

Instagram vs. Facebook: A Quasi Experimental Study on Expository Writing Outcomes among Grade X Students

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Abstract

The increasing integration of technology in education necessitates innovative learning strategies, especially in language instruction. This study investigates the comparative effectiveness of Instagram and Facebook as digital learning media for expository writing instruction among Grade X students at SMA Negeri 7 Bulukumba. The research addresses the gap in existing literature, which has seldom compared social media platforms simultaneously in genre-specific writing contexts. Employing a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental nonequivalent control group design, the study involved 54 students divided into two groups: one using Instagram and the other using Facebook as learning media. Pretest and posttest assessments were conducted to evaluate students' expository writing skills across five dimensions: content, structure, coherence, rules, and grammar. The results revealed a statistically significant improvement in the Instagram group, whose average score increased from 52.04 to 70.70, compared to the Facebook group, which only rose from 46.85 to 50.96. The findings underscore Instagram's superior affordances—its emphasis on visual content, comment interaction, hashtag organization, and story features—supporting multimodal learning and peer feedback mechanisms. These affordances promote deeper engagement, collaborative learning, and alignment with students' digital habits, thereby enhancing motivation and skill development. In contrast, Facebook's chronological and text-dominant interface yielded minimal impact. The study concludes that Instagram is more effective than Facebook for enhancing students' expository writing outcomes and recommends its strategic integration in language curricula. Teachers should be trained in using Instagram's pedagogical features, and policymakers should consider its inclusion in national digital literacy strategies. These findings align with the Merdeka Curriculum's emphasis on contextual, student-centered learning, and suggest that effective social media use can bridge formal education with students' everyday digital experiences, paving the way for broader curriculum reforms that embrace relevant, engaging, and technology-enhanced instruction.

Keywords: Curriculum Reform; Digital Literacy; Expository Writing; Instagram; Facebook

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INTRODUCTION

Language serves as the fundamental communication instrument in human life, playing a crucial role across various dimensions, both in social life and education (Mailani et al., 2022). In the learning context, Indonesian language as a subject not only teaches linguistic aspects but also comprehensive language skills, including writing skills that become the primary focus of students' literacy development. Writing constitutes one of the four essential language skills that students must master

(Nugraha, 2023), as through writing activities, students are required to think critically, logically, and systematically in organizing their ideas. This skill forms the foundation for developing students' thinking and reasoning abilities argumentatively and communicatively, which are highly needed in the current information and technology era. One form of written text taught in the Merdeka Curriculum for senior high school level is expository text, which aims to convey someone's opinion or perspective on an issue or event accompanied by logical reasons and convincing evidence (Abduh et al., 2019). Mastering the structure and linguistic elements of expository text becomes crucial so that students can convey ideas coherently and convincingly to readers. The complexity of learning expository text writing demands innovative approaches that can accommodate the characteristics of 21st-century learning based on digital technology. Therefore, it is essential to explore alternative learning media that are more familiar and engaging for digital generation students, capable of integrating technology with effective writing learning objectives.

Expository text writing skills remain a persistent challenge across various educational institutions globally, where students frequently encounter difficulties in identifying main ideas, constructing coherent arguments, and appropriately utilizing expository text structures (Alaloula, 2023). Recent research indicates that learners particularly struggle with content development and organization, as well as the fundamental writing processes required for effective expository composition (Stewart, 2024). These challenges are further compounded by students' limited ability to employ appropriate cohesive devices and construct coherent sentence structures, which significantly impacts their capacity to produce well-structured expository essays (Jayarathna, 2024). The traditional pedagogical approaches to writing instruction often fail to engage students effectively and lack authentic contexts for meaningful writing practice, necessitating a paradigm shift toward more interactive and technologically-mediated learning environments (Marpaung, 2024). Contemporary educational demands, particularly those emphasizing text-based learning and contextual literacy competencies, require innovative learning strategies that integrate digital technologies with effective writing instruction objectives. The integration of artificial intelligence-driven tools and digital platforms has demonstrated substantial positive impacts on students' writing development, suggesting that technology-enhanced approaches can address longstanding challenges in expository writing instruction (Hafidz et al., 2024). Therefore, educational institutions must explore alternative learning media that are more familiar and attractive to digital-native students, while simultaneously addressing the technical aspects of writing and enhancing student motivation and engagement in the learning process.

In this context, several studies have demonstrated that social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook can serve as effective means for improving students' writing skills due to their interactive, flexible nature and familiarity with students' daily lives (Budiman, 2022; Musyarofah et al., 2024; Silfia & Rahmawati, 2023). Social media provides extensive space for students to express ideas, share thoughts, and receive direct and immediate feedback from teachers and peers. Research conducted by (Sallamah & As Sabiq, 2020) showed that the use of social media in collaborative learning has a significant impact on interactivity with peers, teachers, and online knowledge-sharing behavior. In writing learning, features such as captions, comment

sections, and engaging content visualizations can be utilized to develop students' abilities in processing information and constructing arguments. A study by (Abbas et al., 2025) revealed that Instagram as a writing teaching tool demonstrates significant effectiveness in improving students' writing abilities, particularly in EFL learning contexts. Similar findings were also shown by research from (Nasution, 2020), which identified that Facebook usage as a discussion forum in English helps improve students' writing skills through more intensive and collaborative interactions. Social media also enables learning to occur beyond the boundaries of formal classroom space and time, thus supporting student-centered and technology-based learning principles. Moreover, these platforms offer authentic audiences and real-world contexts for student writing, which can significantly enhance motivation and engagement compared to traditional writing assignments.

Nevertheless, the application of social media as a learning medium for expository text writing is still rarely conducted systematically and structurally, especially in the context of text-based learning that characterizes the Merdeka Curriculum (Jafar et al., 2022). This indicates the need for learning innovations that not only integrate technology but also align with the objectives and characteristics of texts in the curriculum. Furthermore, comparative analysis of social media in education reveals that each platform possesses unique characteristics that potentially provide different impacts on learning outcomes. Research by (Alhabash & Ma, 2017) identified differences in motivation and usage patterns among Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat among university students, demonstrating that each platform has distinct features in supporting learning activities. However, the majority of previous research has not explored in depth how the different characteristics of these platforms can be optimized for expository text writing learning specifically. This gap indicates the necessity for research that not only uses one type of social media but compares the effectiveness of multiple platforms simultaneously to provide more comprehensive recommendations for learning practices. Additionally, most existing studies focus on general writing skills rather than specific text types, leaving a significant gap in understanding how different social media platforms can support genre-specific writing instruction.

Literature analysis reveals that although several studies have examined the effectiveness of social media platforms such as Instagram or Facebook separately in Indonesian language learning, there exists a gap in studies that compare their effectiveness simultaneously in the context of expository text writing skills. The novelty of this research lies in the comparative approach that utilizes two popular social media platforms, Instagram and Facebook, to compare their effectiveness in improving Grade X students' expository writing skills. This has not been extensively studied in previous literature, which generally focuses on only one type of social media in the context of poetry or descriptive text writing (Silfia & Rahmawati, 2023; Siregar, 2022). Furthermore, the majority of previous studies did not employ quasi-experimental designs that allow for more measurable comparisons between experimental and control groups. This study also considers the unique characteristics of each social media platform, such as the dominance of visual content and hashtag usage on Instagram, as well as chronological structure and group interactions on Facebook, both of which have different potentials in supporting writing learning. A comparative study conducted by (Siregar, 2022) demonstrated that differences in

features and interfaces across social media platforms can provide varying impacts on student engagement and learning outcomes. However, this research has not specifically examined its impact on expository text writing skills, indicating that there remains room for further exploration in the context of Indonesian language learning. The present study addresses this gap by providing a systematic comparison of these two platforms within the specific context of expository writing instruction.

This research is anticipated to contribute significantly to both theoretical and practical advancements in digital-based learning media development, particularly within the context of curriculum frameworks that emphasize the enhancement of students' literacy competencies through contextual and innovative pedagogical approaches (Chadafi & Uswatun Khasanah, 2024). Contemporary research demonstrates that social media platforms have become integral to educational practices, with 83% of students aged 16 to 24 utilizing social media for academic purposes, including researching topics, collaborating on group projects, and engaging with educational content (Ardiana & Ananda, 2022). The findings of this study can serve as a comprehensive reference for educators in selecting and designing more effective writing instruction strategies by leveraging digital platforms that align with contemporary student characteristics and learning preferences. Furthermore, this research addresses a critical gap in comparative analysis of social media applications in educational contexts, which remains underexplored, particularly regarding expository text writing instruction at the secondary education level (Zhao & Yang, 2023). Recent investigations have revealed that online social media used for collaborative learning had a significant impact on interactivity with peers, teachers and online knowledge sharing behaviour, indicating the substantial pedagogical potential of these platforms when appropriately integrated into formal educational settings (Himmah, 2020). The research findings are expected to provide novel perspectives on how the distinctive characteristics and affordances of different social media platforms can be systematically optimized to achieve specific learning objectives and enhance student engagement in academic writing tasks.

Additionally, this study supports the optimal implementation of contemporary curricular frameworks, particularly in strengthening writing literacy through innovative, contextual, and relevant approaches that connect with students' daily digital experiences, thereby enhancing not only academic capabilities but also students' adaptive capacities to technological developments in learning environments. Technology-enhanced language learning (TELL) has become the norm in education, with bibliometric analyses revealing current state-of-the-art practices and emerging trends that underscore the importance of integrating familiar digital platforms into formal educational contexts (Aimah & Suhartoyo, 2024). The research also aims to provide evidence-based recommendations for educational policymakers and curriculum developers regarding the strategic integration of social media platforms in formal educational settings, contributing to the growing body of literature on technology-mediated language instruction (Aimah & Suhartoyo, 2024). Technology-enhanced language learning has come into the spotlight due to recent developments in the education sector, with previous studies showing that technology encourages both instructors and students to take an active role in the language learning process (Belmahdi et al., 2022). By examining the comparative effectiveness of Instagram and Facebook in expository writing instruction through a quasi-experimental design, this

study addresses a critical lacuna in the literature and provides practical insights for educators seeking to leverage social media platforms for pedagogical purposes while maintaining academic rigor and learning objectives. Moreover, the transformative power of AI writing technologies has demonstrated enhanced writing performance when students utilize integrated digital platforms, showing improved task achievement, coherence and cohesion, lexical resource, and grammatical range and accuracy (Oaxaca, 2025).

METHOD

Research Type and Design

This study employed a quantitative quasi-experimental design to compare the effectiveness of Instagram and Facebook as learning media for developing expository text writing skills among Grade X students. The experimental approach was selected to examine causal relationships between the use of different social media platforms and student learning outcomes under controlled conditions (Tang et al., 2021). A nonequivalent control group design was adopted due to the impracticality of randomizing class assignments in the school context (Gopalan et al., 2020). This design enables the systematic evaluation of treatment effects while preserving ecological validity in an authentic educational environment (Hassan et al., 2025).

The research consisted of two groups: an experimental group using Instagram and a control group using Facebook. Both groups underwent a pretest and posttest to assess changes in expository writing performance. The structure of the research design is illustrated in Table 1, which outlines the implementation of the nonequivalent control group model.

Table 1. Research Design Scheme Nonequivalent Control Group Design

Group	Pretest	Treatment (X)	Posttest
Experiment	O ₁	Use Instagram	O ₂
Control	O ₃	Use Facebook	O ₄

Sample/Research Subject

The study population included all 82 Grade X students from SMA Negeri 7 Bulukumba during the 2024/2025 academic year, distributed across three classes (X.1, X.2, and X.3). Initial observations indicated that these classes were relatively homogeneous in terms of prior writing skills and familiarity with social media usage.

Table 2. Distribution of Class X Student Population of SMA Negeri 7 Bulukumba

Class	Male	Female	Amount
X.1	14	13	27
X.2	16	12	28
X.3	16	11	27
Amount	48	36	82

A simple random sampling technique was employed to ensure objectivity and minimize selection bias in class selection. Two classes were randomly selected – X.1 and X.3 – each comprising 27 students, resulting in a total sample of 54 participants. Class X.1 was designated as the experimental group (Instagram), while Class X.3 served as the control group (Facebook). This process supports internal validity and

aligns with established educational research practices (Agesan & Hollmann, 2025). Details of the population distribution and sampling results are presented in Table 2 and Table 3, respectively, to clarify class composition and role assignment in the research.

Table 3. Number of Research Samples

Class	Number of Students	Role in Research
X.1	27	Experimental Class (Instagram)
X.3	27	Control Class (Facebook)
Amount	54	

Instrument and Procedures

Data collection utilized a structured expository text writing test designed to assess five dimensions: content, structure, integration, rules, and grammar. These dimensions were adapted from validated assessment frameworks (Kemendikbud, 2013; Weigle, 2007). The instrument's rubric and scoring guidelines are detailed in Table 4.

Table 4. Criteria for Assessment Aspects of Writing Expository Texts

Assessment Aspects	Category and Description	Score
1. Contents	Very Good: very good at mastering the topic of writing; vocabulary; complete development of main ideas of exposition; relevant to the topic discussed.	4
	Good: mastery of the problem; adequate development of exposition; relevant to the topic.	3
	Adequate: limited mastery of the subject matter; sufficient coverage of the core; adequate topic development.	2
	Lacking: lack of mastery of the problem; lack of substance; lack of relevance.	1
2. Structure	Very Good: the text structure is very complete (thesis, argumentation, reaffirmation of opinion) and the implementation of the nature of each component is very appropriate.	4
	Good: complete text structure, but implementation of each component's properties is less than perfect.	3
	Sufficient: the text structure is incomplete (missing one aspect of the structure) and the properties of each component are not implemented.	2
	Insufficient: the text structure is incomplete (only one aspect of the structure is present).	1

Assessment Aspects	Category and Description	Score
3. Integration	Very Good: the integration of meaning and form between words, sentences, and paragraphs is very intact (coherence and cohesion).	4
	Good: integration of meaning and form between words, sentences, and complete paragraphs.	3
	Sufficient: the integration of meaning and form between words, sentences, and paragraphs is not complete.	2
	Poor: the integration of meaning and form between words, sentences and paragraphs is very poor.	1
4. Rules	Very Good: very complete rules consisting of focusing on one topic, using action verbs, containing conjunctions, moving from personal to impersonal statements, using expert opinions, objective language, passive voice, using language to judge or evaluate, using pronouns, using evidence to support arguments, and one-sided arguments.	4
	Good: complete rules (contains eight to ten aspects of the rules).	3
	Sufficient: the rules are incomplete (there are only five to seven aspects of the rules).	2
	Lacking: incomplete rules (only one to four aspects of the rule are present).	1
	Very Good: mastery of writing rules; no errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing.	4
5. Grammar	Good: occasional errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing occur, but do not obscure the meaning.	3
	Sufficient: frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing; sloppy handwriting; meaning is confusing or obscure.	2
	Lacking: does not master research rules; contains many errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing; writing is illegible; not worthy of assessment.	1

To ensure content validity and relevance for Grade X students, the instrument was reviewed by three experienced Indonesian language educators with advanced academic backgrounds. A pilot test involving 20 students from a comparable school was conducted, with two trained raters independently scoring the samples. Inter-rater reliability was calculated using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.87, indicating high consistency (Okoye et al., 2024).

The research procedure followed a pretest-posttest format over three sessions. In the first meeting, both groups completed a pretest to measure their baseline expository writing abilities. The subsequent two sessions involved treatment using Instagram for the experimental group and Facebook for the control group. In the final meeting, a posttest was administered. Independent dual-rater scoring was applied, with differences exceeding one point resolved through consensus. The final score for each student was the average of both raters' assessments, reducing subjectivity and enhancing reliability. The value scale categorizing overall writing performance is shown in Table 5, ranging from "Very Good (A)" to "Lacking (D)" (Kunandar, 2013).

Table 5. Expository Text Assessment Categories Based on Value Scale

Value Scale	Category
91-100	Very good (A)
81-90	Good (B)
70-80	Sufficient (C)
<70	Lacking (D)

Data collection employed a validated expository text writing assessment instrument based on five dimensions: content, structure, integration, rules, and grammar, adapted from established frameworks (Weigle, 2007). Expert validation involved three experienced educators, achieving inter-rater reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.87$). The procedure included pretest administration, three-session treatment implementation using respective social media platforms, and posttest evaluation. Independent dual-rater scoring with consensus resolution ensured assessment objectivity and reduced measurement bias (Okoye et al., 2024).

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection in this study was conducted through two main techniques: testing and documentation. The primary method involved administering an expository text writing test to both the experimental and control groups. This test was used in two phases: a pretest, given during the first meeting to assess students' initial abilities in writing expository texts, and a posttest, conducted during the third meeting following the completion of two treatment sessions. The experimental group received instruction using Instagram, while the control group used Facebook. This structured pretest-posttest design allowed for the measurement of learning gains attributable to the different media platforms used in the instructional process.

In addition to the tests, documentation was employed to gather supplementary data that enriched the understanding of the intervention process. This included collecting students' written outputs, records of student interactions and engagement within the Instagram and Facebook platforms, and instructional materials utilized during the study. The documentation provided contextual evidence supporting the quantitative data and served to validate the implementation consistency of each treatment condition.

Data Analysis

Descriptive Data Analysis

The descriptive analysis in this study aimed to provide a general overview of students' expository writing performance before and after the treatment. Pretest and

posttest scores from both the experimental and control groups were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods, including calculation of means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions. These statistics served to illustrate central tendencies and variability in student performance, offering an initial comparative view of outcomes associated with each instructional medium. The average score (\bar{X}) for each group was calculated using Formula I.

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{n} \text{ (Formula I)}$$

This analysis was essential to identify the extent of student improvement and the overall pattern of results across both conditions.

Inferential Data Analysis

Inferential statistics were applied to determine whether the differences observed between the experimental and control groups were statistically significant. The analysis was conducted using SPSS version 25 and began with a normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method. Data were considered normally distributed if the significance value (p) exceeded 0.05. This was followed by a homogeneity test using Levene's test to evaluate the equality of variances between the groups; a Sig. value above 0.05 indicated that the assumption of homogeneity had been met.

To test the study hypothesis, an independent samples t-test with a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ was performed. This test evaluated whether the differences in posttest scores between the Instagram (experimental) and Facebook (control) groups were statistically meaningful. A p -value less than 0.05 indicated a significant difference, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0) and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H_1). Through this analytical framework, the study ensured rigorous statistical assessment aligned with standard quantitative research protocols (Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

Ethical Statement

This study followed ethical standards to ensure participant protection. Informed consent was obtained from students and guardians after securing permission from the school (SMA Negeri 7 Bulukumba). Participation was voluntary, with the right to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing student identities, and all data were used solely for academic purposes. Both groups received equivalent instructional content, and the study adhered to institutional guidelines with approval from relevant educational authorities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Results

The analysis of students' writing performance before and after the intervention revealed notable differences between the experimental and control groups. In the experimental group (Instagram), the pretest average score was 52.04, with a highest score of 75 and a lowest score of 28. Following the treatment, the posttest average increased to 70.70, with scores ranging from 30 to 95. In contrast, the control group (Facebook) recorded a pretest average of 46.85, with the highest score at 69 and the lowest at 28. After treatment, the posttest average rose modestly to 50.96, with scores ranging from 25 to 78.

Table 6. Pretest and Posttest Results Before and After Using Instagram and Facebook in Experimental and Control Classes

Component	Pretest		Posttest	
	Experiment	Control	Experiment	Control
N. of Students	27	27	27	27
Highest Score	75	69	95	78
Lowest Score	28	28	30	25
Average	52.04	46.85	70.70	50.96

These results are summarized in Table 6, which presents the pretest and posttest score distributions for both groups. The experimental class experienced a mean score improvement of 18.66, indicating a transition from the “lacking” to the “sufficient” category based on the expository text assessment rubric. Meanwhile, the control class showed a smaller gain of 4.11 points and remained within the “lacking” category. This suggests a more substantial learning impact in the experimental class compared to the control class.

Inferential Results

Normality tests were conducted to determine whether the score distributions met assumptions for parametric testing. Results from the Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests, presented in Table 7 and Table 8, showed that all p-values for both pretest and posttest data in both classes were above 0.05, confirming normal distribution.

Table 7. Results of the Normality Test of Pretest Values for the Experimental Class and Control Class

Class	Kolmogorov - Smirnov			Shapiro Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Experiment Pretest	.145	27	.152	.926	27	.054
Control Pretest	.154	27	.101	.934	27	.085

Homogeneity of variance was also tested using Levene’s test. As shown in Table 9 and Table 10, the pretest and posttest data yielded p-values of 0.184 and 0.293 respectively – both exceeding the 0.05 threshold. These results indicate that the variance between the experimental and control groups was statistically equal, thus meeting the assumption of homogeneity.

Table 8. Results of the Normality Test of Posttest Values for the Experimental Class and Control Class

Class	Kolmogorov - Smirnov			Shapiro Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Experiment Pretest	.157	27	.085	.924	27	.051
Control Pretest	.140	27	.189	.960	27	.375

Given that the assumptions of normality and homogeneity were satisfied, an independent samples t-test was performed to examine the significance of the difference in posttest scores. The results showed a calculated t-value of 4.398 with a

significance level (Asymp. Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.001. With degrees of freedom (df) = 52 and a critical t-value of 2.007 ($\alpha = 0.05$), the result ($0.001 < 0.05$) indicates a statistically significant difference. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted – confirming that Instagram had a significantly greater impact on students' expository writing outcomes compared to Facebook.

Table 9. Results of the Pretest Homogeneity of the Experimental and Control Classes

Data	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.	Information
Pretest	1.814	1	52	.184	Sig > 0.05 = Homogeneous

These findings align with those of Musyarofah et al. (2024), who demonstrated improved student performance and engagement when using Instagram to teach poetry writing. Their classroom action research (CAR), involving 14 students over two cycles, showed score improvements from 70 to 73. Although the numerical gain in that study was higher, it involved less cognitively demanding writing (poetry) and incorporated iterative feedback across cycles. In contrast, the current study involved a single testing phase and focused on expository texts, which require higher-order thinking skills. Nevertheless, the significant improvement in the experimental group underscores the pedagogical potential of Instagram as a tool for enhancing writing instruction in secondary education.

Table 10. Results of Posttest Homogeneity of of Experimental and Control Classes

Data	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.	Information
Posttest	1.130	1	52	.293	Sig > 0.05 = Homogeneous

Discussion

The Effectiveness of Instagram as a Learning Medium for Expository Text Writing

The empirical findings of this investigation demonstrate a substantial enhancement in students' expository writing competencies when Instagram was employed as the primary learning medium (Santoso & Kartikawati, 2021). The experimental group exhibited a remarkable improvement from a pretest mean of 52.4 to a posttest mean of 70.70, representing an increase of 18.66 points, which elevated their performance from the insufficient category to the adequate category according to established assessment criteria. This significant advancement aligns with Vygotsky's social interaction theory, which emphasizes the importance of collaborative learning environments and peer interaction in knowledge construction. Instagram's inherent social features, including comment systems, story interactions, and collaborative content creation, facilitate what Vygotsky termed the *Zone of Proximal Development*, where students can achieve higher levels of understanding through guided interaction with peers and instructors (Kurnia & Nasution, 2023). The platform's visual-textual integration supports multimodal learning approaches, enabling students to engage with expository writing through diverse representational modes. These findings corroborate the research conducted by Fauzia and Pd (2022), who demonstrated that Instagram utilization significantly improved students' writing skills in explanation texts, with post-test scores (79.56) substantially exceeding pre-test results (67.97). Similarly, (Musyarofah et al., 2024) reported enhanced student engagement and writing performance when Instagram was integrated into poetry

instruction, observing increased scores from 70 in the first cycle to 73 in the second cycle (Purba et al., 2023). The superior performance of Instagram-mediated instruction can be attributed to the platform's alignment with contemporary students' digital literacy practices and their inherent familiarity with social media interfaces, which reduces cognitive load and allows greater focus on content mastery rather than technological navigation (Yohanna Tampubolon et al., 2022).

Comparative Analysis: Instagram versus Facebook in Educational Contexts

The comparative analysis reveals a stark contrast between Instagram and Facebook's effectiveness as educational platforms for expository writing instruction (Dewi, 2020). While the control group utilizing Facebook demonstrated minimal improvement from 46.85 to 50.96 (an increase of merely 4.11 points), remaining within the insufficient category, the experimental group's substantial advancement underscores Instagram's superior pedagogical potential. This disparity can be explained through Media Richness Theory, which posits that communication effectiveness depends on the medium's capacity to process rich information through multiple channels simultaneously (Rogers, 2021). Instagram's visual-centric design, characterized by seamless image-text integration, story features, and intuitive user interface, provides higher media richness compared to Facebook's text-dominant structure. The platform's emphasis on visual storytelling naturally complements expository writing pedagogy, as students can incorporate multimedia elements to support their textual arguments and enhance comprehension. Statistical analysis confirmed these differences as highly significant ($t = 4.398$, $p = 0.001$), with effect sizes indicating substantial practical significance beyond mere statistical significance (Perifanou et al., 2021). This finding resonates with (Gonzalo & Condoy, 2024) research, which explored Facebook's effectiveness in enhancing EFL students' writing skills through motivational content, yet acknowledged limitations in engagement and collaborative writing development. Furthermore, (Wibowo et al., 2022) noted that while WhatsApp demonstrated utility in writing instruction, its application was not optimal due to limited feature utilization and reduced student engagement compared to more visually-oriented platforms. The current study's results support (Istifci & Ucar, 2021) comprehensive review, which emphasized that social media effectiveness in language learning varies significantly based on platform-specific affordances and their alignment with pedagogical objectives.

Implications for Technology-Enhanced Language Learning and Future Directions

The research outcomes provide compelling evidence for the integration of carefully selected social media platforms into contemporary language education frameworks, particularly within the context of Indonesia's *Merdeka Curriculum* implementation. The study's findings suggest that Instagram's success stems from its ability to bridge formal educational requirements with students' informal digital practices, creating authentic learning environments that promote sustained engagement and meaningful interaction. From a theoretical perspective, the results support (Hafidz et al., 2024) CoPORA model implementation, which demonstrated that digital literacy practices enable students to access, communicate, integrate, evaluate, and create information effectively within social media contexts. The platform's affordances facilitate what (Umamah & Cahyono, 2022) identified as self-regulated writing processes, where students autonomously navigate online resources

to enhance their writing competencies. However, the study also acknowledges inherent challenges, including network connectivity issues and varying levels of digital literacy among participants, consistent with (Abbas et al., 2025) findings regarding the complex relationship between digital media and creative writing skills. These challenges necessitate comprehensive teacher preparation and institutional support systems to maximize educational outcomes. The research contributes to (Fransiska & Hertiki, 2023) advocacy for technology-based learning media that align with student preferences and contemporary pedagogical approaches. Moving forward, educational institutions should consider developing structured protocols for social media integration, ensuring that technological implementation serves clear pedagogical purposes rather than merely following digital trends. The study's methodology and findings provide a foundation for larger-scale investigations exploring long-term retention, cross-cultural applicability, and optimal integration strategies across diverse educational contexts, ultimately supporting evidence-based decisions in educational technology adoption.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Instagram significantly outperforms Facebook as a learning medium for expository text writing among Grade X students at SMA Negeri 7 Bulukumba. The experimental group using Instagram achieved a substantial 18.66 - point improvement (from 52.4 to 70.70), advancing from insufficient to adequate performance levels, while the Facebook control group showed minimal progress (4.11-point increase). The statistical significance ($t = 4.398$, $p = 0.001$) confirms Instagram's superior pedagogical effectiveness, attributed to its visual-centric design and multimodal learning affordances that align with contemporary digital literacy practices. These findings have profound implications for educational policy formulation and teacher professional development, particularly within Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum framework, suggesting that strategic social media integration can bridge formal educational requirements with students' informal digital experiences.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, several recommendations are proposed to support the effective integration of social media in language learning. First, at the policy level, educational authorities should develop comprehensive guidelines for incorporating social media into language curricula, emphasizing platforms like Instagram that demonstrate pedagogical value. This initiative should be supported by investments in digital infrastructure and the implementation of teacher training programs that address technological disparities and digital literacy among educators. Second, teacher professional development should focus on equipping educators with the skills to utilize Instagram's educational features strategically. Training should include the use of story polls for formative assessment, hashtag campaigns for collaborative writing, and visual storytelling to foster engagement with expository texts. These practices should be guided by Media Richness Theory to ensure alignment between technological tools and instructional goals. Finally, in classroom practice, teachers are encouraged to adopt Instagram's interactive elements—such as peer feedback through story polls, thematic

organization via hashtags, and collaborative posts—for group writing projects. The integration of multimedia features supports multimodal learning and transforms traditional writing instruction into a socially mediated, interactive process. These strategies not only enhance student engagement but also foster authentic communication skills, reinforcing the importance of evidence-based educational technology implementation across diverse learning environments.

Author Contributions

Each author has read and approved the published version of the manuscript, has contributed sufficiently to the study, and agrees with the findings and conclusions.

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Conflict of interests

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest in this study.

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