.
2. Students may feel pressure to write well, especially if they compare themselves to others in the group. Constructive but critical feedback might also cause anxiety.
3. Even in a controlled environment, additional screen time for academic tasks might contribute to fatigue or reduced motivation.
4. Some students might be less comfortable using Instagram for academic purposes, leading to differences in participation levels.
5. Confidentiality Concerns: Although all essays will be handled with confidentiality, participants might feel uneasy about their personal thoughts being shared or analyzed.

Possible advantages of participation:

1. Regular Instagram posts encourage students to practice writing in a natural, engaging way, which can lead to better fluency, vocabulary, and overall writing proficiency.
2. Writing on social media may feel less like a traditional academic task, making students more motivated to participate and express themselves.
3. The interactive nature of Instagram (likes, comments, discussions) fosters a more dynamic and engaging learning experience.
4. Students practice using English in a modern, digital environment, helping them develop communication skills relevant for social and professional contexts.
5. Sharing posts and interacting with peers may increase students’ confidence in their writing and communication skills

Confidentiality & Privacy. Within reason, any personal information obtained as a result of participation will be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible. However, total confidentiality cannot be assured.

Contacts for additional information: sandugash.abdyrakhimova@sdu.edu.kz

Voluntary Nature of the Study. It is strictly voluntary as to whether to participate in this study or not. You have a right to withdraw your agreement to participate at any time.

Estimated duration of the research: 8 weeks

Statement of Consent.

I, _____, agree to participate in this study voluntarily. I have been made aware of the research purpose and objectives and clearly understand what is expected from me.

I know that it is voluntary to participate in this study and I have complete freedom to withdraw my consent at any time without providing any reasons and in this case there will be no negative consequences to me.

I understand that any personal information obtained in this study will be kept confidential.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Process of the Experiment

Pretest: Participants will write a 50-minute in-class essay on a topic related to their life experiences.

Account Setup: All participants will create a private Instagram account and follow each other, as well as the researcher, who will act as a mediator.

Intervention (Experimental Group): The experimental group will post on Instagram twice a week for eight weeks, resulting in a total of sixteen posts. Participants are encouraged to engage with each other through comments and responses.

Monitoring: The researcher will monitor student engagement and participation throughout the experiment.

Posttest: After eight weeks, participants will complete a posttest, writing an in-class essay in the same format as the pretest.

Data Analysis: The researcher will analyze data from both the pretest and posttest to assess any improvements in writing skills.

Appendix G

Consent form for the participants of the Control group

SDU University Research Ethics Committee

Informed Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a research study entitled “**English Language Learning via Social Media: Writing Skills Development**”.

Research Purpose and Procedures.

This experiment should take approximately 2 hours to complete in total.

Possible risks and discomfort related to participation in this research:

1. **Confidentiality Concerns:** Although all essays will be handled with confidentiality, participants might feel uneasy about their personal thoughts being shared or analyzed.
2. **Self-Criticism:** Engaging in self-reflection through writing may lead to self-doubt or critical feelings about one’s abilities or experiences.

Possible advantages of participation:

1. **Skill Enhancement:** Engaging in essay writing can improve your writing skills, particularly in constructing arguments, organizing ideas, and enhancing clarity and coherence.
2. **Contribution to Research:** Your participation will contribute to a better understanding of the role of social media in language learning, potentially benefiting future learners and educators.

Confidentiality & Privacy. Within reason, any personal information obtained as a result of participation will be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible. However, total confidentiality cannot be assured.

Contacts for additional information: sandugash.abdyrakhimova@sdu.edu.kz

Voluntary Nature of the Study. It is strictly voluntary as to whether to participate in this study or not. You have a right to withdraw your agreement to participate at any time.

Estimated duration of the research: 8 weeks

Statement of Consent.

I, _____, agree to participate in this study voluntarily. I have been made aware of the research purpose and objectives and clearly understand what is expected from me.

I know that it is voluntary to participate in this study and I have complete freedom to withdraw my consent at any time without providing any reasons and in this case there will be no negative consequences to me.

I understand that any personal information obtained in this study will be kept confidential.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Process of the Experiment

Participants will be required to write a total of two essays on a general topic about life experiences. Those two essays will be pre- and post-test essays to compare to Experimental group essays.

The duration of the experiment will span a total of eight weeks, with the first essay written on the first week and second written on week eight. Each writing session will be allotted a duration of 50 minutes. Participants are expected to produce original work and are prohibited from using external resources or collaborating with others during the writing process.

Appendix H

The Assessment Rubric for essays

Name: _____

Date: _____

Essay Rubric

Directions: Your essay will be graded based on this rubric. Consequently, use this rubric as a guide when writing your essay and check it again before you submit your essay.

Traits	4	3	2	1
Focus & Details	There is one clear, well-focused topic. Main ideas are clear and are well supported by detailed and accurate information.	There is one clear, well-focused topic. Main ideas are clear but are not well supported by detailed information.	There is one topic. Main ideas are somewhat clear.	The topic and main ideas are not clear.
Organization	The introduction is inviting, states the main topic, and provides an overview of the paper. Information is relevant and presented in a logical order. The conclusion is strong.	The introduction states the main topic and provides an overview of the paper. A conclusion is included.	The introduction states the main topic. A conclusion is included.	There is no clear introduction, structure, or conclusion.
Voice	The author's purpose of writing is very clear, and there is strong evidence of attention to audience. The author's extensive knowledge and/or experience with the topic is/are evident.	The author's purpose of writing is somewhat clear, and there is some evidence of attention to audience. The author's knowledge and/or experience with the topic is/are evident.	The author's purpose of writing is somewhat clear, and there is evidence of attention to audience. The author's knowledge and/or experience with the topic is/are limited.	The author's purpose of writing is unclear.
Word Choice	The author uses vivid words and phrases. The choice and placement of words seems accurate, natural, and not forced.	The author uses vivid words and phrases. The choice and placement of words is inaccurate at times and/or seems overdone.	The author uses words that communicate clearly, but the writing lacks variety.	The writer uses a limited vocabulary. Jargon or clichés may be present and detract from the meaning.
Sentence Structure, Grammar, Mechanics, & Spelling	All sentences are well constructed and have varied structure and length. The author makes no errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling.	Most sentences are well constructed and have varied structure and length. The author makes a few errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling, but they do not interfere with understanding.	Most sentences are well constructed, but they have a similar structure and/or length. The author makes several errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling that interfere with understanding.	Sentences sound awkward, are distractingly repetitive, or are difficult to understand. The author makes numerous errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling that interfere with understanding.
Reviewer's Comments				

Appendix I

Research Ethics Committee Approval

The screenshot shows an email client interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with icons for back, home, search, trash, mail, clock, edit, folder, and a menu. The email title is "Resubmitting the Ethics Review Form of Sandugash Abdyrakhimova" with an "Inbox x" tag. The sender is "Sandugash Abdyrakhimova" (green circle with 'S'), a 2nd year student of TFL Master's program, with a timestamp of "Wed, Apr 23, 12:52 PM". The recipient is "Research Ethics Committee" (blue circle with 'R'), with the email address <rethics@sdu.edu.kz> and a timestamp of "Mon, May 5, 9:02 AM". The email body contains the following text:

Dear Sandugash Abdyrakhimova, the decision of Research Ethics committee is provided below:

- The research work of Sandugash Abdyrakhimova, «English Language Learning via Social Media: Writing Skills Development», was approved by the Research Ethics Committee.

**Kind regards,
REC committee**

Below the text are three blue buttons: "Thank you for informing me.", "Thank you so much for the great news!", and "Thank you for the information." At the bottom, there are two buttons: "Reply" and "Forward".