

Investigating the Impact of Messenger to Support Descriptive Essay Writing in Terms of Content and Vocabulary at Tertiary Level: A Mixed Method Study

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Abstract

The study aims to investigate the effectiveness of Messenger based text chatting to support descriptive essay writing. The study employed a mixed method to investigate the potential of Messenger as an addendum to traditional pedagogy. The participants were 60 students selected through convenience sampling. Employing Messenger, the experimental group (N = 30) was exposed to online text-based chatting. However, the control group (N = 30) did receive only traditional lectures. The findings of this mixed method study highlighted: (a) the participants in the intervention group outperformed their counterparts regarding descriptive essay writing, (b) the participants in the treatment group displayed a positive attitude towards the use of Messenger, and (c) text chatting helped foster online interaction that supported the learning of descriptive essay writing. Pedagogical implications focus on the potential of Messenger based text chatting contexts as useful platforms for active collaborative learning of writing and other skills.

Key Words: Social Media; Facebook Messenger; Writing; Content and Vocabulary

Introduction

Technological advancements have profoundly transformed the educational landscape, exerting a significant influence on all facets of the learning process, including language instruction (Bashori, 2018). As technology continues to fundamentally transform society and the world (Avidov-Ungar & Amir, 2018), its permeation into nearly every domain of society (Scherer et al., 2019) has significantly impacted educational practices. The rise of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has ushered in a new era of pedagogical approaches, with a growing emphasis on digital learning technologies across various sectors (Mehta et al., 2019). Within this evolving context, social media platforms have emerged as valuable tools for fostering student engagement and facilitating collaborative learning experiences. This study investigates the efficacy of Facebook Messenger as a pedagogical intervention to enhance the descriptive essay writing abilities of undergraduate students within the Pakistani higher education context, where social media penetration is substantial. Prior research has extensively explored the pedagogical potential of Facebook in supporting diverse language learning objectives. Studies have consistently demonstrated its effectiveness in facilitating vocabulary acquisition, grammatical development, and reading comprehension skills (e.g., Mariappan et al., 2018; Nesrine et al., 2019; Sijali, 2020; Dizon, 2016; Ahmed, 2016; Shafie et al., 2016; van Rensburg & La Thanh, 2017; Faryadi, 2017;

Polok & Harežak, 2018). Furthermore, a substantial body of literature indicates that utilizing Facebook as a platform for writing instruction can yield positive outcomes, with learners demonstrating improved performance across a range of writing tasks (e.g., Dizon, 2016; Annamalai & Jaganathan, 2017; Annamalai, 2018; Aziz & Khatimah, 2019; Fithriani et al., 2019; Sakkir & Dollah, 2019; Barrot, 2020, 2021). Notably, Facebook's inherent features, such as peer-to-peer communication and collaborative tools, facilitate peer interaction and create an environment conducive to peer feedback and collaborative learning (e.g., Peeters, 2019; Okumuş & Yurdakal, 2016; Septiawan, 2018). While prior research has explored the pedagogical applications of Facebook within the language learning domain, investigations specifically examining the efficacy of Facebook Messenger as a text-based intervention for enhancing undergraduate writing skills remain unexplored. This study aims to address this gap in the literature by investigating the impact of Messenger-based text-based communication on students' descriptive essay writing performance, with a particular focus on the development of content and vocabulary. This study is situated within the context of the Pakistani higher education system, characterized by a high prevalence of Android phone usage and widespread engagement with social media platforms among students (Khalid, 2017b). Recognizing the need to effectively integrate these ubiquitous technologies into the educational landscape (Waqas et al., 2016; Butt & Qaisar, 2017; Zulfikar et al., 2018), this research seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of Facebook Messenger as a pedagogical tool for enhancing undergraduate writing skills. More recently, the importance of social media or other technology tools for teaching has increased manifold after COVID-19 has brought disruptive changes in the social, health and economic landscape of the whole world including Pakistan with massive jolt to educational systems. Therefore, the present study deals with Pakistani students to see the effects of Facebook Messenger based text chats on their descriptive essay writing generally and content and vocabulary especially. It attempts to provide answers to the following research questions.

RQ1: Is there any significant difference in pre-test and post-test mean scores between participants in the treatment group (Facebook Messenger) and those who are in the control group in terms of content and vocabulary?

RQ2: How do the participants in the treatment group experience Facebook Messenger as supporting tools for learning descriptive essay writing in terms of content and vocabulary?

RQ3: How the patterns of interaction (fostered during chat) are supportive in improving students' descriptive essay writing with respect to content and vocabulary?

Material and Method

Participants and setting

Participants were fourth-semester students enrolled in Mathematics, and Computer Science classes from a public sector Graduate College in Southern Punjab, Pakistan. The learners' age ranged between 19 and 21 years. Using convenience sampling, 60 students from two intact classes were selected and assigned to a control group (N=30) and a treatment group (N=30) for the intervention trial. The treatment group participants had at least three years of experience using Facebook Messenger and came from various L1 backgrounds (e.g., Punjabi, Saraiki, and Urdu), having studied English as a compulsory subject for at least 12 years. To minimize pedagogical differences, the same teacher instructed both the control and intervention groups.

Pretest and post-test descriptive essays

To determine baseline knowledge of the participants or assess their pre-existing writing skill, a paper pencil pre-test was administered to the participants in both groups. The topic (s) of essay was in accordance with the institutional syllabus. The topic questions guided by Dabbagh and Janebi Enayat (2019) were adapted and piloted. The students were given forty minutes time to write a descriptive essay on any one given topics in the light of analytical rubrics developed and

introduced by (Jacobs, 1981) and revised by Polio (2013) with five components namely content, organization, vocabulary, language and mechanics. The words limit was set from 250 to 300 words as it was followed in their actual exams. During the test, students were not allowed to collaborate or discuss with their peers or teachers or any other reference material such as dictionary or mobile. To measure the impact of Facebook Messenger on the participants' descriptive essay writing, a paper pencil post-test was administered to all students. To ensure the comparability of the pre-test and post-test, the students were administered tests with the same writing conditions such as the same text type (descriptive essay), setting (classroom), length of the essay (250-300 words), duration of test (40 minutes) and so on.

Written chats on Messenger

During treatment, the participants in the experimental group produced written chats while addressing the topic and every question raised by the teacher and peers. One clear benefit of employing this chat was to scaffold students in terms of content and vocabulary whenever needed. It is important to note that these chats fostered online interaction among the participants.

Semi-structured interview

To answer the research question two (RQ2), a semi structured interview, was conducted after treatment with an aim to embed students' views into quantitative. Twelve intervention participants were interviewed one by one after the treatment groups (Creswell, 2014) which were expected to represent the main characteristics of the participants (Morgana, 2018). The interview was scheduled at participants' convenience and carried out in the classroom at the campus after the treatment.

Intervention

The intervention started with formation of Facebook group and inviting the participants. With the consensus of teacher and students, 4 PM was fixed to learn descriptive essay through text based activity on Messenger. Drawing on open educational resources and practices (Borthwick & Gallagher-Brett, 2014), the teacher posted the topic on the platform at four o'clock every day to start a conversation. The teacher posted a question to start an online discussion with the participants on the first day. With the help of questions, the students developed an essay since the questions were relevant to the topic. On the next day, the teacher also provided supportive materials, such as sample essay or any other relevant content to assist students improve their descriptive essay writing skills in terms of content and vocabulary. The instructor monitored the students' reactions to see if they also shared any helpful links and resources. The instructor also gave links to helpful vocabulary and several sample essays on descriptive writing on the third day. On the third day of class, the students were engaged in writing the same essay on paper they developed in the last two days through text based activity. They then handed over their work to the teacher for feedback. On the other hand, the control group received only lectures on how to write a descriptive essay along with the additional handouts from the teacher.

Research Design and Data Analysis

The study employed a quasi-experimental mixed-method approach (Creswell, 2012). In the quantitative part, the learners' pre-test and post-test scores were compared and differentiated to explain the participants' development of descriptive essay writing in terms of content and vocabulary in the experimental group. A single-factor ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of social media (Facebook Messenger) with the control group on undergraduates' descriptive essay writing skills. The two-factor MANOVA aimed to assess if the changes in the scores of students in the two environments showed a meaningful difference in terms of content and vocabulary, was also conducted. For qualitative data, Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis method was used to analyze the interview data and text chats.

Findings

Results of Research Q 1

To address the first research question, Table 1 below shows the Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) of the students' descriptive essay writing scores before and after the treatment. A single-factor ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of social media (Facebook Messenger) with the control group on undergraduates' descriptive essay writing skills.

Table 1

Descriptive Essay Writing Scores Before and After Treatment

Group	Pre-Treatment Mean (M)	Pre-Treatment SD (SD)	Post-Treatment Mean (M)	Post-Treatment SD (SD)
Treatment (Messenger)	8.93	1.911	12.83	1.599
Control (Traditional)	8.97	2.076	8.73	2.083

The Mean scores of students in the treatment group (using Facebook Messenger) increased from M=8.93 (SD=1.911) before the treatment to M=12.83 (SD=1.599) after the treatment. In contrast, the Mean scores of students in the control group, who received traditional instruction, slightly decreased from M=8.97 (SD=2.076) before the treatment to M=8.73 (SD=2.083) after the treatment. The results of the one-way ANOVA, conducted to determine if the changes in the scores of students in the two different environments showed a significant difference, revealed a significant interaction effect. The analysis indicated that the combined effect of being in different learning environments and the factors of repeated measures on scores is statistically significant, as demonstrated in Table 2: $F(2, 87) = 45.22$, $p < .05$. This finding suggests that the effectiveness of the learning environments varied over time.

Table 2

ANOVA Results between groups and within groups

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Scores treatment	before	Between Groups	2.467	2	1.233	.260	.772
		Within Groups	413.133	87	4.749		
		Total	415.600	89			
Scores treatment	after	Between Groups	341.756	2	170.878	45.223	.000
		Within Groups	328.733	87	3.779		
		Total	670.489	89			

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) results revealed a significant difference in scores between groups after the treatment, as evidenced by an F-value of 45.223 and a p-value of .000 ($p < .05$). Conversely, no significant difference between groups was observed in scores before the treatment, as indicated by an F-value of 0.260 and a p-value of .772 ($p > .05$).

A two-factor MANOVA, presented in Table 3, was employed to assess the impact of Facebook Messenger on undergraduates' descriptive essay writing abilities, specifically focusing on content quality. Students in the Messenger treatment group exhibited a mean score increase from 1.67 (SD: .479) before treatment to 2.43 (SD: .568) after treatment. In contrast, the control group, which

received traditional instruction, demonstrated a slight increase in mean scores from 1.77 (SD: .679) to 1.87 (SD: .629), which was not statistically significant. The observed significant difference in mean scores between the treatment and control groups for content quality supported the alternative hypothesis.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics pre-test and post-test in terms of content

	Treatment & Control	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Scores in content before treatment	Messenger	1.67	.479	30
	Control	1.77	.679	30
	Total	1.78	.614	90
Scores in content after treatment	Messenger	2.43	.568	30
	Control	1.87	.629	30
	Total	2.30	.678	90

Table 4 presents the Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) of vocabulary scores before and after treatment for both the treatment (Messenger) and control groups. The Mean scores of students in the treatment group increased from M=1.80 (SD=0.407) before treatment to M=2.20 (SD=0.484) after treatment. In contrast, the Mean scores of students in the control group, who did not receive the treatment, increased from M=1.80 (SD=0.551) before treatment to M=2.07 (SD=0.521) after treatment. The two-factor MANOVA results revealed a significant difference in vocabulary scores between the treatment (Messenger) group and the control group after the treatment, with a p-value of .000 ($p < .05$). However, no significant difference in content scores was observed between the groups, as indicated by a p-value of .772 ($p > .05$). The significant difference in mean scores of the treatment group compared to the control group for vocabulary provides support for the alternative hypothesis

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics pre-test and post-test in terms of vocabulary

	Treatment & Control	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Scores in vocabulary before treatment	Messenger	1.80	.407	30
	Control	1.80	.551	30
	Total	1.83	.546	90
Scores in vocabulary after treatment	Messenger	2.20	.484	30
	Control	2.07	.521	30
	Total	2.21	.530	90

Results of Research Q 2

To address research question 2, a semi-structured interview was conducted with participants from the treatment group. Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis method was used to analyze the interview data. The qualitative findings revealed that one of the contributions of Messenger was the improvement in content. Several students mentioned that Messenger had the potential to provide them with free content or ideas related to the topic. This category of code led the researcher to infer that Messenger helped learners enhance their descriptive essays in terms of content. According to the responses from multiple interviewees, prior to joining the Messenger group, they did not find descriptive essay writing enjoyable and considered it boring. However, the Messenger platform changed their perception by providing free content and additional learning materials, making the learning process more engaging. For instance, Participant 12 expressed:

"I enjoyed learning descriptive essay writing after joining the Messenger group. Because after joining this group, it improved my knowledge and because on this platform I can get free contents and more learning materials from classmates and teachers. So in this environment, I always enjoy learning."

The analysis also identified "others' ideas" as a supporting code contributing to content improvement. Students who finished writing tasks before others served as models, and aided in obtaining better content for descriptive essays. One respondent mentioned that he improved his ideas and content by reading what others produced on Messenger. It evolved into a reciprocal process where students learned from each other. For example, Participant 10 expressed:

"Because here we can enhance our knowledge by reading the ideas presented by other students about that topic. Other students also get enlightened by knowing our ideas. So, this mutual coherence is more enjoyable."

Another category of code contributing to the development of content and improvement in descriptive essay writing was "diverse content." As every student contributed on Messenger, the varied types of content generated through chats on this platform provided students with a better understanding of writing tasks. Consequently, students found that their essay writing skills improved, particularly in terms of content. One interviewee highlighted that Messenger was beneficial because it offered learning material and content from various sources, including teachers and peers:

"Yes, I think on Messenger chatting with my friends and teachers improved my descriptive writing because I was able to ask more questions from them. I came across more information on diverse content from different venues, and it improved my descriptive writing in so many ways." (Participant 5)

The next coding category is "sample essay." Students from both platforms mentioned that sample essays shared by teachers helped them learn better descriptive essay writing skills. One respondent mentioned that their teacher provided sample essays through Messenger, which significantly aided in learning:

"Yes, I think with learning material, my essay becomes better. After joining this course, I learnt academic words. After combined study with friends and attending sample essays provided by teachers, I interacted with learning materials which proved helpful for learning descriptive essay writing." (Participant 3)

These accounts from different respondents revealed that the intervention provided through the Messenger platform helped learners improve their descriptive essay writing skills in terms of content. They found it useful in learning content shared by their peers and teachers, which enhanced their understanding of the topic.

Another significant contribution of the intervention was learning vocabulary through social media tools like Messenger. The teacher facilitated vocabulary learning by posting guiding questions to assist students in their descriptive writing tasks. The first coding category that led the researcher to infer that Messenger helped learners improve their vocabulary was "enhancement in

vocabulary." Some students mentioned that Messenger not only helped them identify grammatical mistakes but also facilitated learning new words. For example, Participant 12 stated:

"Yes, Facebook Messenger has helped me a lot. After joining the group, I have come to know about my mistakes, and I have also learned many words."

Polishing vocabulary" was another category associated with learning vocabulary. Both the teacher and students contributed to vocabulary building. In response to a question about vocabulary, one interviewee found these tools useful in enhancing vocabulary:

"Yes, sir, it was very helpful for me because it enhanced my knowledge and vocabulary when the teacher and students shared sample essays." (Participant 7)

Figurative language" was another coding category linked to the learning of vocabulary. Some respondents mentioned that they developed an interest in descriptive essay writing tasks because they noticed an increase in their use of vocabulary and figurative language. For instance, a student from Messenger stated:

"It gave more understanding of a particular topic by giving us a lot of details in which we found the use of vocabulary and figurative language. It encouraged me to use new vocabulary words." (Participant 6)

However, some interviewees did not see a strong relationship between Messenger and learning vocabulary. For instance, one student expressed:

"Yes, sir, we learned vocabulary but not much, although the teacher taught us a few vocabulary words in some of the essays in the start." (Participant 3)

These accounts from some respondents show that Messenger was useful in teaching and learning vocabulary, although not all respondents shared a positive view in this regard.

Results of Research Q 3

For the third research question, data from chats on the Messenger platform was analyzed. The coding system for this archival data was based on Golonka, Tare, and Bonilla (2017) and Alghasab, Hardman, and Handley (2019). The analysis of chats revealed that the Messenger platform helped learners improve their descriptive essay writing skills, particularly in terms of content. It was found to be beneficial for learning content and material shared by peers and teachers, ultimately enhancing learners' understanding of the topic. One notable aspect identified in this study from Messenger chats was the assistance provided by peers in terms of content help. When the teacher posted a question, peers actively engaged by writing answers, which served as a valuable resource for others who were less active:

Prf. Try to make such picture of your friend.

6:36:31pm, His height is approximately 5'7". Mostly he wears pent and check shirt. He is very careful about his personality. He has round face and curly hair.

6:36:31pm, Harry is the tallest of all in our friends, and that what he loves about himself. With light brown curly hairs, he looks like a statue but his blueish eyes affect his appearance. Wearing traditional outfits is his love and that suits him too. In jeans or casual suits, he doesn't look so good.

6:37:27pm, Ahmad is good in height. His eyes color is brown He likes silky hairs on his head. Mostly he wears shalwar Kameez. His face color is brown. His nose is in round shape. He likes to wear black color most. He is fond of eating fast food

6:38:25pm, He is a good guy. He has brown eyes and curly hairs. He frequently wears pant and shirt. He is normal in height.

In this example, a student asked the teacher whether he/she could give his/her suggestions while describing the piece of art. The student in chat four took one word from the list of vocabulary provided by the teacher to complete the task and asked for clarification. In the last chat, a student assisted the inquirer and advised him to follow his/her example:

6:47 PM - Teacher: How was he/ dressed?

6:48 PM - Teacher: Say something about his/her dress.

6:49 PM: Her dressing was so simple... She had a black gown n hijab around her face...

6:50 PM: She was staring at me with those deep green eyes and soul-less dark black pupil. She had dyed black hair.

6:51 PM: When I see that person who was standing alone, I feel like he was somewhat miserable. As he was in an event but standing apart from everyone, it was clear that he was feeling some (kind of) complex.

6:51 PM: He was wearing a white dress shirt with black pent and a bow of silk. He was in black casual shoes. He was looking so handsome in this simple outfit.

In this second example above, when the teacher posted a question to complete the writing task, students from chat three to six posted their answers and thus acted as a resource for those who were less active in this activity. Teaching vocabulary (another code) refers to the teacher's providence of an appropriate vocabulary while students complete the writing tasks. The teacher instructed vocabulary through Messenger platform wherever he felt necessary. For instance, he guided the students on the appropriate use of vocabulary while the students were engaged to complete the description of a painting:

6:49:42pm, **Prf.** Choose any word to describe painting, (guiding the writing steps)

Prf. Lifelike dreamlike, confusing, colorful, romantic, lyrical, impressive,

(Teaching vocabulary) reacted 👍 to your message

Appropriate use of vocabulary was another area the teacher provided formative feedback during writing activities, for example:

6:34 PM: She has a maturity in her talks and thinkings.

6:35 PM - Teacher: Thinking not thinkings (formative feedback)

And

6:51 PM: Because she is sincere to heart.

6:52 PM - Teacher: Sincere hearted (formative feedback)

The students were also provided formative feedback in terms of the appropriate use of vocabulary in the following example:

6:39:39pm, my garden contains different types of plants. For example, it has different flowers such as roses, sunflowers, daisies. These flowers are the easiest to grow and flourish the environment with their beautiful smells. Moreover, my garden has different vegetables growing in them. For example, vegetables like tomato, carrots, sweet potato, bell pepper, etc. These are the easiest to grow.

6:39:39pm, Fragrance is suitable word instead of smell, (formative feedback)

A few instances of text chat show, that students learned vocabulary in addition to content. However, we could not trace multiple examples to support the potential of Messenger to teach vocabulary in descriptive essay writing.

Discussion

The current study investigated the effectiveness of Messenger chats in supporting the development of descriptive essay writing skills in terms of content, vocabulary, and online interaction. To address this, three research questions guided the study.

The first research question explored whether there was a significant difference in descriptive essay writing performance between students who utilized Messenger as an additional learning tool and those who received traditional instruction. The findings revealed that students in the Messenger group demonstrated significantly higher performance in descriptive essay writing compared to the control group. This finding was supported by statistically significant post-treatment scores observed between the groups, as determined by the post hoc Tukey HSD test. These results suggest

that the integration of Messenger into the learning process had a positive impact on undergraduates' descriptive writing abilities.

These findings align with previous research conducted by Barrot (2021) and Simpson (2017), which also demonstrated the potential of Messenger-based communication to enhance student writing performance. Furthermore, the post hoc Tukey HSD test results from the Messenger group findings are consistent with Barrot (2020) and Syafrizal et al. (2020). They investigated the efficacy of Facebook in improving writing skills. While this study specifically focused on the impact of Messenger, given the similarities between the two platforms, findings from Facebook-based research offer valuable insights. While drawing valuable insights from these studies, the current research extends these findings by investigating the impact of Messenger on the writing skills of university-level students.

Overall, this study contributes significantly to the growing body of research supporting the pedagogical potential of social media platforms, specifically Messenger, in enhancing writing skills among university students. The integration of Messenger as a mediating tool within a formal learning environment provides a unique and valuable approach to improving descriptive essay writing skills.

These findings resonate with the research of Alam and Mizan (2019), who also observed a positive relationship between writing skills and Facebook utilization within a formal learning context. Furthermore, several other studies (Karal et al., 2017; Altunkaya & Topuzkanamis, 2018; Alberth, 2019; Sakkir & Dollah, 2019) have consistently demonstrated the potential of Facebook in supporting the development of writing skills.

The second research question aimed to explore the attitude of the learners towards Messenger as mediating tool to support the learning of descriptive essay writing in terms of content and vocabulary. The thematic analysis of interview data vividly showed that students showed positive attitude towards learning descriptive essay via Messenger as a mediating tool. One of the active participant expressed that:

"Yes, I think on Messenger chatting with my friends and teachers improved my descriptive writing because I was able to ask more questions from them. I came across more information on diverse content from different venues, and it improved my descriptive writing in so many ways."

Another participant, for whom learning essay was a boring activity, expressed his perception in the following extract:

"I enjoyed learning descriptive essay writing after joining the Messenger group. Because after joining this group, it improved my knowledge and because on this platform I can get free contents and more learning materials from classmates and teachers. So in this environment, I always enjoy learning."

Referring to the views of these participants, it becomes clear that learning descriptive essay through Messenger not only improved the participants' skill of essay writing, it also became joyful activity. However, it's notable that while there's strong support for its impact on content improvement, the views regarding its effectiveness for vocabulary learning are more varied. For example, one participant expressed that:

"Yes, sir, we learned vocabulary but not much, although the teacher taught us a few vocabulary words in some of the essays in the start."

It is noteworthy that the study yielded nuanced findings regarding the impact of Messenger on specific writing components, such as content and vocabulary. While the study aligns with Ahmed (2016), who observed positive contributions of social media platforms like Facebook in terms of grammar, content, and organization in writing, the findings regarding vocabulary learning diverge from previous research. Studies by Nesrine et al. (2019), and Mukhlif (2021) have suggested that platforms like Facebook can effectively support vocabulary acquisition.

The study provides valuable insights into this discrepancy by acknowledging the potential influence of factors such as the reliance on Google Translate and the potential distractions associated with frequent messaging, which may have hindered vocabulary development in this specific context.

Finally, the third research question aimed to investigate how patterns of interaction within the Messenger chat environment facilitated the learning of content and vocabulary in descriptive essay writing. The qualitative analysis of chat data revealed that Messenger effectively fostered a dynamic online interaction environment among participants. This interactive environment proved beneficial for learning, with both students and the instructor providing valuable scaffolding in terms of vocabulary and content.

'Harry is the tallest of all in our friends, and that what he loves about himself. With light brown curly hairs, he looks like a statue but his blueish eyes affect his appearance. Wearing traditional outfits is his love and that suits him too. In jeans or casual suits, he doesn't look so good'.

Another extract shows the assistance provided by the teacher to the student in learning vocabulary:

Prf. Choose any word to describe painting, (guiding the writing steps)

Prf. Lifelike dreamlike, confusing, colourful, romantic, lyrical, impressive.

The analysis of the Messenger chat data provides valuable insights into the dynamic of online interaction within the learning environment. It is evident that technology-enhanced learning fostered a sense of empowerment among participants and facilitated meaningful interaction, crucial for effective learning, particularly in the context of writing. These findings resonate with the research of Karal et al. (2017), who investigated the impact of educational Facebook use on high school students' language proficiency. Similarly, Haron and Adi Kasuma (2021) findings support the results, demonstrating that a positive and supportive online community, such as that facilitated by WhatsApp, can significantly enhance student writing performance. It is crucial to acknowledge the challenges associated with utilizing social media platforms in educational settings. Some students reported negative experiences, citing issues such as repetitive content, an overwhelming volume of messages, and distracting off-topic conversations. These findings align with the observations of Çetinkaya and Sütçü (2019), who also identified instances of irrelevant and disruptive communication within online learning environments. Furthermore, the issue of "message bombardment," driven by students' eagerness to participate, resonates with the challenges highlighted by Dehghan et al. (2017), where distractions such as gaming, music, and casual messaging can hinder learning outcomes.

Conclusion

Guided by Vygotskian concepts such as scaffolding, mediation and Zone of Proximal Development, the current study was conducted to examine the effectiveness of Messenger mediated lessons to support the learning of descriptive essay writing in terms of content and vocabulary. Overall, the findings indicated that students exposed to Messenger platform performed better than those in the control group, showcasing Messenger's potential as a pedagogical tool in L2 writing classrooms. The results also indicated positive perception of students regarding Messenger as mediating tool to support descriptive essay writing and online interaction. Finally, the results showed that text based chatting fostered an online interaction and contributed to the learning of descriptive essay writing, allowing for unrestricted learning and prompting gains in both content and vocabulary aspects of descriptive writing.

However, challenges such as text message bombardment were reported, highlighting the need for managing communication within such platforms effectively. The study's implications are multifaceted: theoretically, it enhances our understanding of Messenger's role in L2 writing classrooms, emphasizing crucial factors and affordances. Pedagogically, it provides insights into systematic integration of Messenger into writing teaching methodologies, supplementing

traditional approaches. Methodologically, it contributes to clarifying the efficacy of social media tools like Messenger in enhancing descriptive essay writing skills.

Despite its contributions, the study has limitations worth addressing in future research. These include the relatively small sample size and the use of intact groups, suggesting a need for larger and more diverse participant pools through random sampling. Furthermore, future studies could explore social media tools' pedagogical affordances from teachers' perspectives, offering a comprehensive view of their potential in language teaching and learning contexts.

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