Social Media – Facilitated Instructional Strategy in Improving Writing Performance

Christy Pansy Nidoy
Graduate School of Education, University of Visayas
christypansy.laurente001@deped.gov.ph

ABSTRACT

This study focused on the conceptualization of a social media-facilitated instructional strategy using a combination of the Facebook, ZenPen, Grammarly, and Wattpad in improving the writing performance of the Grade 12 Senior High School students of Libagon National High School. Graves' (1985) approaches to writing was used made up of prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Social media platforms were used in each these writing processes The Facebook (closed group) was used for prewriting, the ZenPen for drafting and revising, Grammarly was for editing, and the Wattpad, for publishing. Evaluation of the conceptualized instructional strategy which rendered a Highly Accurate result was done by three experts using More and Pinhey's (2014) Evaluation Rubric for the Development of Fully Online Learning Objects. The validated strategy was used in the writing activity of the students focused on content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. The students had a very efficient weighted mean. Thereby, this study introduces the potential impact of the conceptualized social media-facilitated instructional strategy in improving students' writing performance.

Keywords: *Social Media-Facilitated Instructional Strategy, Writing Performance*

INTRODUCTION

English writing for critical thinking, learning, and expression requires learners to create a writing product by employing complex cognitive skills (Reynolds & Teng, 2021; Anda Oana, 2020). The ability to create something in the form of writing is pure writing that plays a fundamental part in academic writing where processes, elements, and features are involved (Kumar, 2010). As such, writing is more troublesome for students than other language skills (Grami 2010 as cited in Kumar 2020). So, the English Education Curriculum framework in the Enhanced Basic Education Act puts a vital premium on the development of communicative competence by expressing one's ideas and feelings clearly and effectively in writing (K to 12 Curriculum Guide, 2013). This act prompts teachers to teach writing effectively (Astrini, Ratminingsih, & Utami, 2020) amidst challenges on linguistic and cultural difference between the target language and the native language, the learners, the teachers, and the teaching context (Naaser 2016 as cited in Astrini, Ratminingsih, & Utami, 2020). Reiser (2002 as cited in Astrini, Ratminingsih, & Utami, 2020) suggested that teachers' use of correct and appropriate strategy may help students along the process of writing. With all these considerations, this study posited that a social media-facilitated instructional strategy could be used in developing the writing performance of the students.

The use of technology through the social media has reached its potential stage in teaching and learning (Haidari, Katawasai, & Yusof, 2020). This is supported by the study of Astrini, Ratminingsih, and Utami (2020) in which they suggested to integrate the strategy of teaching writing with technology and to read literature and develop teaching writing strategies suitable for the students and by Ngubane, Ntombela, Govender (2020) who proposed that the teacher should implement the teaching of writing strategies by considering learning goal and students' competency. When Bair and Fisher (2005 as cited in Wang, Wang & Li, 2022) first study the use of social media in education, they identified the significant advantages of social media platforms for learners. From then, there had been a general positive inclination toward technology-based education since it is time-saving and much more interactive (Wang, Wang, & Li, 2022). In fact, Sobaih, Palla, and Baquee (2022), emphasized in their study that the present is an opportune time to consider the theoretical benefits of social media as they found out that it is critical for modern competency by both students and educators alike. Furthermore, the study pointed out that the use of social media can promote learning, increase participation, and engagement, disseminate content well and improve pedagogy.

Even if social media use in the classroom is a powerful tool to enhance students' writing skills (Ledgerwood, 2022), it is important for teachers to familiarize themselves with the different platforms and how they function most effectively in teaching writing (Shout Out UK, 2021). There is a need for teachers to design social media teaching strategies that will be catered to the availability, accessibility, and familiarity of the students (Wang, Wang, & Li, 2022; Purvis, Rodger, & Beckingham, 2020; Sobaih, Palla, & Baquee, 2022). This valuable input from these researchers was a major consideration in choosing the social media platforms used in the study.

In Libagon National High School, language teachers are alarmed that most of the Senior High School students can hardly express their thoughts in writing. English teachers found out that students' written outputs usually contain shorter paragraphs, with simple discussions and lesser details that are contrary to the demands of most writing activities for Senior High School students. In worst cases, some students do not participate in writing activities at all. Such a performance is alarming considering that the

Senior High School is in placed to prepare students for the rigorous academic writing tasks and development of lifelong learning skills. Being aware of the benefits of social media in teaching writing (Bui, Ulla, Tarayo, Pham, 2023), this study tried to use social media as a tool in improving the writing skills of the Senior High School students. A lot other online platforms are being used in social media teaching. However, these platforms need to conform to the suggestions of researchers on availability, accessibility, and familiarity to the students (Wang, Wang, & Li, 2022; Purvis, Rodger, & Beckingham, 2020; Sobaih, Palla, & Baquee, 2020). Teachers must carefully select platforms that meet these requirements. By taking into account all these considerations, this study focused on the conceptualization of a social media-facilitated instructional strategy using a combination of the Facebook (closed group), ZenPen, Grammarly, and WattPad in improving the writing performance of the Grade 12 Senior High School students of Libagon National High School. This combination of social media platforms followed the researchers' (Wang, Wang, & Li, 2022; Purvis, Rodger, & Beckingham, 2020; Sobaih, Palla, & Baquee, 2020) suggestions on availability, accessibility, and familiarity to the students.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The study conceptualized a social media facilitated instructional strategy using the theory of Grave (1985) on the Five-Process Approach To Writing composed of Prewriting, Drafting, Revising, Editing, and Publishing. Each of these stages were incorporated with social media platforms like the Facebook (closed group) for prewriting, the ZenPen for drafting and revising, Grammarly for editing, and the Wattpad for publishing. Then, the conceptualized strategy underwent validation by three experts using More and Pinhey's (2014) Evaluation Rubric for the Development of Fully Online Learning Objects. The social media-facilitated instructional strategy was used by the Grade 12 Senior High School students of Libagon National High School to determine if through its usage, the students' writing performance was improved. The writing activity focused on content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics.
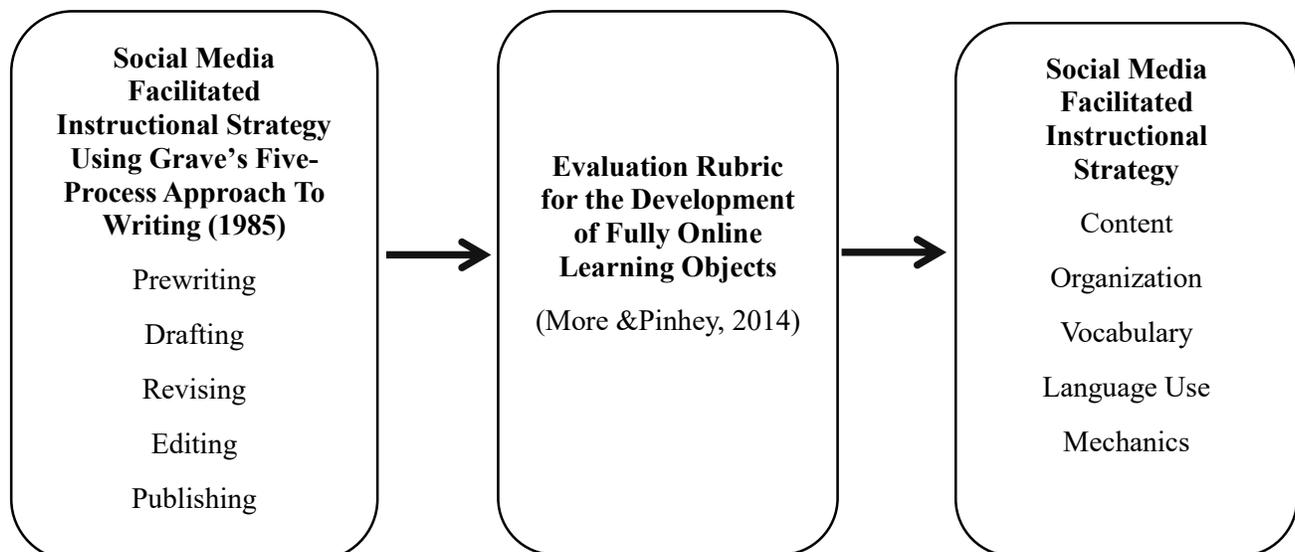
Figure 1. *The theoretical and conceptual framework of the study.*

METHODS

Prior to the conduct of the study, a social media-facilitated instructional strategy was conceptualized by the researcher. It followed Grave's Writing Approach in which social media platforms were chosen for each stage. The conceptualized strategy was validated by three experts using the Evaluation Rubric for the Development of Fully Online Learning Objects adapted from Dr. Nicole A. Buzzetto-More and Kaye Pinhey (2014). The conceptualized social media-facilitated strategy was administered to the Grade 12 Senior High School of Libagon National High School.

In the *Prewriting* stage, the students determined the purpose of their writing activity and narrowed down the points in the topic and then spent to collaborate with their classmate through a closed group in Facebook. A *brainstorming* activity with peers was conducted instead of Grave's way of researching the internet for possible ideas. This modification of Graves' process was done because in the brainstorming activity, students can get ideas from their peer group. This is supported by Baumgartner (n.d.) who emphasized that brainstorming allows students to think critically, form connections, and share ideas with peers and allows exploring and expanding a student's ability to think critically and laterally.


Figure 2. Facebook closed group created for prewriting activity
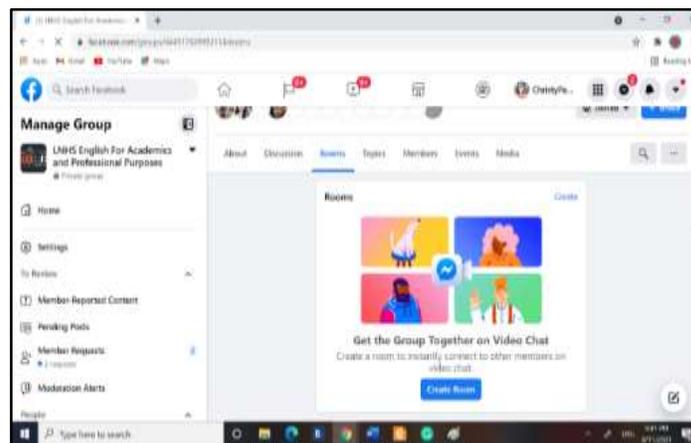
Figure 3. Facebook closed group video chat created for brainstorming in the prewriting activity

In the *Drafting* stage, the ideas were put on paper and were arranged in a readable manner. In this study, a free web-based writing app, ZenPen, was identified. It was through this app that the students were allowed to write freely without correcting their errors. They were blocked from all distractions and family focused on their writing activity.
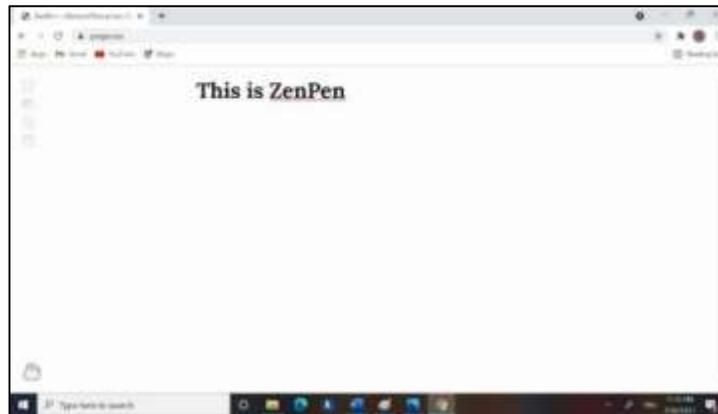
Figure 4. ZenPen full screen mode for writing draft and revising

The next stage is *Revising* which was an excellent opportunity for the students to refine their writing. The researcher still chose ZenPen as a means of a self-revision approach for the students. At this stage, grammatical mistakes were not corrected so the activity considered only the content and organization of the writing outputs of the students.

In the *Editing* stage, the students corrected their grammar mistakes, spelling and punctuation errors, style, sentence structure, document format, and other important writing considerations. At this stage, the students applied Grammarly in editing their respective works through the help of the teacher. Some explanations were also provided by the teacher on some aspects of the Grammarly correction aspects.
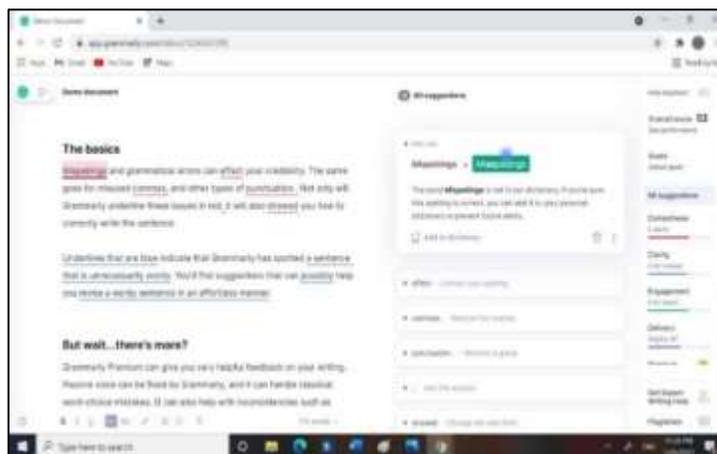
Figure 5. Grammarly editor full screen

After editing is the ***Publishing*** stage wherein the researcher selected an online publishing platform, the Wattpad. It is where the Grade 12 Senior High School students' written essays were published.

Figure 6. Wattpad account created for publishing of students' output

The data from the expert evaluators and students' assessment results were tabulated and analyzed. The mean was used to get the accuracy and efficiency of the conceptualized instructional strategy and the students' scores in the writing activity. The statistical tool allowed the researcher to interpret properly the data needed to achieve the objectives of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Evaluation of the Accuracy of the Conceptualized Social media-Influenced Instructional Strategy

Table 1 presents the experts' evaluation of the conceptualized social media-facilitated instructional strategy in improving students' writing performance.

Table 1

Overall Evaluators' Score in the Evaluation of Instructional Writing Strategy

Criteria	Evaluation Score					Interpretation
	Evaluator1	Evaluator2	Evaluator3	Total Score	Mean	
Prerequisites	2	3	2	7	2.3	Highly accurate
Technology Requirements	3	2	3	8	2.7	Highly accurate
Objectives and Outcomes	3	3	3	9	3	Highly accurate
Activities Support Learning	3	3	3	9	3	Highly accurate

Variety of Tools Enhance Interaction	3	3	3	9	3	Highly accurate
Course Materials	2	2	2	6	2	Moderately accurate
Student Support	3	2	3	8	2.7	Highly accurate
Frequent and Timely Feedback	3	3	3	9	3	Highly accurate
Expectations for Student Discussion	2	3	2	7	2.3	Highly accurate
Reusability	2	3	2	7	2.3	Highly accurate
Over All Weighted Mean					2.63	Highly accurate

Legend

Scale	Range value	Interpretation
0	0.00-0.75	Not accurate
1	0.75-1.5	Slightly accurate
2	1.50-2.25	Moderately accurate
3	2.25-3.00	Highly accurate

It could be seen in the table that a *Highly Accurate* rating is achieved by the conceptualized social media-facilitated instructional strategy in developing writing skills in the aspects of prerequisites, technology requirements, objectives and outcomes, activities support learning, variety of tools enhance interaction, course materials, student support, frequent and timely feedback, expectations for students discussion, and reusability. A *Moderately Accurate* rating is attained by course materials. The findings revealed an overall *Highly Accurate* rating of the conceptualized instructional strategy in improving the students' writing skills.

It is undeniable that the internet and technological advances have paved the way that one can learn and teach a new language (Wang, Wang, & Li, 2022) and the present is an advantageous time to appraise and check the theoretical benefits of social media to improve student learning (Sobaih, Palla, Baquee (2022). The recent study made a package of the Facebook, ZenPen, Grammarly, and Wattpad as the social medial tools through which the students' performance in writing were measured.

Hussain, Cakir, and Candeger (2018) emphasized that social media promotes opportunities for easy access to interactions among students who preferred this source of learning because of its futuristic approach through task-oriented activities. In the current context, students like to keep abreast of technological developments while learning English language skills. The Facebook has become a global and popular social media for students around the world (Putril and Aminatum, 2021) and learning English writing by using Facebook-based instructional materials is suitable for the students' level, their need for learning, and in their daily lives (Sakkir and Dollah (2017). Putril and Aminatum (2021) further claimed that students agree the influence of Facebook in the increase of their performance in writing. They added

that since writing entails the use of students' vocabulary, the use of the Facebook can be beneficial when students read the various captions on Facebook to improve their vocabulary. Moreover, Gholkar (2021) suggested that in places where teachers and student do not have access to advanced digital tools or infrastructure for learning, the Facebook can be used as a quick and readily available platform where students can also learn their digital skills. The students in the study already have their cellphones and their Facebook accounts prior to the conduct of this study. They can always access their Facebook accounts through cellular data. In this study, the Facebook was used in the *Prewriting* stage where the teacher conducted brainstorming activities to encourage collaborative learning. When they were ready, they put their ideas in ZenPen.

Ching (2023) mentioned that *ZenPen* "is an *excellent tool* for *freewriting.*" This is due to ZenPen's aim to create simple distraction-free writing zone. It makes use of Google's Lora font and a white background that keeps the writer focused with "super-simple pop-ups with formatting options for links, quotes, and bold and italic text" (Cooper, 2015). In this study, the Grade 12 students did not have difficulties in using ZenPen both in the *Drafting* and *Revising* stages. The use of these digital tools in developing writing skills is supported by Mospan (2023) who emphasized that the aspects of creating different educational spaces fostered a "range of digital tools for writing, e.g. annotations or collaborative writing on a whiteboard and texting in chats on video conferencing platforms." Moreover, Mospan (2023) mentioned that in the studies of Dahlstrom and Bostrom (2017), Baker and Lastrapes (2019), and Dahlstrom (2019) scholars found out that digital access and opportunities to practice improve students' writing and spelling, and enriched their motivation and means. The students also were comfortable with ZenPen as they know that they will be able to check on their mistakes using Grammarly.

The use of the Grammarly in the *Editing* stage of this study provided a hassle-free means of a personal digital proofreader (Brown, 2023). Moreover, Pope (2021) mentioned the positive aspects of Grammarly which are real-time grammar correcting, highly accurate, easy to understand explanations, customizations, and simplicity on the aspects of its usage. The Grade 12 Senior High School students in the study were helped by the researcher in applying Grammarly and were provided some explanations for further clarifications pertaining the corrections made by Grammarly.

In the *Publishing* stage, the students were very excited to see their written outputs being posted in the Wattpad. Purti and Nasrullah, (2023) uphold the positive impacts of Wattpad on students' language skills, writing skills, comprehension, and reading habits. It was emphasized in their study that the use of the WattPad fosters in the students an interest in literature and in developing essential life skills such as self-reflection, motivation, creative imagination, maturity, and a love of reading. These aspects form the image of a good platform where the students could publish their writing.

The digital platforms that are packaged in the conceptualized social media-facilitated instructional strategy have established claims with respect to their validity in the realm of their worldwide use and familiarity when used in writing. This is intensified by Olagbaju and Popoolashowed (2020) who hold in high esteem how social media played dominance in writing performance development of English language, and how emerging technologies, especially social media, had transformed the forms and genres of writing.

Evaluation of Efficiency of the Social Media - Facilitated Instructional Strategy

Table 2 presents the overall mean ratings garnered by the students in their assessment scores in the writing activity.

Table 2

Overall Descriptive Statistics of Students Scores and Mean Ratings

Rubric Criteria	Maximum Score	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Content	5	4.18	Very Efficient
Organization	5	4.39	Very Efficient
Vocabulary	5	4.09	Very Efficient
Language Use	5	3.88	Very Efficient
Mechanics	5	3. 36	Moderately Efficient
Overall Weighted Mean		3.98	Very Efficient

Legend:

4.51 – 5.00 Highly Effective

3.51 – 4.50 Very Effective

2.51 – 3.50 Moderately Effective

1.51 – 2.50 Slightly Effective

1.00 – 1.50 Not Effective

Notably, the results indicate a good performance in the writing skills of the students. The overall weighted mean is 3.98 indicating that the conceptualized instructional strategy greatly facilitated in encouraging students to perform a writing activity. Content, organization, vocabulary, and language use obtained *Very Efficient* ratings while mechanics got a *Moderately Efficient* score. The results on the aspects of the writing activity support the findings in the study of Rajendran and Yunus (2021) in which social media activities had a positive impact on the students' language learning experience. This is intensified by the study of Al-Khalidi and Khouni (2021) that asserted social media technology as an important part of all fields of learning, leading to the emergence of learning communities. Specifically, the findings of the study of Encalada and Sarmiento (2019), revealed that students boosted their vocabulary, enhanced accuracy and raised their confidence when activities were shared through social media. In the study, the students showed a positive attitude towards the usage of social media platforms in the context of learning and teaching. In fact, majority of the participants strongly believed in the benefits of social media platforms to support educational purposes and improvement of language skills. When the Grade 12 Senior High School respondents in this current study were informally interviewed by the researcher of their reactions as well as reflections of the conceptualized social media-facilitated strategy, they expressed gratefulness and showed

eagerness to do the activities again. They said that they have now a means to improve their writing abilities. However, they expressed concerns on how low internet connection might affect the process.

In similar studies, Shahzadi (2020) stressed on the help of Facebook through which the students improved their writing skills as they were motivated to write in an organized way in a stress- free environment. The study pointed out that the use of Facebook increased student-teacher interaction and it was a collaborative means for the students to learn from their teachers and peers. Prior to the conduct of this recent study, the Grade 12 Senior High School students showed a low aptitude in writing. There were even those who did not pass their writing activities. When the conceptualized social-media-facilitated strategy was introduced, the students were eager to do their work and to complete the whole activity. This can be attributed to the familiarity of the chosen platforms. Research reports had emphasized that the Web 2.0 applications, on top of which come from social media, blogs, and wikis have reached an unprecedented universal popularity among students worldwide (Lakhal, 2022). All the respondents in this current study have a Facebook account and are familiar with Wattpad. When they were asked of their familiarity of the Wattpad prior to the conceptualization of the social media-influenced strategy, majority of them were reading stories in it. The few others who were not reading stories in it knew what it was all about. The familiarity of the Wattpad had created an impact among students (Lestari, 2022). In the study of Permatasari, Wijianato, and Kristina (2020), they found out that the students had a positive perception towards extensive reading on Wattpad. This implies that the students were comfortable with using Wattpad. In fact, the students expressed their views of the fun and enjoyable activities that Wattpad provides that come in the form of reading materials in various genres that cater to their personal interests. This was among the reasons why the Senior High School students were eager to publish their essays in the Wattpad.

The use of the ZenPen in this study served as a wholesome academic experience to the students. ZenPen serves as a free website that "is a low distraction way of writing assignments which has very few features and encourages the person to just write" (Ahed, n.d.). When ZenPen was introduced to the students in this study, the students were very eager to try it. It must be because of its features. It is a very simple webpage that opens with text. The student only has to delete the text, write a title, then start to type. The student has four options placed in one side; one allows him/her to go full screen to block out all distractions, the second reverses the contrast so the student can type black text on white background or white text on a black background, the third allows the student to set word count, and the fourth offers the student the chance to save his/her writeup as text file that he/ she can download. The way to save the file is to download it. The downloaded text file can be copied and pasted into a word or Google document to be edited further. The student can select the text in the essay upon which four options appear- add a link, bold the text, italicize the text, and set the paragraph to a quote.

Editing the work through the help of Grammarly was a fun activity of the students. It was when they discover of their mistake and to learn the correct equivalent through the help of Grammarly that they expressed observations like, "*Sajun ra man diay ni Ma'am kay tabangan man tang Grammarly ug edit*." (This is easy, Ma'am because we are helped by Grammarly in editing.). One student expressed his reaction in this manner, "*Niadtu pa unta mis kaniadtu gitudluan ug ing-ani Ma'am*." (We should have been taught of this process a long time ago, Ma'am). Grammarly detects mistakes on grammar, spelling, punctuation,

word choice, and style (Chesson, 2023) and are used in school-related writing tasks such as course papers, research papers, reports, presentations, and dissertations. That is why the respondents in this study were so happy that there is an available technical assistant that can help in their writing activities. In a Grammarly User Survey Analysis, it was found out that 70% of the respondents reported that Grammarly had increased their level of confidence in their writing ability and 99% of the respondents reported Grammarly ha improved their writing grades (grammarly.com, n.d.).

The conceptualized social media-facilitated strategy had indeed helped in the improvement of the students' view on writing and it had helped them in improving their writing performance. This is supported by Pekkala and Zoonen (2021) who found out in in their study that the use of social media has become an integral part in intellectual work and the posting of students' study-related material on social media is considered a reliable source of information which is important to students, customers, and employees.

CONCLUSION

The conceptualized social media-facilitated instructional strategy has improved the students' writing performance.

REFERENCES

Alrubail, R. (2016, February 16). How to use social media to strengthen student writing. *Edutopia.* https://www.edutopia.org/discussion/how-use-social-media-strengthen-student-writing#:~:text=Social%20media%20can%20be%20a,to%20help%20advance%20student%20communication

Astrini, N. W., Ratminingsih, N., & Utami, I. (2020). The model of strategies employed by English teachers in teaching writing skill in national plus schools. *Journal of Educational Research and Evaluation, 4*(1), 59–62. https://ejournal.undiksha.ac.id/index.php/JERE

At Hive. (n.d.). ZenPen.io low distraction typing experience. *Ahead.* https://www.ahead.ie/ZenPen#:~:text=ZenPen%20is%20a%20free%20website,to%20just%20write%20the%20content

Baumgartner, J. (n.d.). *The complete guide to managing traditional brainstorming events.* http://www.jpb.com/creative/brainstorming.pdf (jpb.com in Bing)

Bui, H., Ulla, M., Tarayo, V., & Pham, C. (2023). Editorial: The roles of social media in education: Affective, behavioral, and cognitive dimensions. *Frontiers in Psychology.* https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1287728

Buzzetto-More, N., & Pinhey, K. (2006). Guidelines and standards for the development of fully online learning objects. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Knowledge and Learning Objects.*

Dragomir, I., & Niculescu, B. (2020, September 22). Different approaches to developing writing skills. *Review of Air Force Academy, 25*(3), 201–206. https://doi.org/10.2478/raft-2020-0024

Grammarly.com. . (n.d.). *Grammarly user survey analysis.* https://www.grammarly.com/press/research/docs/grammarlystudentsurvey-121018133119-phpapp01.pdf

Haidari, M., Katawasai, R., & Yusof, S. (2022, September 22). The use of social media and wikis in teaching writing skills: A review article. *International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies, 14*(16), 15531. https://doi.org/10.3991/ijim.v14i16.15531

Jamie, K. (2023). How do I get the most out of using tech in the classroom? *Common Sense Education.* https://www.commonsense.org/education/articles/teachers-essential-guide-to-teaching-with-technology

Department of Education. (2013). *K to 12 curriculum guide.* https://www.deped.gov.ph/k-to-12/about/k-to-12-basic-education-curriculum/

Lakhal, M. (2022). The role of social media in developing English language writing skills: Moulay Ismail University as a case study. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences, 7*(3). https://ijels.com/upload_document/issue_files/41IJELS-106202217-TheRole.pdf

Ledgerwood, K. (2022). Technology and the curriculum. https://pressbooks.pub/techcurr20221/chapter/using-social-media-to-promote-21st-century-learning/

Lestari, I. (2022). The use of Wattpad strategy to improve students' reading skills at SME Negeri 3 Luwut Utara [Unpublished master's thesis]. Institute for Islamic Studies, IAIN Palopo.

Macallister, J., & Nation, I. S. P. (2020). *Teaching ESL/EFL reading and writing.* Francis and Taylor.

Ngubane, N., Ntombela, B., & Govender, S. (2020). Writing approaches used by teachers in selected South African English. *Journal of the Reading Association of South Africa.*

Palmer, M. L. (2021). The relationship between reading fluency, writing fluency, and reading comprehension in suburban third-grade students [Doctoral dissertation, University of San Diego].

Pekkala, K., & van Zoonen, W. (2021). Work-related social media use: The mediating role of social media communication self-efficacy. *European Management Journal.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2021.03.004 (doi.org in Bing)

Permatasari, D., Wijianato, A., & Kristina, D. (2020). Extensive reading on Wattpad and its benefits to students' English skills: Students' perceptions. *ELS Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities, 3*(4). http://dx.doi.org/10.34050/elsjish.v3i4.11714

Reynolds, B. L., & Feng, M. (2021). *Innovative approaches in teaching English writing to Chinese speakers.* De Gruyter.

Shahzadi, A. (2020). Using social media to improve students' English writing skills: A mixed method study. *Journal of Research in Social Sciences, 8*(1). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341399232_Using_Social_Media_to_Improve_Students%27_English_Writing_Skills_A_Mixed_Method_Study

Shout Out UK. (2021, December 17). Impacts of media in teaching and learning. https://www.shoutoutuk.org/2021/12/17/impacts-of-media-in-teaching-and-learning/

Sobaih, A., Palla, I., & Baquee, A. (2022, April 28). Social media use in e-learning amid COVID-19 pandemic: Indian students' perspective.

Wang, H., Wang, M., & Li, G. (2022, September 23). The use of social media inside and outside the classroom to enhance students' engagement in EFL contexts. *Psychology, Section Educational Psychology.*