The Impact of Social media on Grade 10 learners' Creative Essays in Tshivenḓa Home Language at Vhumbedzi Circuit, Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province, South Africa

By

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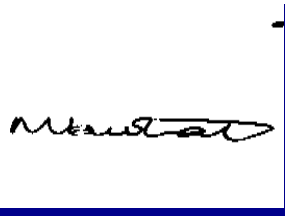
DECLARATION

I, Mbuvha Tshilisanani, declare that the dissertation entitled: **The Impact of Social Media on Grade 10 learners' Creative Essays in Tshivenḓa Home Language at Vhumbedzi Circuit, Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province, South Africa**, hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree Master of Education in the Department of Language Education, has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.



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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Almighty God, whose grace has always sustained me. It is also in loving memory of my late father, Mbuvha Samson Mboneni. May his soul rest in peace! To my mother, Mbuvha Florah Lindelani, whose uṅwavering encouragement and support have been a constant source of strength throughout my studies. I also dedicate this work to my siblings Dakalo, Ndaedzo, Vhulenda, Muruṅwa, Rotakala, and Rolivhuwa for their continuous support and for always believing in me.

ABSTRACT

This study explored the impact of Social Media on Grade 10 Learners' Creative Essays in Tshivenḓa Home Language at Vhumbedzi Circuit, Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province, South Africa. This follows the researcher's observations that most Grade 10 Tshivenḓa Home Language learners' essay writing tasks in Vhumbedzi Circuit are riddled with informal Tshivenḓa register and a range of other language errors associated with the use of Social Media language. These include the use of incorrect capitalization, numerous spelling errors, fragmented sentences, and gross grammatical errors. To get a better understanding of the problem studied, a qualitative case study research design was employed. Data were successfully gathered from a sample of 9 learners and 1 teacher. The participants were purposely selected from the Vhembe District's rural based secondary school. Three instruments were used to collect data: non-participant observation, text analysis, and the semi-structured interviews. Data were triangulated and analyzed using two data analysis techniques, namely: content analysis for data collected through text analysis and the thematic data analysis for the semi structured interview and observation data sets. This study revealed that the learners' level of exposure to the social media language that they use for informal communication unconsciously makes them commit language errors that result in the deformation, omission, and substitution of the key words or phrases that help construct meaning in their Tshivenḓa Home Language academic creative essays. Secondly, the study established that learners perceive the use of social media language in academic writing as an effective tool, as it helps them to save time. Learners do not understand the formal academic writing setting. Thirdly, teachers need better and effective language error-correction strategies since their use of dictation is evidently ineffective to redress the social media language challenges that their learners' experience.

Keywords: Social media, creative essay writing, Tshivenḓa Home Language.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE DISSERTATION

TSVHL = Tshivenḓa Home Language

ZPD = Zone of Proximal Development

CMC = Computer Mediated Communication

CAPS = Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

DBE = Department of Basic Education

CV = Curriculum Vitae

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY 1
1.1. INTRODUCTION 1
1.2. RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION 1
1.3. RESEARCH PROBLEM 3
1.4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY 3
1.4.1 The purpose of this study 3
1.4.1.2 Researcher Questions 3
Main Question 3
Sub Questions 4
1.5. QUALITY CRITERIA 4
1.5.1. Credibility 4
1.5.2. Dependability 4
1.5.3. Transferability 5
1.5.4. Confirmability 5
1.6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY 5
1.7. ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTERS 6
1.8. CONCLUSION 7
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW 8
2.1. INTRODUCTION 8
2.2. THE ROLE OF THEORY 8
2.3. LITERATURE REVIEW 10
2.3.1. What is social media? 10
2.3.2 Historical background of social media 10
2.3.3. Social media in the 21st century 12
2.3.4 Types of social media 13
2.3.5. Social Media and Education: Global Trends 14
2.3.6 Adoption of Social Media in South African Schools 14
2.3.7 Accessibility of social media in South Africa 15
2.3.7.1 Lack of reliable and affordable internet access 16
2.3.7.2. Policy and Institutional Support 16
2.3.8 Social media and language learning in South African schools 17
2.3.9. Pedagogical Use of Social Media in South African classrooms 17
2.3.10 Influence of social media on Writing Skills 19
2.3.11 Language use on social media by learners 19
2.3.11.1 The use of abbreviations by learners on social media 20
2.3.11.2 Words Contraction, Shortening of words and Vowel deletion 21

2.3.11.3 Capitalization errors 22
2.3.11.4 Spelling and typo errors 23
2.4 Essay writing 24
2.4.1.1The Essay as a Genre: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives 24
2.4.1.2 Types of Essays: Definitions and Classifications 24
2.4.1.3 Purpose and Function of the Essay 25
2.4.1.4 Essay Structure and Composition 25
2.4.2. The Role of Essays in Education 25
2.4.3 The influence of social media in learners' ability to write essay 26
2.4.4 Positive Impact of Social Media on Creative Writing 29
2.4.5 Negative impact of Social Media on Creative Writing 31
2.4.6 Suggested solution of Challenges faced by learners when writing essay 32
2.5 CONCLUSION 32
3. CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN 34
3.1 INTRODUCTION 34
3.2. RESEARCH PARADIGM 34
3.3. RESEARCH APPROACH 34
3.4. RESEARCH DESIGN 35
3.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING 35
3.5.1 POPULATION 35
3.5.2 SAMPLING 36
3.6. DATA COLLECTION 37
3.6.1 Semi-structured interview 37
3.6.2 Text analysis 38
3.6.3 Non-participant observation 38
3.7 DATA ANALYSIS 38
3.8 QUALITY CRITERIA 40
3.8.1 Credibility 40
3.8.2 Dependability 40
3.8.3 Transferability 41
3.8.4 Confirmability 41
3.9. Ethical considerations from the researcher 42
3.9.1 Permission to conduct the study 42
3.9.2 Informed consent 42
3.9.3 Confidentiality and anonymity 43
3.9.4 Voluntary Participation 43
3.9.5. Protection from harm, Risks and Benefits 44

3.10 CONCLUSION 44
4. CHAPTER 4 PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS 45
4.1. INTRODUCTION 45
4.2. Participants' demographic profiles 45
This section presents the demographic profiles of all the participants, all learners and their teacher. The profile includes things such as gender, age, income, etc. 45
4.2.1. Table A: Teacher demographic profile 45
4.2.2. Table B: Learners' demographic profile 46
4.3.1 Interviews with learners 47
4.3.2. Interview with the teacher 60
4.3.3 Analysis of learners' and teacher's answers to semi structured interview . 65
4.4. TEXT ANALYSIS 70
4.4.1 Data from learners' written samples 70
4.4.2. Analysis of data from text analysis. 75
4.4. Observation 81
4.4.1 Observation data presentation 82
4.4.2 The following sub-themes were derived through observation 82
4.5. CONCLUSION 86
5. CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION 89
5.1 INTRODUCTION 89
5.2 Summary of the research findings 89
5.3. Summarizing findings through answering the research questions 90
5.3.1 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY 93
5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS 94
5.5. RECOMANDATION FOR FURTHER STUDY 95
5.6 CONCLUSION 96
REFERENCES 97
APPENDIX 111
APPENDIX A: Clearance Certificate (TREC) 111
APPENDIX B: Department Of Education Permission 112
APPENDIX C: Letter to Vhembe East District 113
APPENDIX D: Letter to the principal 114
APPENDIX E: Parent/Guardian Consent Form 115
APPENDIX F: Underage Assent Form 116
APPENDIX G: Teacher's Consent Form 118
APPENDIX H: Proof of Editing 119

INSTRUMENT NO 1: LEARNERS' SEMI STRUCTURE INTERVIEW QUESTION. 120
Mbudziso dzine dza do livhiswa kha vhagudi..... 120
INSTRUMENT NO. 2: TEACHERS' INTERVIEW SCHEDULE. 121
INSTRUMENT NO 3. : OBSERVATION SCHEDULE..... 122

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The 2011 Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) in South Africa identifies reading, writing, speaking, and listening as key literacy skills that learners must master before advancing to tertiary education. However, factors such as the influence of technology and social media in the 4th Industrial Revolution hinder students' ability to achieve these literacy objectives, particularly affecting their writing skills.

This study aims to explore the impact of Social Media on Grade 10 Learners' Creative Essays in Tshivenḓa Home Language. This chapter provides the background of the study, research problem, purpose of the study, quality criteria, significance of the study, organization of the chapter, and conclusion.

1.2. RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

The advent of the fourth industrial revolution led to a dramatic shift in the way people communicate. The world has lost all its significance without the internet, computers, and gadgets. Communication is now instant, simple, and cost-effective. Thanks to the Internet and other technological advancements. Social media is a part of everyday life, and social media platforms like Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Facebook are some of the most popular social media platforms globally (Dyers & Davids, 2015). Learners now spend most of their time connected with the people through social media. Rural and urban high schools and university students belong to the age group of people who own mobile devices and have a registered social media account (StatsSA, 2022). Consequently, the accessibility of technological devices like smartphones, laptops, Macs, etc. makes it easier to live stream and exchange messages through the chat feature options of social media platforms. Now the question arises: what is social media? Carr and Hayes (2015:47) define social media as Internet-based channels that allow users to opportunistically interact and selectively present themselves, either in real-time or asynchronously, with both broad and narrow audiences that generate value from user-generated content.

Crystal (2008) claims that the first text message was sent in years back, December 1992. Text messaging evolved with textspeak (a language characterized by abbreviations, acronyms, initial, emoticons, etc.). This language is largely used by the youth daily when exchanging texts via SMS or social media. Majola, Pillay and Hlongwane (2019), Marwa and Sabrina (2017), Thubakgale and Chaka (2016), Steyn and Van Greunen (2015), Odey, Essoh and Endong (2014), Risto (2014), Farina and Lyddy (2011), Barasa (2010), and Mphahlele and Mashamaite (2005) observed the use of a non-conventional language on social media known by terms such as textese, textism or social media language. When social media users send text messages to each other, they often use a special type of register called *textese* (the register that allows the omission of words and the use of *textisms*). As a result, there is a call to examine social media from various perspectives, in order to comprehend its impact on young people. Writing skills are an important part of communication. Good writing skills allow one to communicate their message with clarity. Writing is a productive skill that uses graphic language to convey thoughts and feelings (Qin, 2017). It involves fluency in sentence structures, suitable selection of vocabulary units, and a cautious attention towards punctuation and spelling (Belkhir & Benyelles, 2017). Writing is a carefully executed process of transferring accurate meanings into a written form conforming to the rules of grammar. It is a conscious process that uses sets of symbols to denote oral sounds. As observed by Apsari (2018), writing comprises of numerous components such as word choice, use of appropriate grammar, syntax, mechanics, and organization of ideas into coherent and cohesive form. One might be called upon to write a report, press release, or a well written Curriculum Vitae (CV), all these with no spelling or grammatical mistakes (Manisha, 2014). In presenting ideas about variety of issues, learners need to follow certain rules in writing creative essays. Currently, it is vital for learners to use the standard language to express their feelings and opinions, not to use the language that they adopt from social media. Krysten (2020) defines creative essay writing as a form of writing that exists outside of journalism, business writing and academic writing. It expresses an author’s unique voice, writing style, thoughts and ideas in an engaging and imaginative manner. Creative essays that school learners write must be error free in terms of social media influence. Thus, the use of social media language results in learners' written messages not being clear because of grammatical and spelling errors. There have been many research studies that

investigated how social media affects language development among learners and students in the classroom. These studies examine the impact of social media on writing skills. However, there appears to be a lack of research on how social media affects other languages such as Tshivenḓa. This gap in research can be addressed to determine the influence of social media on Tshivenḓa Home language learners' writing abilities.

1.3. RESEARCH PROBLEM

According to Polit and Beck (2017), a research problem is "an area of concern in which there is a gap in the knowledge that warrants investigation." It serves as the foundation of the study, helping to identify the objective and guide the selection of methods and analysis. The use of social media among secondary school learners of the selected school in Vhumbedzi circuit, Vhembe district, is increasing daily. The problem is the texting style that is mostly used by learners on social media, which contains inappropriate language usage that does not follow syntactic rules. This allows learners to abandon correct spelling and all grammatical rules. These Grade 10 Tshivenḓa Home Language learners tend not to distinguish between the formal writing (which is needed at school level) and informal writing (which they use on social media). This happens when they are writing creative essays. This texting style also appears in learners' academic works, like when they are writing creative essays. This excessive use of social media language reduces academic progression of these learners.

1.4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.4.1 The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of Social Media on Grade 10 Learners when they are writing creative essays at Vhumbedzi Circuit, Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province, South Africa.

1.4.1.2 Researcher Questions

Main Question

- What is the impact of social media on learners when writing creative essays in Tshivenḓa Home Language?

Sub Questions

- How can teachers alleviate the impact of social media in their Grade 10 classrooms?
- What strategies can be used in Grade 10 classrooms to improve the writing skills of learners and alleviate against the influence of social media?
- What is the relationship between the language that is used on social media and the language produced by learners at school?

1.4.1.3 Objective of the study

- To investigate the impact of social media on learners when writing creative essays in Tshivenḓa Home Language.
- To explore strategies that teachers can implement to alleviate the impact of social media on Grade 10 learners in the classroom.
- To analyze the relationship between the language used on social media and the language produced by learners in school settings.

1.5. QUALITY CRITERIA

This study discusses this section under credibility, confirmability, dependability and transferability in line with qualitative research quality criteria:

1.5.1. Credibility

"Credibility refers to the amount of confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings" (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). This study ensured credibility by ensuring that the research results were consistent with the data presented and that the interpretation of the data reflects the exact statements of the participants without any form of data manipulation.

1.5.2. Dependability

Dependability guarantees that research results are consistent and can be repeated, which can be measured by the standard by which the research is conducted, analyzed, and presented (Moser & Korstjens 2018). To ensure dependability, the researcher provides a thick description of all research processes.

1.5.3. Transferability

Transferability describes the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents and produce the same results" (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). In line with transferability rules, the researcher discloses the context of the study and a complete description of the study, so that readers can determine to what extent the findings might be applicable to other contexts.

1.5.4. Confirmability

Confirmability is the extent to which the research findings are based on the feedback from the participants and not the researcher's motivation or interest (Nieuwenhuis, 2020). To ensure confirmability, the researcher ensured that the research findings were based on what participants said, rather than the researcher's imagination.

1.6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study are beneficial to the following stakeholders:

- The findings of this study benefit learners because they will write creative essays using formal language which respects grammatical rules and not language from the social media.
- The findings of this study benefit teachers because the researcher will make recommendations on how they must teach learners to use formal language that respects grammatical rules.
- The findings of this study benefit the school because the results of the school will improve.
- The findings of this study benefit parents because their children will progress to the next Grade level, which will save them money and other resources.
- Curriculum advisers also benefit from the study because the recommendations from this study will help them to train teachers on how to encourage learners not to use social media language excessively.
- Department of Basic Education benefits from the recommendations of the study because they will not use study materials to the same learners as they will be progressing.

1.7. ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTERS

The study is structured into five (5) chapters, which are as follows**:**

Chapter 1 provides background and motivation for the Impact of social media on Grade 10 learners' Creative Essays in Tshivenḓa Home Language. Some of the aspects discussed are a brief overview of the research problem, purpose of the study, the research questions and quality criteria. Lastly, the chapter closes with the significance of the study**,** organization of chapters and conclusion.

Chapter 2 gives a detailed review of literature that is relevant to the study. This section is discussed under the following themes: what is social media, historical background of social media, social media in the 21st century, types of social media, social media and education: global trends, adoption of social media in South Africa, accessibly of social media in South African education, social media and language learning in school, social media and language in South African school, pedagogical use of social media in South African classroom, social media and language development, influence of social media on writing skills, language use of social media, essays writing, the role of essays in education, policies on essays of writing Tshivenḓa Home Language, the influence of social media in learners' ability, positive impact of social media on creative writing, suggested solution of challenges faced by learners when writing essay and lastly, conclusion.

Chapter 3 Outlines the research methodology and design of the study adopted. This covers the research approach used, the research site chosen, the study population, and sampling. It also highlights the data collection instruments and process, as well as the data analysis strategies used. Ethical issues and quality criteria observed are also provided.

Chapter 4 details and analyzes data collected through classroom observations, teacher and learners' interviews and text analysis. The researcher also presents and analyzes biographical information of learner and teacher participants.

Chapter 5 presents the findings of the data presented in chapter four of the study. It also presents the summary of the study, as well as conclusions reached from the findings. It then gives recommendations.

1.8. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter introduces the study by touching on the key aspects of what is covered. This is highlighted in the background of the study, the problem investigated, the purpose of the study, the research questions, and quality criteria. Lastly, the chapter closes with the significance of the study and chapter organization.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Coffta (2020) defines a literature review as a comprehensive summary of previous research on a topic. He further states that the evaluation should enumerate, describe, summarize, objectively evaluate and give clarification of the research that has been conducted before. In addition, Kumar (2019) defines literature research as the process of searching the existing literature on your research problem to develop theoretical and conceptual frameworks for your research results with what the literature says about them. The literature review provides an overview of the sources examined when researching a topic and shows how the research fits into a large research area (Fink, 2014).

In this study, this chapter is delineated in two major dimensions: the first one being the role of theory, and the second one being the review of literature under the following themes: what is social media, historical background of social media, social media in the 21st century, types of social media, social media and education: global trends, adoption of social media in South Africa, accessibility of social media in South African education, social media and language learning in school, social media and language in school, pedagogical use of social media in South African classroom, social media and language development, influence of social media on writing skills, language use of social media, essays writing, the role of essays in education, policies on essays of writing Tshivenḓa Home Language, the influence of social media in learners' ability, positive impact of social media on creative writing, suggested solution of challenges faced by learners when writing essay and lastly, conclusion.

2.2. THE ROLE OF THEORY

Creswell and Creswell (2018) state that the role of theory in research is to guide the structuring of the research questions. Ravitch and Riggan (2017) further define the role of theory in research as fundamental because it provides a structured framework that guides the inquiry process, shapes research questions, and aids in the interpretation of findings. Theories serve to clarify concepts, establish relationships

between variables, and offer explanations for observed phenomena. They not only help in generating testable hypotheses, but also facilitate the integration of new findings into the existing body of knowledge, allowing for the refinement and development of theories over time. By grounding research in established theoretical perspectives, researchers can ensure that their work contributes meaningfully to the broader academic discourse and advances understanding within their field.

The theory used in this study is Social Cognitive Theory. This theory was used as a "lens" to study research phenomena that seek to understand possible causes and effects of social media on learners' writing of Tshivenḓa Home Language Creative Essays in the classroom. Bandura (1986) emphasizes the primary role of cognition in the coding and execution of behaviour. Bandura's argument is that individuals are constantly learning new behaviours from their external environment. Furthermore, social-cognitive theory assumes that people learn from each other through observation, imitation, and modeling. It is also Bandura's (1977a) view that an individual's behaviour may be a true reflection of on-going interaction between him and his external environment. Learners are the focus of the study and continuously participate in various social media activities (external environment). Through their participation, they are exposed to different behaviours, including lifestyle and linguistic behaviour (how they use the language daily). This can be through interactions with their peers or simply by being exposed to different behaviours in the environment (in this case the mass media context).

Therefore, this study used social-cognitive theory to micro-graph the influence of the external environment on learners' writing behaviour. Zhou and Brown (2015) argue that "Social Cognitive Theory holds that portion of an individual knowledge acquisition which can be directly related to observing others within the context of social interactions, experiences, and outside media influences". In assuming that human behaviour is learned, behaviourists also hold the view that all behaviours can also be unlearned and replaced by new behaviours. That is, when behaviour becomes unacceptable, it can be replaced by an acceptable one. This theory was used to understand and relate the impact of external factors (social media) on learner writing behaviour and to make an informed statement about what influence

learners and students receive during observation and how they model the observed behaviour or to other contexts (formal educational context).

2.3. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.3.1. What is social media?

Social media has been defined in multiple ways, reflecting its dynamic and ever-evolving nature. Kaplan and Haenlein (2020) offer a widely cited definition, describing social media as a "set of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content." This definition underscores two key aspects of social media: the participatory nature of platforms and the capacity for user-generated content. Other scholars, such as Kietzmann et al. (2020), emphasize the social dimensions, noting that social media is not just a platform for content-sharing, but also for networking and interacting in real-time with others. The broad scope of social media includes micro-blogging platforms, social networking services, photo-sharing platforms, video-sharing platforms, and social gaming spaces. As platforms diversify, a scholar stress the complexity of categorizing social media as a single phenomenon, as each platform offers distinct functionalities and fosters different types of interaction. For example, the character-limited micro-blogging of Twitter contrasts with the image-centric sharing culture of Instagram or the video-centric content on TikTok (Zhu et al., 2020).

2.3.2 Historical background of social media

Social media as a platform for communication and interaction has evolved significantly over the past two decades, fundamentally altering the ways individuals, organizations, and societies connect, share, and engage. Its historical development can be understood through various technological, social, and cultural shifts that laid the foundation for the digital platforms we use today (Fuchs, 2020). Early social media platforms such as Friendster (2002) and MySpace (2003) enabled users to create personal profiles, interact with friends, and share content, marking the initial

phase of social networking. These platforms were pivotal in demonstrating the potential of online communities to facilitate both social interactions and user-generated content, but their limitations in scalability, functionality, and user experience prompted the rise of more sophisticated platforms.

With the advent of Facebook in 2004, followed by Twitter (2006), YouTube (2005), and Instagram (2010), the social media landscape entered a new phase characterized by real-time interaction, multimedia sharing, and the rise of mobile-first platforms. These platforms leveraged advancements in internet infrastructure, mobile technology, and broadband access to cater to a global audience, thus transforming communication from a localized, asynchronous process to one that is increasingly instant and widespread (Tufekci, 2015). As these platforms expanded, so too did their influence, with social media becoming integral not only to social interaction, but also to political mobilization, marketing, and brand development (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Social media's cultural significance has also grown, reflecting broader shifts in societal values such as the growing emphasis on digital identity, participation, and the democratization of information (van Dijck, 2013). With the proliferation of user-generated content and the rise of influencers and online communities, platforms have shifted from traditional, top-down media structures to more decentralized models, where ordinary users have significant influence over what is seen and shared (Benkler, 2006).

Moreover, recent trends highlight the rise of new social media forms like TikTok (2016), which introduced short-form video as the dominant content type, reshaping entertainment, marketing, and social interaction even further. The algorithmic-driven nature of platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube has also raised concerns around user privacy, data collection, and the spread of misinformation (Gillespie, 2018). As social media continues to evolve, it increasingly intersects with issues of mental health, privacy, and political polarization, pushing both users and policymakers to grapple with the complex ethical and regulatory challenges these platforms present (Marwick, 2021).

2.3.3. Social media in the 21st century

According to Al-Tarawneh (2014), social media is the fastest growing web application in the 21st century. In the 21st century, social media has profoundly transformed academic communication and collaboration, significantly enhancing accessibility and engagement within the research community. Platforms such as Twitter, LinkedIn, and ResearchGate allow scholars to share their findings in real time, facilitating instant feedback and discussions that accelerate the pace of knowledge dissemination (Bik & Goldstein, 2020). This immediacy not only speeds up the sharing of new ideas, but also invites diverse perspectives that can lead to richer insights and innovative approaches.

Furthermore, social media platforms foster networking opportunities that transcend geographical barriers, promoting cross-disciplinary collaborations that were once more challenging to establish. Researchers can connect with peers around the globe, share expertise, and work together on projects that draw from various fields of study (Veletsianos, 2020). This interdisciplinary engagement not only broadens the scope of research, but also encourages the incorporation of diverse methodologies and theories, ultimately enriching the academic discourse.

In addition to enhancing collaboration, social media allows researchers to engage with broader audiences, helping to demystify complex academic concepts and garner public interest in their work (Heath, 2020). By presenting research in accessible formats, scholars can educate non-specialists, fostering a more informed society. This engagement can also lead to increased public support for scientific initiatives and funding, as researchers demonstrate the real-world implications of their findings.

Moreover, social media serves as a valuable tool for professional development, providing access to resources, discussions, and mentor-ship opportunities that support academic growth (Wang, 2020). Scholars can participate in webinars, join discussions on current trends, and share their own work with a wider audience, enhancing their visibility and influence within the academic community. This dynamic environment not only enriches individual careers, but also contributes to a collective knowledge base that supports the advancement of various fields.

The interconnected nature of research in the digital age is evident as social media continues to evolve. It fosters a culture of collaboration and transparency, where researchers can share not only their successes, but also their challenges and failures. This openness encourages a more supportive academic community, where learning from one another becomes the norm.

2.3.4 Types of social media

Social media allow users to upload and share personal information, documents, pictures, videos, and pictures from different devices such as desktop computers, laptop computers and smartphones (Obar & Wildman, 2015). There are many types of social media applications such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and many others, but the researcher only concentrates on WhatsApp and Facebook definitions. Bosch (2017b) highlights that Facebook is a hybrid social media platform that facilitates communication at all levels, offering space for various communicational contexts including intra-personal, interpersonal, organizational, business, and public communication. Facebook's activities encompass status updates, casual chatting, the use of private messaging for more personal conversations, and its role as an internal communication platform for organizations, with businesses also leveraging Facebook for marketing and brand promotion.

In recent years, the platform has continued to evolve, with its user base growing steadily in 2019 and 2020, particularly as businesses increasingly turned to it for online engagement and digital advertising, a trend that became even more pronounced during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, when remote communication and digital interaction surged (Smith, 2021). WhatsApp, on the other hand, is defined as a free multi-platform messaging application that allows users to make video and voice calls, send text messages, share documents, post status updates, and more (Goodwin, 2022). WhatsApp’s popularity surged during the pandemic years of 2020 and 2021, with users worldwide relying on it for personal communication and businesses adapting it for customer service, particularly as an alternative to face-to-face interaction considering the global health crisis (Johnson, 2021). The app’s encryption and user-friendliness have made it a key tool for both interpersonal communication and business transactions, with its role in promoting digital

commerce and communication becoming even more pronounced during these years of increased reliance on virtual platforms.

2.3.5. Social Media and Education: Global Trends

Globally, social media platforms have become increasingly integral to various educational contexts, serving multiple functions such as communication, collaboration, and content distribution. These platforms offer a unique space where students, teachers, and learners from diverse backgrounds can interact and share ideas beyond traditional classroom settings. Research has shown that social media can play a significant role in supporting informal learning by providing opportunities for self-directed study, facilitating peer-to-peer interactions, and enabling the sharing of resources such as articles, videos, and educational content (Veletsianos & Kimmons, 2020). This dynamic exchange of knowledge and ideas helps create a more flexible, engaging, and personalized learning experience.

However, the effectiveness of social media as an educational tool is not universal. Its impact depends heavily on how it is used within specific pedagogical frameworks. For instance, whether teachers use these platforms for active collaboration, project-based learning, or content dissemination can greatly influence the outcomes. Additionally, the digital literacy of users plays a crucial role in determining how effectively social media can be leveraged for learning. If learners or teachers are not proficient in navigating these platforms, the potential benefits may be underutilized or misapplied. Moreover, the infrastructure available for seamless online interaction such as internet access, user-friendly platforms, and technical support also plays a key role in ensuring that social media can be a viable tool for educational purposes (Junco, Heibergert & Loken, 2020). Therefore, while social media holds promise for enhancing education, its effectiveness is contingent on a combination of user skills, pedagogical strategies, and technological infrastructure.

2.3.6 Adoption of Social Media in South African Schools

Social media adoption in South African educational institutions has been a gradual, but notable process with certain platforms gaining popularity due to their accessibility and practical utility. According to Nkosi and Mncube (2021), platforms such as

WhatsApp and Facebook have become especially prevalent in high schools across the country. Their success can largely be attributed to their low-cost data requirements, ease of use, and broad availability, making them accessible to a wide range of students, including those in less affluent areas. WhatsApp has emerged as a versatile tool allowing for real-time group discussions, the submission of assignments, and the sharing of learning materials among learners and teachers. It offers a convenient way for learners to collaborate on schoolwork outside the traditional classroom setting. Similarly, Facebook has been leveraged to create virtual classrooms and learners' communities, where learners can engage in discussions, access educational resources, and interact with peers and teachers in a more informal, yet structured environment (Dube & Molefe, 2020).

However, while these platforms have become important components of the learning experience for many learners, significant challenges persist. One of the most pressing issues is the digital divide, particularly in rural and under-served areas where access to reliable internet and digital literacy is limited. As highlighted by Govender (2020), many learners still face considerable barriers when it comes to accessing online educational resources. High data costs and limited internet coverage, particularly in remote regions, continue to hinder learners' ability to fully participate in the digital learning environment. This inequality in access to technology and connectivity poses a serious challenge for ensuring equitable social media integration in South African education. Without addressing these disparities, the potential benefits of social media for learning could remain out of reach for a significant portion of the student population, thereby exacerbating existing educational inequalities. Thus, bridging the digital divide and enhancing digital literacy will be essential for maximizing the effectiveness and inclusivity of social media platforms in the education sector.

2.3.7 Accessibility of social media in South Africa

Social media accessibility remains a significant challenge in our country, with many individuals unable to afford the data required to stay connected due to their socio-economic circumstances. This digital divide limits their access to important information, opportunities for communication, and participation in online communities. Additionally, other barriers such as inadequate infrastructure and

limited digital literacy further exacerbate the problem, as discussed in more detail below:

2.3.7.1 Lack of reliable and affordable internet access

One of the most significant barriers to social media integration in South African education is the lack of reliable and affordable internet access. According to a study by Bhorat et al. (2020), access to technology remains uneven, with a large portion of the population, particularly in rural areas, lacking adequate infrastructure to support effective online learning. Additionally, high data costs remain a substantial obstacle, with South Africa having some of the highest mobile data prices in the world (World Bank, 2020). Another challenge is the digital literacy gap among both students and teachers. While many students in urban areas are familiar with social media platforms for personal use, they may not possess the skills to apply these tools effectively for academic purposes (Kapp & Ndlovu, 2021). For teachers, there is often a lack of training in how to incorporate social media into teaching strategies, limiting its effectiveness in the learning process (Govender, 2020).

2.3.7.2. Policy and Institutional Support

Government and institutional policies are key factors in determining the success of social media integration in education. However, we still find other policy and institution preventing the good flow of access to the proper use of social media. The South African government has made efforts to enhance digital education through initiatives such as the Department of Basic Education's (DBE) e-learning strategy, which aims to integrate technology into schools (DBE, 2020). However, these efforts are often hampered by insufficient funding and infrastructure, particularly in underprivileged areas. Additionally, universities and schools are beginning to develop policies that encourage digital literacy and the use of social media as an educational tool. For example, some institutions have established guidelines for the responsible use of social media in academic contexts (Zinn, 2021). Social media has become an integral part of the daily lives of teenagers, especially in their academic and social development. The pervasive use of platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, TikTok and Facebook has transformed the way students engage with content, communicate, and express themselves. While these platforms offer numerous educational

opportunities, they also present challenges, particularly in relation to academic tasks like writing creative essays.

2.3.8 Social media and language learning in South African schools

Home languages pave the way for easier acquisition of additional languages. Mastery of one's home language is crucial. Once learners have a strong foundation, they can more effectively tackle new languages. The influence of social media on Tshivenḓa creative writing highlights significant issues surrounding linguistic and cultural identity. Social media often promotes globalized communication which can marginalize indigenous languages. This trend is evident in the study by Van der Merwe and Bosman (2019), which indicates that learners are increasingly inclined to use dominant languages like English, given their widespread presence in the digital landscape. Similarly, Ramoroka and Moeti (2022) also note that learners often feel a sense of pride and identity when writing in their home language, but this connection is weakened by the prevalence of English and other global languages in online interactions.

The use of Tshivenḓa on social media is limited, and learners may not see the value in using it in academic contexts. This lack of motivation can hinder learners from fully engaging with their language in creative writing tasks. According to Baker (2015), the absence of digital resources and platforms that support minority languages like Tshivenḓa can reinforce the perception that such languages are less valuable or relevant in a modern, digital world.

2.3.9. Pedagogical Use of Social Media in South African classrooms

Research on the pedagogical use of social media in South Africa has highlighted its potential to foster collaborative learning and peer support. According to Zinn (2021), teachers in South Africa have begun incorporating social media to engage students in active learning environments and to promote discussions that extend beyond the classroom. These tools offer students opportunities for collaborative problem-solving, increased participation, and enhanced engagement, which is particularly important in a context where traditional methods of teaching may not always encourage active involvement. However, the extent to which social media is integrated into pedagogy

is still limited. Studies suggest that some teachers still struggle to effectively utilize social media tools for educational purposes, often using them as a supplementary, rather than integral part of the curriculum (Dube & Molefe, 2020).

The integration of social media into education in South Africa holds great potential, offering opportunities for enhanced student engagement, collaborative learning, and the distribution of educational resources. However, challenges such as the digital divide, high data costs, and a lack of digital literacy remain significant barriers. While the pandemic has accelerated the adoption of social media in education, there is a need for more focused policy interventions, infrastructure development, and professional training to ensure that the benefits of social media integration are realized equitably across the country. Moving forward, a more comprehensive approach to bridging the digital gap and enhancing digital competencies will be essential for the sustainable and inclusive use of social media in South African education.

The rapid consumption of information via social media platforms can affect language use and literacy development in both positive and negative ways. Several studies highlight the role of social media in fostering new forms of literacy, which often include a blend of written, visual, and auditory modes of communication (Reilly, 2020). The language used on social media often involves informal, colloquial expressions and shortcuts such as acronyms, slang, and emojis. These linguistic features can influence learners' writing styles, especially in home language assignments. A study by Ndou (2020) examined the impact of social media on language proficiency among South African high school learners. The study found that students who regularly engaged in social media interactions in their home languages, including Tshivenḓa, exhibited both positive and negative outcomes in their language skills. On one hand, they demonstrated improved vocabulary and fluency in informal contexts, but on the other hand, formal writing tasks such as creative essays were often affected by the overuse of informal expressions and a lack of attention to grammatical accuracy.

Studies show that learners often struggle to switch between the informal register of social media and the formal register required in academic writing. The frequent use

of slang, informal structures, and colloquialisms in social media communication can erode learners' ability to write in a more standardized, formal language required in school settings (Anderson, 2019). A significant concern is whether the informal language practices on social media might negatively affect learners' literacy and writing skills in academic contexts. Research by Rampton (2015) highlights that over-reliance on social media's informal registers can hinder learners' development of academic writing conventions such as argumentation, paragraph structure, and cohesive writing.

2.3.10 Influence of social media on Writing Skills

Social media has changed the way learners interact with language, often prioritizing brevity and informality over grammar and structure. According to research by Kapur (2021), social media platforms encourage rapid communication, which often leads to the use of abbreviations, slang, and non-standard spelling. This phenomenon is especially evident in African languages like Tshivenḓa, where users often switch between languages (code-switching) and insert English words or phrases, even when writing in Tshivenḓa. As noted by Mavhunga (2021), this practice impacts learners' ability to maintain language integrity, particularly in academic contexts where the formality and accuracy of language are essential.

Furthermore, Rassool (2021) emphasizes that learners' exposure to informal language on social media platforms discourages the development of formal writing skills, which are crucial when composing structured creative essays. The lack of focus on grammar, sentence structure, and coherence in online communication directly affects learners' ability to express complex ideas in a creative essay, as they tend to replicate the informal language used in digital conversations.

2.3.11 Language use on social media by learners

This section outlines language used on social media platforms. It encompasses text-speak used in various platforms of text-exchange such as social media.

2.3.11.1 The use of abbreviations by learners on social media

The use of abbreviations by learners, particularly in social media, has become increasingly prevalent due to the fast-paced nature of online communication. Social platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and whatsaap encourage users, especially younger audiences, to abbreviate words and phrases for efficiency and brevity. For instance, common abbreviations like "LOL" (laugh out loud), "BRB" (be right back), and "BTW" (by the way) are frequently used in informal online interactions. These shorthand expressions are not only a reflection of the digital culture, but also a way for learners to communicate more rapidly, adapting to the informal tone of social media discourse. However, excessive reliance on abbreviations can have implications for academic writing, as it may undermine the development of formal language skills essential for school essays and other scholarly tasks (Williams & Blevins, 2020).

In contrast, school essays require a more structured and formal language, where clarity and precision are critical. When learners transfer the habit of abbreviation from social media to their academic work, they risk diminishing the quality and coherence of their writing. Teachers have observed a rise in informal language such as "u" instead of "you" or "2" instead of "to," in students' essays, which can negatively affect their grades and understanding of formal writing conventions. While abbreviations are functional for casual digital exchanges, academic settings demand attention to detail, proper grammar, and a more sophisticated vocabulary (Williams & Blevins, 2020). The challenge lies in helping learners strike a balance between the informal language of social media and the more structured requirements of academic writing.

Table: 1

Table 1 below shows Abbreviations and their meaning

Abbreviations/ Texting forms of writing	Their meaning/ formal convention
2morow	Tomorrow
2nte	Tonight
W8	Wait

NVM	Never Mind
LOL	Laughing out laud
EAAP	As early as possible
ASAP	As soon as possible
BFF	Best friend forever
GR8	Great

2.3.11.2 Words Contraction, Shortening of words and Vowel deletion

The use of social media by learners has significantly influenced language patterns, particularly in terms of word contraction, shortening, and vowel deletion. As platforms like Twitter, WhatsApp, and text messaging prioritize brevity due to character limits or the fast-paced nature of online communication, users often resort to abbreviating words to save time. This trend of shortening words such as using "u" instead of "you" or "b4" instead of "before," becomes common in digital discourse (Crystal, 2020). These conventions, while efficient for online communication, have the potential to impact learners' spelling and writing skills in more formal settings.

Furthermore, the trend of vowel deletion has become more prevalent in online interactions driven by the need for faster, more fluid communication. For example, words like "please" may become "plz" or "because" shortened to "bc." This vowel reduction is not just an aesthetic change. It reflects how digital language has evolved to accommodate the immediacy and convenience of social media. Over time, learners who frequently engage in this style of communication may begin to internalize these patterns, which could carry over into their academic or professional writing, where clear, standard spelling is expected (Baron, 2020).

However, while such contractions and reductions might be accepted in informal, digital contexts, they raise concerns in formal educational settings. Teachers and linguists worry that learners, especially younger ones, may struggle with proper spelling and grammar when they are constantly exposed to shortened versions of words and vowel deletions online. This shift in language use demonstrates the need for teachers to emphasize the importance of writing clearly and formally while

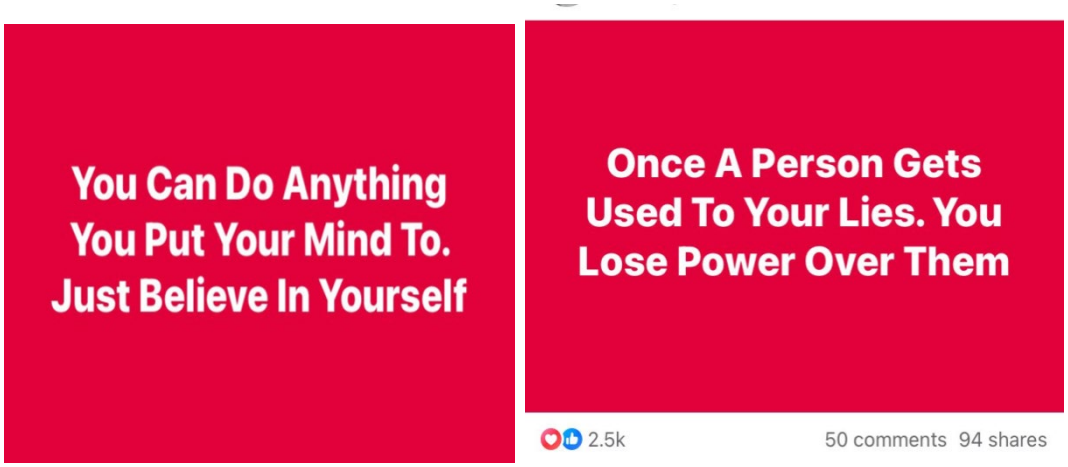
recognizing the evolving nature of language in digital environments (Thurlow & Mroczek, 2020). By balancing these online trends with formal writing practices, learners can maintain their ability to adapt to both informal and academic communication.

2.3.11.3 Capitalization errors

Capitalization errors often occur when words are either missing appropriate capital letters or contain excessive capitalization, such as random upper-case letters within a sentence or entire words in capital letters (Lyddy, Farina, Hanney, Farrel, & O'Neill, 2014; Verheijen, 2015). Text users, especially in informal contexts like social media, frequently misuse capitalization by inserting capital letters arbitrarily in the middle of a sentence or by writing entire words in uppercase (Yi Kay, Jing Kai, & Yew Hor, 2014).

Since social media interactions often take place without proofreading or careful editing, these capitalization mistakes can become normalized in everyday communication. As a result, learners who are accustomed to this casual style may fail to apply proper capitalization conventions when writing formal academic texts, potentially impacting the quality of their work (Bitchener & Knipe, 2020). This highlights the need for greater awareness and correction of capitalization errors, particularly when transitioning between informal and formal writing contexts.

Figure: 1.
Below are examples of capitalization error:



2.3.11.4 Spelling and typo errors

Spelling and typographical errors among school learners have been a persistent challenge in educational settings, often affecting students' writing proficiency and academic performance. Studies have shown that learners, particularly in the primary and secondary stages, frequently make spelling mistakes due to a lack of mastery over phonetic rules, insufficient vocabulary, and inconsistent proofreading practices (Lee & Hsu, 2020). Furthermore, typographical errors which occur when students accidentally omit or substitute letters while typing, also contribute to the overall quality of written work. These errors can hinder the clarity of students' ideas and lead to difficulties in communication, potentially affecting their grades and self-confidence in writing. Research indicates that early interventions such as targeted spelling instruction and regular proofreading exercises are essential to improve learners' writing accuracy (Smith & Jones, 2020).

Technological advancements, particularly the use of word processing tools and digital communication platforms, have altered the nature of spelling and typing errors among students. While digital spell checkers can correct some mistakes, they often fail to catch homophones or contextually inappropriate words, which are common issues in learners' writing (Galloway, 2020). This reliance on automatic corrections may reduce learners' engagement in the manual proofreading process, further perpetuating errors in their work. Some studies argue that over-reliance on technology can result in a decline in students' spelling skills over time, as they may not fully internalize spelling rules and strategies (Williams & Baker, 2020). To address this, teachers are encouraged to integrate technology into spelling instruction while also emphasizing traditional spelling practices and the importance of careful editing to develop students' writing competency in a balanced way

Social media has significantly influenced how people, particularly learners, spell and write. On platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp, the informal nature encourages the use of slang, abbreviations, and even emojis (Smith, 2020). Words like "you" are shortened to "u," "are" becomes "r," and "please" is reduced to "plz." Additionally, acronyms like "lol" (laugh out loud), "brb" (be right back), and "omg" (oh my god) are commonly used instead of full sentences. As a result, learners may

carry these habits over to their academic writing, unintentionally making spelling errors or using informal language when they should be writing more formally (Jones, 2020).

2.4 Essay writing

2.4.1.1The Essay as a Genre: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives

The origin of the essay can be traced to Montaigne, who referred to it as a "trial" or "attempt," reflecting the personal and exploratory nature of the form (Montaigne, 1580). Contemporary scholars have built upon this, viewing the essay as a flexible genre that blends personal reflection, critical analysis, and argumentation. According to Schulz (2020), essays are now often categorized into several sub-genres such as descriptive, narrative, expository, argumentative, and persuasive essays, each serving a distinct communicative purpose.

In modern times, the essay has become integral to both academic and personal writing. As Enos (2020) argues, the essay form facilitates deep engagement with topics, allowing writers to explore complex ideas in nuanced ways. This adaptability to different contexts ranging from academia to personal blogs has ensured the essay's ongoing relevance in the digital age (Kress, 2021).

2.4.1.2 Types of Essays: Definitions and Classifications

Recent literature highlights the diversity within the essay genre. Kress (2021) outlines the primary types of essays: argumentative essays, which aim to persuade the reader toward a particular viewpoint; descriptive essays, which evoke vivid imagery and create a sensory experience for the reader; and expository essays, which aim to explain or inform about a topic in an objective and clear manner.

A notable distinction is made between formal and informal essays. Formal essays are typically characterized by a more structured approach and are used in academic and professional settings, while informal essays may employ a conversational tone and are often more personal (Enos, 2020). Another important distinction noted by scholars like Griffin (2020) is the rise of digital essays such as those found in online platforms and blogs, which blur the boundaries between formal and informal writing.

2.4.1.3 Purpose and Function of the Essay

The primary purpose of the essay, according to Figueroa (2020), is to engage readers intellectually, allowing them to reflect, question, and think critically about a given topic. Essays serve a range of functions, from informing and explaining to persuading and entertaining. Enos (2020) emphasizes that the essay's strength lies in its ability to present complex arguments in a concise and accessible manner, which is why it remains a favored method of discourse in both academic and public domains.

Moreover, the essay is often used as a tool for personal reflection and self-exploration. In this respect, the essay can serve as a platform for writers to organize their thoughts and communicate their experiences. For instance, Persaud (2021) suggests that essays in the digital age, especially personal essays published online, have become a popular medium for people to share personal narratives and connect with others over shared experiences.

2.4.1.4 Essay Structure and Composition

The structure of an essay, though flexible, is often guided by specific conventions. A typical essay includes an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion. According to Griffin (2020), the introduction should present the topic and establish a clear thesis statement, while the body paragraphs must provide evidence and analysis that support the central argument. The conclusion, in turn, is meant to summarize the main points and offer a final perspective on the issue.

Despite this traditional structure, recent scholarship suggests that the rigid "five-paragraph essay" model, often promoted in schools, is increasingly being criticized for limiting the scope of argumentation. Scholars such as Kress (2021) advocate for a more flexible approach that allows writers to adapt the structure to the complexity of the topic at hand.

2.4.2. The Role of Essays in Education

Essays continue to play a central role in education. They are frequently used as a tool for assessing student understanding, critical thinking, and writing skills. The academic essay, in particular, is often viewed as a vehicle for the development of argumentation and reasoning. According to Kress (2021), educational essays challenge students to engage critically with literature, data, and theories, thus preparing them for more advanced academic work.

The evolution of the essay in education has also been shaped by changes in technology. As Enos (2020) observes, digital literacy and the ability to conduct research online have become crucial components of essay writing in modern education. Teachers are increasingly encouraging students to integrate digital sources and multimedia into their essays, leading to new forms of digital essays that incorporate video, interactive elements, and hyperlinks.

2.4.3 The influence of social media in learners' ability to write essay

According to Surat (2014), learners lack procedural knowledge. This is seen in some of their essay writing introductions as they fail to produce meaningful sentences. In addition, learners fail to use declarative knowledge to explain ideas. Songxaba (2019) indicates that social media, particularly WhatsApp, has a very massive effect on learners' writing skills. It is highlighted that social media is now part of every one of us and it has become the norm of everyday speedy communication method. However, as much as it is helpful and entertaining, it can also harm children's education. For example, most learners are no longer able to structure standardized essays because their method of writing has changed due to social media writings. Essay writing skills are affected by abbreviated method of writing on social media, and the unnecessarily shortened words and use of numbers instead of the complete word form.

According to Asare (2022), when people write individually, social media does have much impact on their formal writing. Learners who work in groups are not mainly affected by social media. Furthermore, Asare (2022) says that learners use social media language such as clipping, abbreviation, alphanumeric homophony, vowel deletion, grapheme and other slang terms. People, societies and learners use social

media or internet language when they communicate in order to fasten the speed of their conversation and make communication easier.

In the case of mass communication of students, social media does not have much overwhelming influence as associated with the writing competence of undergraduate students. Among all types of social media chat language, graphemes rank highest in use among the study population (Salaudeen, 2019). It is further indicated that there are phenomena on social media that affect writing competence among undergraduate students, such as training for writing. The above case stands to prove that writing has a very long hard knot of rope that needs to be tackled. However, such challenges can be solved in the early years before learners get destroyed or polluted by social media.

Majority of the learners dwell deeper into the tags or language of social media usage, which is a language that cannot be found among the official matrix of standard English (SE). Instead, the young stars have resorted to the usage of social media tags such as “U” for “YOU”, “GR8T” for “GREAT”, “UR or URS” for “YOUR or YOURS. These patterns have crept into their everyday writing consciousness in classes and examinations (Omoera, Stevenson & Omluranti, 2018). Furthermore, this development is seen to have serious implications for effective and efficient writing among Nigerian youths especially in formal situations.

Shahzadi and Kausar (2020) indicate that there is positivity and a room for quality improvement of writing skills. It is indicated that social media can be used as a discussion forum, so as to help with improvement of writing skills. Moreover, this particular study proves that social media is not at all that bad, but can create room for improvement of writing. The major concern is how it is used by the students or learners. Furthermore, they state that most of the students were of the view that it is a new experience of learning writing by engaging in discussion with the peers and teachers through Facebook.

In the system of Malaysian education, the English language curriculum for primary schools aims to develop learners’ ability to write different types of texts using appropriate language, style, and form through the use of various media. Summative

assessment writing is tested as one of the compulsory subjects in the national examination, primary school assessment test for the Grade 6 learners. However, it is argued that the proficiency of English among Malaysian learners is on the decline despite learning English as a second language for at least six years at the primary level and yet, they are still weak in English, especially the writing skills (Chan, Melor & Maslawati, 2018).

In the study of Suhaimi, Mohamadi and Yamat (2019), it was stated that the movement of social media, especially WhatsApp, has significantly improved 75% of the participants' vocabulary, while grammar had no effect as one participant represented 12% of those who indicated improvement. Bataineh (2018) explains that a WhatsApp instruction platform could be a good form of improvement of writing performance particularly regarding content, ideas, organization and mechanics, vocabulary, and language use. Vikneswaran and Krish (2016) add that with the forever evolving and improving technology around the world, writing is no longer just part and parcel of the classroom, as internet is within the learner's reach. Thus, online writing is a new method that needs to be implemented to enhance students' writing skills. The use of technology in writing tasks makes students to write better in English owing to the exchanges of feedback and ideas that took place through the social networking site.

Che Wil, Yunus and Suliman (2019) explain that writing needs to go hand-in-hand with the line of mastering aromatically rules and vocabulary and writing is mostly encouraged by what a learner knows or masters, i.e., grammar and vocabulary; as such knowledge helps the learner to have confidence than a learner who has no good vocabulary and grammar. Furthermore they state that writing is an important skill in language production. Unfortunately, it is considered as the most difficult skill to be developed by learners, especially secondary school pupils. Writing is the hardest skill to comprehend or learn, since it requires major usage of knowledge better than listening, speaking and reading.

Teachers can teach learners easily and efficiently through mobile learning, the shared techniques of writing activities are brainstorming, group drafting, teacher's feedback, starter, quick writing, peer feedback and information gathering elaboration

exercises, checklist for these techniques can be used through WhatsApp (Susanti & Tarmuji, 2016).

The rise of digital media has profoundly affected essay writing. Online platforms have allowed essayists to reach broader audiences and engage with a wider array of subjects, from political commentary to lifestyle writing (Schulz, 2020). The essay has migrated from print publications and academic journals to blogs, social media, and websites, contributing to its democratization and wider distribution. This shift has led to increased participation in essay writing, as more people have the ability to share their thoughts publicly (Figueroa, 2020).

2.4.4 Positive Impact of Social Media on Creative Writing

The impact of social media on creativity has been a subject of ongoing research. While some studies suggest that social media can stimulate creative thinking by exposing students to diverse perspectives and ideas (Johnson, 2020), other studies argue that excessive exposure to the fast-paced, attention-grabbing nature of digital media can hinder deep, reflective thought necessary for creative writing (Thompson, 2020). In the context of Grade 10 Tshivenḓa Home Language creative essays, the ability to produce original ideas, organize thoughts coherently, and apply grammatical structures correctly is crucial. Some scholars such as Masango (2020), assert that the fast consumption of content on social media may discourage sustained attention, which is vital for the reflective and complex thinking involved in writing creative essays. Students may struggle to focus on the task at hand, leading to fragmented ideas and a lack of coherence in their essays.

Conversely, social media can also provide learners with exposure to cultural narratives and storytelling techniques that could enrich their writing. A study by Makhubela (2020) notes that learners who interacted with Tshivenḓa content on social media platforms were often exposed to diverse linguistic structures and cultural references that enriched their creative writing. This exposure allowed them to draw upon a wider range of expressions, metaphors, and local idioms when composing their essays, potentially enhancing the cultural and emotional depth of their writing.

Motivation plays a crucial role in writing, particularly in creative tasks such as essay writing. Social media's ability to foster a sense of connection and belonging can influence learners' motivation to write creatively in their home languages. According to Chetty (2020), social media platforms create a space for learners to express themselves and seek validation through likes, shares, and comments. This can translate into greater motivation to produce creative content, including essays in their home language.

However, this motivation may not always align with academic expectations. Learners may be more motivated to engage in short, informal, and instantly gratifying forms of writing, such as status updates or tweets, rather than long-form, structured essays (Msimanga, 2020). This shift in motivation could impact their ability to write detailed, coherent, and thoughtful creative essays in Tshivenḓa.

Social media platforms provide a variety of tools and opportunities that can enhance creative expression, particularly in the development of writing skills. According to Pittman and Reich (2020), social media can help learners engage in writing practices that foster creativity and self-expression. Online platforms often encourage students to use language creatively in various forms, including memes, captions, and posts. This informal, creative engagement with language can transfer to more formal academic writing tasks such as creative essays by providing students with opportunities to explore different genres, tones and styles of communication (Kearney & Schuck, 2020).

Additionally, social media platforms serve as venues for peer interaction, feedback, and collaboration, which can positively impact writing. In particular, Fuchs and Seitz (2020) found that students who participate in online writing communities or engage in collaborative storytelling on social media often demonstrate improved narrative skills, creativity, and voice in their writing. The collaborative nature of social media allows learners to share ideas, receive constructive feedback, and experiment with different writing approaches in a low-risk environment, thereby enhancing their creative essay writing.

2.4.5 Negative Impact of Social Media on Creative Writing

While social media offers many benefits, there are significant concerns about its potential negative impact on creative writing. One primary concern is the reduction in attention span and focus that can result from excessive social media use. Rosen, Lim, Carrier and Cheever (2020) conducted a study that showed that students who spend extended periods on social media tend to experience fragmented attention spans, which negatively affect their ability to concentrate on long-form writing tasks, such as creative essays. The constant influx of information on social media can lead to a distracted and shallow engagement with academic tasks, making it harder for learners to organize their thoughts and articulate their ideas coherently in creative writing.

Moreover, the pressures to conform to online trends and social norms may lead to a loss of individual voice in students' creative writing. Gonzalez (2020) notes that many learners, when influenced by the public discourse on social media, may begin to mimic the language, tone, or even themes that are popular on these platforms, rather than developing their own unique writing styles. This can hinder creative expression, as students may prioritize trendy, catchy, or viral ideas over authentic self-expression in their essays.

Another concern is the reliance on shortcuts and external aids that social media promotes. Bergström and Tully (2020) highlight that some students, when faced with writing tasks, may be tempted to look for inspiration or solutions on social media platforms, such as searching for plot summaries or using ready-made content, which may undermine their critical thinking and creativity.

However, some scholars caution against the decline in quality associated with this democratization. As noted by Persaud (2021), the ease of publishing online has led to an overabundance of unedited, informal essays, making it difficult for readers to discern quality from superficial content. Nevertheless, the ability to share essays in digital spaces also allows for a more diverse range of voices to be heard.

2.4.6 Suggested solution of Challenges faced by learners when writing essay

Some educational researchers have proposed strategies to counteract the negative impact of social media on learners' language skills. Graham (2018) advocates for integrating digital tools that promote language development while also respecting cultural and linguistic diversity. In the case of Tshivenḓa, this might involve the development of apps, websites, or educational programs that encourage learners to use the language in creative and formal contexts. Additionally, Adams (2017) emphasizes the importance of nurturing a learner's motivation to engage with their home language, suggesting that teachers should highlight the relevance and beauty of Tshivenḓa to foster a sense of pride and ownership in using it.

Further research by Magwa (2020) stresses the importance of incorporating creative writing practices in the classroom that bridge the gap between social media usage and academic writing. For instance, teachers could design assignments that combine creative storytelling with the use of social media platforms, encouraging learners to create content in Tshivenḓa while applying the formal structures they have learned in class.

In conclusion, social media has a profound impact on learners' ability to write creative essays in Tshivenḓa. The informal and abbreviated language conventions prevalent on social media platforms pose significant challenges for learners when attempting to write formal, structured essays. These challenges include a decline in vocabulary, an over-reliance on code-switching, and a lack of exposure to complex language structures. However, with targeted interventions, such as promoting digital literacy in indigenous languages, developing educational tools that support Tshivenḓa, and fostering a deeper cultural connection to the language, it is possible to mitigate the negative effects of social media on learners' writing abilities.

2.5 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter provided a discussion in two main dimensions: the first dimension gave the perspective of social cognitive theory. The main principle of Social Cognitive Theory is the idea of reciprocal determinism, which posits that human behavior is influenced by the dynamic interaction between personal factors,

behavior, and environmental contexts. This means that our thoughts, emotions, and attitudes (personal factors) affect our actions (behavior), and in turn, the actions we take influence our environment. Conversely, the environment and the people around us also shape our behaviors and perceptions. This theory was used to understand and relate the impact of external factors (social media) on learner writing behaviour and to make an informed statement about what influence learners and students receive during observation and how they model the observed behaviour or to other contexts (formal educational context). The second dimension examined relevant studies to act as references and justification for what is known about the topic. Numerous prior researches have demonstrated a correlation between the use of social media language and the writing in professional or academic contexts in English. The primary goals of this research were to strengthen the foundation for the previous investigation and determine the connection between the language used in the media (social media) and the written essays completed by the learners. The next chapter details the methodological steps and data collection methods used to collect the data that gave rise to this study's findings.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Dawson (2019), research methodology is the primary principle that guides research. The above chapter gave a detailed review of literature that is relevant to the study. This chapter provides the Research paradigm, research approach, research design, population and sampling, data collection, data analysis, quality criteria and ethical consideration of the research. This chapter also gives a clear discussion of the research approach that was applied to the influence of social media on Grade 10 learners' Creative Essays in Tshivenḓa Home Language. The chapter begins with the description of the research approach and research design, research paradigm, followed by the target population, sampling, data collection, data analysis, ethical considerations and finally a conclusion.

3.2. RESEARCH PARADIGM

A research paradigm and other philosophical assumptions are called world views (Creswell & Poth, 2022). This study was guided by the interpretivist paradigm. The interpretivist paradigm is the belief that reason is the best way to generate knowledge about reality. Creswell (2014) suggests that the interpretivists aim to obtain a deeper understanding of a phenomenon and its complexity in its unique context, not to generalize to the whole population. The researcher followed the interpretivist paradigm because it is considered the most appropriate for addressing the research problem that involves the semi-structured interviews, observation and text analysis.

3.3. RESEARCH APPROACH

Creswell and Creswell (2018) describe a research approach as a broader plan that specifies the kind of procedures to be followed, and the boundaries within which a study should proceed from the beginning to the end. The type of data that the researcher wants to collect influences the specific research approach for the study. This research project was based on the qualitative approach because it focuses on the interaction between learners and teachers (Almalki, 2016). Crossman (2020)

explains the qualitative research method as a producer of descriptive data that the researcher interprets through the application of rigorous and systematic methods of transcribing, coding, and analyzing trends and themes. Kumar (2014) points out that the main focus in qualitative research is about understanding, explaining, exploring, discovering and clarifying situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and experiences of a group of people. The motive of using qualitative research in this research was to explore how social media influences Grade 10 learners when writing creative essays in Tshivenḓa Home Language.

3.4. RESEARCH DESIGN

Said (2021) defines the research design as a strategy for a study providing the general framework for collecting data. MacMillan and Schumacher (2001) cited in Zulu (2013) state that it is a plot for choosing subjects, research locations, and data collection measures to reply to the research questions. They further show that the research design's objective is to afford results that are judged to be trustworthy. According to this definition, the research design refers to the plan whose goal is to provide credible findings based on the collected data. This study used the case study design to help explore the study's topic. The case study research design was appropriate here as it helped to explore the research problem through a variety of lenses to reveal multiple facets of the phenomenon.

3.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

3.5.1 POPULATION

A population refers to any collection of specified groups of human beings or non-human entities such as objects, educational institutions, time units, geographical areas, and prices of wheat or salaries drawn by individuals (Wani, 2019). Kellehear, (2020) further defines population as a group of participants, institutions, and objects with mutual features that are of interest to the researcher. It may be argued that a research population should be diligently selected, so that the research topic, research questions and research purposes may precisely link with the population, so that even the research is found to be relevant.

The research was conducted in Limpopo Province, Vhembe East District, Vhumbedzi Circuit. Vhumbedzi is one of the 27 circuits in the Vhembe East District, and it comprises of 12 secondary schools and 24 primary schools. The selected school had 420 learners and 14 teachers in the period under review. The school accommodates learners from Grade 8 to Grade 12. The selected school had a population of 90 Grade 10 learners. The Grade 10 learners were distributed in two classes which are Grade 10A with 40 and 10B with 50 learners. There is only one teacher who teaches Tshivenḓa home language in Grade 10.

3.5.2 SAMPLING

Kobus (2016) explains sampling as the process of selecting the sample for estimating the population characteristics. This study adopted purposive sampling. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) state that “purposive sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore, must select a sample from which the most can be learned”. In addition to this assertion, Creswell and Creswell (2018) argue that “the idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites (or documents) that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question”.

Purposive sampling is a technique that involves selecting certain units or cases grounded on a specific purpose rather than random sampling (Plano, Clark & Creswell, 2008). Furthermore, it focuses on a limited number of informants selected strategically, based on a pre-selected criterion looking at the study itself, so that their in-depth information can give prime perception regarding an issue of which little is known about. According to Kumar (2011), Purposive sampling gives the researcher an opportunity to gauge as to who can provide the best information to achieve the objectives of a study. The group selected consisted of 9 learners and 1 teacher from the selected school.

There were 50 Grade 10b learners at this selected School. The researcher purposely selected 9 learners, three best performing learners, three average learners and three learners who obtained low marks in the Tshivenḓa Creative Essays writing, making it a total of 9 learners. The only teacher who teaches Tshivenḓa Home Language in Grade 10 formed part of the participants. Therefore, the selected school was

selected as the research site because it was convenient for the researcher to access, hence the researcher teaches at the selected school.

3.6. DATA COLLECTION

According to Creswell (2014), data collection refers to collecting information through unstructured or semi-structured interviews, observations, documentary surveys, and visual materials. Bismah and Umai (2018) further explain data collection as the process of gathering information on variables of interest from sample of research participants. Data collection describes in detail how data is collected in a study. In this study, the researcher collected data using three data collecting methods, which were non-participant observation, semi structured interviews and text analysis. These are detailed below.

3.6.1 Semi-structured interview

The researcher used semi-structured interviews which involve gathering information consisting of dialogue between the researcher and participants guided by flexible interview protocol and supplemented by follow-up questions, probes and comment (DeJocknheere, 2019). The semi-structured interviews helped the researcher to collect data, explore the participants‟ thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about the learners‟ language usage in academic writing. Wishkoski (2020) alludes that the use of the semi-structured interview gives the researcher some flexibility in the way he expresses questions for each learner participant and teacher participant. In addition, it provides the researcher with the opportunity to probe for more information and clarifications where necessary. The researcher arranged the classroom prior to the interview with the teacher and learner participants to ensure privacy and confidentiality. Learners and their teacher were interviewed individually to ensure independent responses. The interviews lasted for about ±15 minutes per session. The given time was enough for the researcher to gather information from them. The researcher prepared the interview schedule with open-ended questions to guide the proceedings (**see appendix I, data instrument number 1 and 2**).

Nine Grade 10 learners and their one Tshivenḓa Home Language Teacher were interviewed. Notes were taken as the participants responded to questions. An audio

device such as a tape recorder was used as a back-up instrument for notes taken during the interview. The purpose of using the audio-recorder during the learner participants and their teacher participant responses during the interviews was to help the researcher to remind himself of what transpired during the interview when he makes a play-back of the recordings.

3.6.2 Text analysis

Text analysis is said to be a type of qualitative research strategy wherein documents are analyzed and vigorously interpreted by the researcher to hand out a voice and meaningful views around a researched topic (Frey, 2018). Dalglish, Khalid, and McMahon (2020) further define text analysis as a form of qualitative research that uses a systematic procedure to analyze document evidence in order to answer specific research questions. The current study analyzed the Tshivenḓa Home Language creative essays of Grade 10 learners. The understandings were integrated to best describe the study. The study analyzed scripts of the learners' Tshivenḓa creative essays to identify any possible grammatical errors caused by excessive use of social media.

3.6.3 Non-participant observation

Non participant observation is relatively unobtrusive qualitative research strategy for gathering primary data about some aspect of the social world without interacting directly with its participants (Almeida & Queiros, 2017). The researcher used this tool to collect contextual (school premises) data on the extent to how social media impact learners when writing Tshivenḓa creative essays in Tshivenḓa Home Language, and thus used even in classroom activities in the selected school. To gain access to areas that would hardly be granted elsewhere, the researcher took advantage of being an teacher in the school, and assumed the role of a participant observer in this study. The researcher used the observation schedule instrument (**Refer to Appendix I, data instrument number 3**) as a tool to collect data from both the learners and teacher participants in a classroom setting.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Calzon (2022) says that data analysis can be defined as the process of summarizing gathered information. Chicco and Jurman (2020) further refer to data analysis as a path of breaking up the information into understandable links and themes. This study used thematic analysis method to analyse data collected. According to Braun and Clarke (2023), thematic analysis is a qualitative research method used to identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) within a data set. It allows researchers to interpret and make sense of qualitative data, such as interview transcripts, focus group discussions, or textual content. Thematic analysis is appropriate in this study as a method for systematically identifying, organizing and offering insight into themes across the data set. It allowed the researcher to make sense of the collective or shared meaning of the participants' experiences. Under thematic analysis, the researcher used inductive coding as a strategy for generating codes from data. Inductive coding is also called open coding, which starts from scratch and creates codes based on the data collected (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Inductive coding is suitable for this study because it allowed the researcher to make codes based on the responses received from interviews and observation. It also allowed the researcher to break down collected data into smaller samples which make it easy for readers to read and comprehend the findings. The content analysis was also used to analyze learners' essays script document. The researcher used content analysis so that he would explore the phenomenon of the study and interpret data collected from both learner and teacher participants. In content analysis, a researcher puts emphasis on counting the number of times a word, a phrase or a theme occurred to interpret the data (Walia, 2015).

Data collected from interview schedule with teacher and learners' participants was transcribed to get a general sense of the ideas and experiences presented (Maldonado, 2017). The researcher used direct quotations of the participants, so that proper analyses of the participants' experiences could be made (Janessick, 2016). The data was then coded into common themes. Irrelevant data was discarded, while relevant data was coded into reduced common themes or categories that were then labeled into basic themes or categories for interpretation. The researcher asked the participants to read their own interview transcripts for validation and also asked them to agree or disagree with the researcher's interpretation of the data.

During the analysis of data collected from observation schedule, the researcher read and reread the raw data collected and looked for recurring data patterns from the participants' ideas, experiences and expressions, and coded the patterns according to similarities and differences that emerged. Saldaña (2015) defines coding as "a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data". Coding helps to generate new ideas and also helps gather material by topic (Richards, 2006). Data that was not useful in the study was set aside, while relevant data was further coded into few themes that were then labeled into basic themes for interpretation.

In text analysis, data collected from learner participants' Tshivenḓa Home Language creative essays writing tasks was read and reread, and just like in observation and interviews, emerging common themes that were relevant to this study were labeled and analyzed. All irrelevant data was discarded while relevant data was coded to reduce emerging themes which were labeled into basic themes for interpretation.

3.8 QUALITY CRITERIA

This study discusses this section under credibility, confirmability, dependability and transferability in line with qualitative research:

3.8.1 Credibility

"Credibility refers to the amount of confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings" (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). This study maintained credibility by ensuring that the research results were consistent with the data presented and that the interpretation of the data reflects the exact statements of the participants without any form of data manipulation. This research study followed the data collection instruments provided in data collection to measure the performance of learners, to find factors contributing to the problem and to provide recommendations. The findings are credible and reliable because the research study found them by analyzing the data that was collected from the participants themselves, and the documents that were collected from the school.

3.8.2 Dependability

Dependability guaranteed that research results were consistent and can be repeated, which can be measured by the standard by which the research is conducted, analyzed, and presented (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). This explains that dependability ensures that the information provided must be enough, so that the same information can be replicated if the research study is to be re-conducted. According to Marshall and Rossman (2013), if the work is repeated in the same context, with the same methods and same participants, similar results would be obtained. This means that dependability is used as an instrument to measure the truthfulness of findings, because it stresses that if the same study can be done under the same topic, methods and participants, the findings must be the same. This can only happen if the findings are true. To ensure dependability in this study, the research study used information gathered from the sampled participants, observation and text analysis to determine the results, in order to ensure that the findings are realistic and dependable.

3.8.3 Transferability

Transferability describes the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents and produce the same results" (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). The researcher provided enough information so that this research study can be applicable to another setting where there is a similar problem to the one experienced by the selected Secondary School Grade 10 learners. The findings are authentic and can also be transferred to another situation similar to this one.

3.8.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is the extent to which the research findings are based on the feedback from the participants and not the researcher's motivation or interest (Nieuwenhuis, 2020). Confirmability as postulated by Nieuwenhuis focuses on objectivity of the research study. This is to say that the findings should be objective. In this research study, the findings emanate from the participants, the documents analyzed and the observation that the research study generated. Therefore, the findings of this research study were brought about by the results of data collected from learners, their teacher, documents and observation, and not the researcher’s wish.

3.9. Ethical considerations from the researcher

Ethical principles are guiding moral standards that regulate the conduct of people, especially in any field of research (Fouche, Strydom, & Roestenburg, 2021). They help set the norms, values, and standards people should adhere to in their relationship with one another. Ethical considerations help to prevent the fabrication or falsifying of data. They promote the pursuit of knowledge and truth, which is the primary goal of any research project. Four ethical principles employed in this study are discussed hereunder:

3.9.1 Permission to conduct the study

According to Smith, Johnson and Davis (2021), permission letter to conduct a study is a formal request to obtain a permission to conduct a study from an organization. The researcher requested permission to conduct this study from Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC). The researcher also requested the permission to conduct the study from Limpopo Department of Basic Education, Vhembe East District, Circuit Manager of Vhumbedzi Circuit and the school principal of the selected school.

3.9.2 Informed consent

Informed consent is a way of informing the participants about a research project and ensuring that they understand what a study is all about, so that they take a decision to participate or not to participate in the study (Mpiti, 2016). Fouka and Mantzorou (2011) assert that informed consent "means that a person knowingly, voluntarily and intelligently, and in a clear and manifest way, gives his consent". A written consent form was given to learner participants and their parents/guardians to complete as the learner participants were below 21 years of age of legal consent **(Refer to Appendix F)**. Pillay (2014) emphasizes that "if the child participants are under the age of consent, then the permission of parents or legal guardians is required". The underage participants were given voluntary assent forms to sign after receiving their parents' consent to do so (**Refer to Appendix F**). The emphasis was placed on the right participants have, which allows them to pull out of the research process should they feel like doing so. The teacher participants were also given a consent form to fill in, after they were clarified of what the study was about, so that they would agree to the terms and conditions of the study **(Refer to Appendix G)**. The teacher participant was also informed in writing of all data collection methods and activities

that were to be done in the study. The researcher assured all the participants that their rights, interests and wishes would be considered.

3.9.3 Confidentiality and anonymity

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), confidentiality is to keep sensitive information secret. Participants were assured that their names would not be mentioned in the study. This enabled the participants to participate in the study without fear of being exposed by the researcher. Participants were also guaranteed of their privacy in the study, such that the researcher did not use participants' real names. This enabled participants to take part in the research without fear of exposure by the researcher.

According to Nashirova (2018), anonymity is the way in which information is kept unknown or hidden. Participants were assured that their responses would not be linked to where they came from. In this regard, the researcher concealed the addresses of participants and their names.

3.9.4 Voluntary Participation

Voluntary participation in a study means that the participants willingly decide to take part in a research project without being coerced into being part it (Smith, 2022). The researcher merely explains to the prospective participants in writing, what the research is about and how it would benefit them. The onus would be on the participants to take a decision on whether to participate or not. Marshall, Adebamowo, Adeyemo, Ogundiran, Strenski, Zhou and Rotimi (2014) state that "an important aspect of voluntary participation in research is the capacity to withdraw from an ongoing study". Marshall et al., (2014) add that "the ability to make one's own decision must be coupled with the absence of coercion in order for participation to be truly voluntary". In Appendix F and G, the researcher clearly states that both learner and teacher participants may opt out of the research any time they wish. Voluntary participation means that the participants should not expect compensation for the data collected from them and that they may decline to answer questions asked by the researcher.

3.9.5. Protection from harm, Risks and Benefits

According to World Health Organization (WHO, 2021), in research participants can be harmed both psychologically and physically, Therefore, the researcher carries the responsibility to ensure that those participants are protected from any possible physical or psychological harm. In this study, the researcher protected all the participants from any form of harm either physical or psychological. The researcher protected all participants from any form of harm by protecting privacy and maintaining confidentiality. There was protection of vulnerable participants from coercion and undue influence. All necessary precautions were exercised to make sure that all participants are not harmed physically. Lastly, the participants were informed that there would be no material gain in return for their participation.

3.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the methodology used to solve the research problem; a plan that combined all the major parts of the research to work together. The chapter begins with the description of the research approach and research design, research paradigm, followed by the population and sampling method used which the researcher chose purposive sampling method, data collection methods used to collect data and data analysis procedures that were followed in the study, quality criteria. Lastly, Ethical issues about the way researchers should conduct themselves in a study were discussed. The next chapter provides data presentation and analysis, as well as report findings on data collection.

CHAPTER 4 PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research was to explore the impact of social media on Grade 10 Learners at Vhumbedzi Circuit, Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province, South Africa. The study used qualitative research methodology which included semi-structured interviews with learners and teacher to understand their experiences with the phenomenon under investigation. In addition, non-participant observation and text analysis were used to identify essay writing errors caused by social media. This chapter presents, analyzes and interprets the data that was collected. The chapter commences with participants' demographic profiles.

4.2. Participants' demographic profiles

This section presents the demographic profiles of all the participants, all learners and their teacher. The profile includes things such as gender, age, income, etc.

4.2.1. Table: 2 Teacher demographic profile

Teacher	Gender	Age	Tshivenḓa teaching experience	Home Language	Qualification	Income
Teacher x	Male	55	32	Tshivenḓa	Bachelor of Education (Bedspf)	Range (R300000-R400000) annually

Table A illustrates demographic profile of the teacher who participated in this study's data collection. The teacher is 55 years old Tshivenḓa speaking male with thirty two years of teaching Tshivenḓa Home Language. The qualification of the teacher is bachelor of education in language education.

4.2.2. Table 3: Learners' demographic profile

Learners	**Gender**	**Race**	**Age**	**Home language**
Learner A	Female	African	15	Tshivenḓa
Learner B	Male	African	16	Tshivenḓa
Learner C	Male	African	15	Tshivenḓa
Learner D	Female	African	16	Tshivenḓa
Learner E	Female	African	15	Tshivenḓa
Learner F	Male	African	15	Tshivenḓa
Learner G	Male	African	16	Tshivenḓa
Learner H	Female	African	15	Tshivenḓa
Learner I	Female	African	16	Tshivenḓa

Table B shows 9 learners named as learner A to Learner I. As the table illustrates, five learners participated in the study. Their ages were between 15 and 16 years and they were all Tshivenḓa speaking learners.

4.3 Semi-structured Interview

Using semi structured interview as data collection technique, the researcher asked learners similar questions, but in some instances, the researcher did a follow up question directed by the responses from the learners. Some of the questions asked to the teacher were similar to learners' questions, but some of them were not the same. The researcher asked these questions to nine learners who were sampled using purposive sampling technique and one teacher who was sampled for teaching Tshivenḓa Home Language in Grade 10. The learners' and their Tshivenḓa Home Language teacher answered interview questions verbally. The researcher recorded their responses.

4.3.1 Interviews with learners

The following questions were asked to learners (For Tshivenda version answers see annexture X)

- **In your understanding what is social media and what are the social media platforms do you use the most?**

The objective of including this question in the study was to determine whether learners have a clear understanding of the terminology of social media. Furthermore, the study sought to identify the most frequently used social media platforms on their mobile phones, giving a better understanding of their digital engagement patterns and preferences.

Learner A response:

> "Social media platforms are spaces where individuals can create profiles and share personal information about themselves. The social media platforms I use most frequently are WhatsApp and Facebook".

Learner B response:

"Social media refers to a variety of internet platforms that facilitate the sharing of ideas and information among the users. The social media platforms I use the most are Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram".

Learner C response:

"Social media is the application that we use to connect to people who are far from us and to know what is happening around the world. Social media platforms that I use the most are Facebook and WhatsApp".

Learner D response:

"Social media are interactive technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of ideas and keep us updated on what is happening around the world. Social media platform that I use the most are Facebook and WhatsApp".

Learner E response:

"Social media is the platform which we use to communicate with different people in different area. Social media helps us to stay connected to bulleting news around the globe. The social media platforms that I use the most are Facebook and WhatsApp".

Learner F response:

"Social media is a set of platforms that people use to interact with other people and some use it to advertise their business. I mostly use Facebook".

Learner G response:

"Social media is platforms where people interact with each other online and share content. The social media platform which I use the most is WhatsApp".

Learner H response:

“By my understanding social media is the way of communicating online with different people in different areas. I mostly use WhatsApp to interact with people”.

Learner I response:

“Social media are websites and application that enables users to create and share content or to participate in networking. I mostly use WhatsApp and Facebook”.

- **What do you do most of the time when you have logged into a social media platform? Do you follow a social media page that teaches correct grammar usage?**

The objective of this question in the study was to understand how learners spend their time after logging into their respective social media platform accounts. Additionally, the question aimed to determine whether learners actively follow social media pages that promote proper grammar usage, as this could offer insights into their commitment to improving their language skills through online platforms. By exploring these behaviors, the research sought to better understand the role of social media in language acquisition and the potential for using these platforms as educational tools.

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Learner A response:

“i just chat with friends. We give each other company. We give them updates on what is happening in our homes. If there are question papers, we share them among ourselves. To be honest I do not follow a page that teaches correct grammar”.

Learner B response:

“i use social media when chatting with my friends. i explain myself so that people can know who I am. i use social media when i am bored to avoid boredom. No, I do not follow pages that teach correct grammar, pages that I follow are non-academic pages”.

Learner C response:

"When I have logged in social media platform which is WhatsApp and Facebook I just reply to messages and scroll down seeing other people status either photos, videos or written text. To be quite honest I do not follow such pages that are academic related I follow celebrities' pages".

Learner D response:

"I just text different people and voice call them, video call them and read statuses via Facebook. No, I follow pages of my favourite artists and sports personalities".

Learner E response:

"Every time when I log into a social media platform, I search for school homework and being updated on what is happening around the world. I usually follow page that teaches me the manner or something that is beneficial such as teaching me how to write my language correctly so".

Learner F response:

"Most of the time when I have logged in social media platform I just chat with my friends, share pictures I have taken recently and watch some videos. I also follow a few educational pages that include pages that focus on correct grammar usage".

Learner G response:

"I like entertainments very much to the point where I just log in social media pages and watch my favourite artist and athletes videos. I do not follow any pages or group that teaches correct grammar".

Learner H response:

“I just watch funny videos and chart with family members, friends and classmates. Yes I do follow pages that help me to learn complicated English words”.

Learner I response:

“I just scroll through my news feed and check news and sports updates around the globe. I do not follow any pages that are school related on social media”.

- **Which language do you use on social media?**

The objective of this question in the study was to investigate the language choices made by learners when interacting on social media, specifically whether they prefer to use their home language, Tshivenḓa, or English in these digital spaces.

Learner A response:

“I communicate with my family on social media through Tshivenḓa, as it helps us stay connected and share our cultural heritage. However, when I interact with my peers, I prefer to use English. This allows for smoother conversations and helps me connect with a broader circle of friends. Each language holds a special significance for me, representing different aspects of my life and relationships”.

Learner B response: “I use the correct form of writing”.

Learner C response: “I use English and Tshivenḓa on social media space”.

Learner D response:

“I use informal language which is the mixture of English and Tshivenḓa”.

Learner E response: “On social media I use Tshivenḓa and English always”.

Learner F response:

“On social media I use English and my native language Tshivenḓa”.

Learner G response: "on social media I use English only".

Learner H response:

> **"**I use Tshivenḓa only even though my peers laugh at me because I don't want anything to do with English when I am on social media".

Learner I response:

> "I primarily use English on social media, some of the time I use my home language which is Venda especially when texting friends and family".

- **Do you follow grammar rules when texting or writing statuses on social media?**

The objective of this question was to determine whether learners adhere to grammatical rules when writing statuses or texting on social media, as this can provide insight into their understanding of language conventions and its application in informal digital communication.

Learner A response:

> "i do not follow grammar rules when texting on social media".

Learner B response:

> "No. Instead of writing 'vhathu', I can just write 'vha2' and chikobi' for 'Tshikovhi'. We write in this way so that we can understand each other".

Learner C response:

> "i follow grammar rules, while sometime I do not. Most of the time I ignore these rules to save time when writing. When a sentence is too long, i make it shorter".

Learner D response:

> **"**I just write, as long as someone will understand my message. We do not check the spelling. We even shorten words. If the statement is long, we omit other words so that the message could be understood quickly".

Learner E response: "I use the correct form of writing"

Learner F response:

“To be quite honest I tend to be more relaxed with grammar rules when texting and writing statuses on social media platform. This is because social media encourage a more casual and conversional tone”.

Learner G response:

“No, I do not follow grammar rules when texting or writing on social media platform, I use abbreviation and short cut to avoid sending long text to save time”.

Learner H response:

“i just write, as long as someone will understand my message. By the way, we do not check the spelling. We even shorten words. If the statement is long, we omit other words so that the message could be understood quickly”

Learner I response:

“No, I do not follow grammar when I am engaging on social media platform; I use informal and conversational tone”.

- **What type of language do your peers or friends use on social media to text or share thoughts? Is it a formal or informal language?**

The objective of this question was to understand if their communication is more formal and structured.

Learner A response:

“i use informal language on social media platforms as I am not guided by policy like when we are at school. Here on social media platform, i even go to an extend of using vulgar language because i have make it a norm with our peers”.

Learner B response:

“i use informal language because i do not follow grammatical rules whenever I am sharing a text or a status on social media platform. i write every text and status in short, i omit some vowels to keep message short, for example my cell phone allows me to send hundred characters per massage

and by that time i have to send a long message then i end up shortening word and use street language".

Learner C response:

"I use both formal and informal language on social media, depending on who I'm chatting with at the moment. With some close friends, we speak freely and comfortably, without holding back, even if that means using strong or vulgar language".

Learner D response:

"I and my peers we use informal language which is totally against the grammar rules, we do this to shorten the conservation and we also have our own dictation".

Learner E response:

"Mostly what I have observed when my peers send messages, they shorten words and they use street language which is informal language because they are not bound to use grammatical rules since social media platforms are not a formal setting".

Learner F response:

"i use informal English language because it's full of shortcuts".

Learner G response:

"i usually use street language which is informal".

Learner H response:

"When interacting with my friends on social media I use both English and my Home language which is Tshivenḓa. I prefer to write in a formal way, I don't write in abbreviation and in shortcut".

Learner I response:

"Mostly i use informal language on social media because the social media users are our age group and we understand each other quickly".

- **Is your teacher giving you enough work on essays writing to help you to write language that is social media free?**

The objective of this question was to understand the strategies the teacher is employing to help learners write essays that use formal, academic language, rather than social media-style language. Additionally, it aimed to assess whether the teacher is providing an adequate number of essay assignments to help learners develop their writing skills effectively.

Learner A response:

“Yes, the teacher is trying to give us essays almost every week to try and fight with this language we have adopted from social media”.

Learner B response:

“Yes, to be quite honest my teacher is trying by all means to alleviate the problem we have as learners, which is writing essays full of social media language”.

Learner c response:

“Yes, my teacher is doing more than enough to help me and my fellow learners. He always gives us essays to write and encourages peer assessment of essays every week, we exchange our essays writing with our close classmate and check the mistakes”.

Learner D response:

“Yes, honestly think my teacher is doing more than enough to help us write language that is social media free”.

Learner E response:

“Yes, our teacher is trying his best; almost every week gives us homework and classwork to write essays”.

Learner F response:

“Yes, we write many essays. Our teacher always gives us essays to write and he encourages peer assessment of essays every week”.

Learner G response:

“Yes, to improve our writing skills and creativity, since some learners communicate well through writing and just need some effort to reveal their hidden talents”.

Learner H response:

“Yes almost every two days in a week we write essays question on our classwork book. I think our teacher is doing more than enough to help u write in a correct manner”.

Learner I response:

“Yes, my teacher is doing more than enough to help me and my fellow learners”.

- **Do you sometimes use social media language or SMS language unconsciously when writing in a formal setting like at school?**

The objective of this question was to determine whether learners are conscious of their use of social media language, which often deviates from traditional grammar rules when writing in more formal contexts like school. By exploring this, we aim to understand if learners recognize the differences between informal, online communication and the formal language expected in academic settings. This inquiry sought to uncover whether learners are aware of how their casual, social media-driven writing habits might influence their ability to adhere to proper grammar and writing standards in school assignments, essays, or other academic tasks.

Learner A response:

“Yes, i usually forget the correct words and i opt for what i use on Facebook and WhatsApp. I think our minds are used to social media writing. Even when i write in the English subject, i shorten words. During English essays, we write as if we are writing on WhatsApp, and this is not good”.

Learner B response:

“Truly speaking, i do not use such in my essays. i write properly because i know that my teacher will reduce my

marks if i write grammatically incorrect language. Post-writing, i proofread to check if i did not commit writing mistakes. However, it is time consuming. Often, i do not use Facebook writing style at school".

Leaner C response:

"The social media writing is destroying me. It destroys me because i write wrong words and then i fail. Teacher reduces my marks if i use an incorrect writing style. If he gave us essay to write in Tshivenḓa , he usually gives us the number of words required with an allocated time. When writing, i check time, and i would find that i have many ideas to put down and end up using the form of Tshivenḓa writing used on social media so that i can finish on time. You would find that i wrote valid points, but because i wrote the Tshivenḓa language incorrectly, that reduces my marks".

Learner D response:

"No, I always use formal language when writing my schoolwork".

Learner E response:

"It depends on how you use social media. If you are always on social media, your writing will be dominated by its words. However, if you do not use it extensively, you will remember to use correct grammar when you write".

Learner F response:

"I am not addicted to social media usage. I am always extra cautious when writing in formal setting".

Learner G response:

"Every time when I am writing I just write the way I type on social media, to be honest social media is killing me and my fellow peers because we can't differentiate formal setting and informal setting".

Learner H response:

“I do not know the difference between formal setting and informal setting so when I write I just write the way I write on my Facebook”.

Learner I response:

“I am not addicted to social media usage. I am always extra cautious when writing in formal setting”.

- **Are your parents and guardians helping you to limit and manage the usage of social media?**

The objective of this question was to gain insights from learners regarding the strategies and practices their parents or guardians use to manage and limit social media usage.

Learner A response:

“Yes, our parent are trying their best to help us limit the use of social media, as they were told that by teachers that their children’s are overusing social media language when writing school work which make them to get lower grades”.

Learner B response:

“Yes, because I am only allowed to use my cellphone until 7 pm from there I focus on my studies”.

Learner C response:

“No, my parents are old, they don’t even know about technology”.

Learner D response:

“Yes, because they caution me to be mindful of time allocated to me to use social media”.

Learner E response:

“Yes, they do help by switching off the Wi-Fi at home so that I can have limited access to social media”**.**

Learner F response:

“No, my parents don’t care about my school related matters. I use social media the way I want without any limit”.

Learner G response:

"I stay with my grandparent and they are old, so, no one limit my activity on social media"

Learner H response:

"My guardians are my old sisters; they are busy furthering their studies at Unisa so they don't limit me to use social media".

Learner I response:

"My parent resides at Gauteng so I just do as I want on social since I stay with my siblings".

- **According to you, is social media influencing you positively or negatively when writing school work?**

The objective of this question was to explore how social media impacts learners' academic performance and motivation, seeking insights into the various ways it shapes their engagement with schoolwork and learning habits.

Learner A response:

"Social media is influencing me positively because I can communicate with teachers and fellow learners when we are at home".

Learner B response:

"Social media is positively influences my schoolwork by granting me access to information and delivering real time updates".

Learner C response:

"Social media is influencing me negatively, it distracting me because i spend lot of time on it".

Learner D response:

"Yes, it is influencing me positively as I get to find more information and references on social media".

Learner E response:

“Positively, because social media has almost everything, so most of the things asked from school they are usually shared on social media”.

Learner F response:

“It has a positive impact on me because whenever I'm given an assignment or homework that's difficult to grasp, I can use social media to search for explanations. Additionally, if I encounter unfamiliar words or concepts during a lesson, I can look them up online when I get home. This helps me understand more clearly and improves my overall learning”.

Learner G response:

“I think social media has both positive and negative influences. On the positive side, it exposes me to a lot of information and different writing styles. However, it also encourages the use of informal language and shortcuts that are not suitable for academic writing”.

Learner H response:

“Positively, social media do help me a lots when I am writing school homework and project”.

Learner I response:

“Social media is influencing me positively towards my school work because I can access helpful school information”.

4.3.2. Interview with the teacher

The following questions were asked to the only teacher who was sampled because he is the one who is responsible for teaching Tshivenḓa Home Language in Grade 10 class.

- **In your understanding what is social media?**

The objective of this question was to find out if the teacher understands social media terminology and its meanings.

Teacher X:

> “By my understanding it’s an online platform that allows people to create their profile or account which they use to interact and share messages, videos and photos”.

- **Do you use social media? And which social media platform do you use the most?**

The objective of this question was to find out from the teacher whether he uses social media and which app does he use the most.

Teacher X:

> “Yes I do use social media. I am technophobia since I was born before this social media thing but at school we have WhatsApp group which I am part of, meaning I only use WhatsApp”.

- **What is your general experience about learners’ form of writing when they write the Tshivenḓa Home Language in the classroom?**

The objective of the question was to gather insights from the teacher about learners' overall experiences with different forms of writing when studying Tshivenḓa Home Language in the classroom.

Teacher X:

> “Learners have a problem of shortening words. Furthermore, they do not write letters correctly. For instance, a word fhethu is written as fhe2 this means that they use ‘2’ instead of ‘thu’. Learners can write ndi xap instead of ndo takala. The application of punctuation is also problematic. Learners do not use capitalisation (the use of upper case and lower-case letters) correctly. They start sentences in lower case. Sometimes when they do direct quotations, they do not use an appropriate punctuation mark to show that they are quoting”.

- **Do you experience any writing challenges or problems when assessing learners’ written work? If yes, please specify and explain.**

The objective of this question was to understand the problems and challenges teacher face when assessing learners' written work**.**

Teacher X:

> "Yes, spelling is a problem. Word division is a problem. Words that are supposed to be combined are separated, and words that should be separated are combined. Learners use c instead of s. The use of conjunctions is not correct; they attach conjunctions to other parts of speech. They fail to use grammatical language from lower grades. Learners do not practise written language; instead, they write spoken language. They are unable to differentiate between spoken and written language. We teach them everything, but when it is time to write, they repeat the corrected mistakes. They forget that we want formal writing in the classroom". In addition: "Our learners use the wrong form of writing. For example, they use the letter 'c' on Words such as 'tshi and I think this might be a result of social media influence. I think their writing is being influenced by external factors. They spend a lot of their time on things that are not related to school".

- **When assessing social media, we observed a special writing style which deviated from the standard writing of the Tshivenḓa language. If you have experienced such kind of writing, which of the following characteristics did you come across when assessing learners' written work in the classroom?**

  Grammatical (syntactic and morphological) deviations
  Spelling deviations
  Punctuation deviations

The objective of this question was to understand if the teacher noticed the special writing which deviated from the standard Tshivenda Home Language when assessing learners' written work**.**

Teacher X:

> "When assessing my learners I do find the grammatical deviation, spelling deviation omission of letters and words, borrowing of words amongst their essays writing. But most common problem amongst the learners is omission of letters and words, as a teacher I have done a follow up to ask them why do you omit letters and words when writing a formal task, their respond was social media has made us to forget the normal writing".

- **Which methods do you use to develop and encourage essay writing free of social media language in the classroom?**

The objective of this question was to understand the methods the teacher is using to encourage learners to write essay that is free from social media.

Teacher X:

> "We usually do dictation activities with them so that they can master spelling. Learners think that we undermine them when we teach spelling because they think that they are old enough to learn spelling differently; however, when we look at their writing, they lack knowledge on spelling". In addition, "I try to give learners lot of words for them to get used to when writing. I encourage them to read Tshivenḓa Home Language books. We advise them to be aware of the following when writing, spelling, punctuation marks, word division, and types of sentences. We also advise them to separate paragraphs properly".

- **Do you see the influence of social media in learners' essays writing of Tshivenḓa Home Language?**

The objective of this question was to ask the teacher if he sees the influence of social media in learners' essays writing.

Teacher X:

> **"**Yes, I can say I have observed the influence of social media in my learners Tshivenḓa Home Language creative essays writing. Most of the cases learners cannot differentiate between spoken language and

written language. As their teacher I always teach them the important different between spoken and written language and when it's time to write they repeat same mistake which I have corrected with them". In addition, "The informal style of writing developed through excessive use of social media platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook affect learners' formal writing skills. Learners tend to deviate from spelling and grammar rules, leading to a decline in their writing performance".

- **When busy with lesson presentation, are there learners who focus on their phone (social media) rather than lesson presentation?**

The objective of this question was to find out from the teacher if there are learners that focus on their phone during lesson presentation.

Teacher X:

"Even though mobile devices that enable internet connectivity access and social media are prohibited in class and inside school yard, you still find some leaners busy scrolling through their social media pages".

- **Is social media helpful to learners towards their schoolwork?**

The objective of this question was to find out from the teacher if social media is helping learners towards their schoolwork.

Teacher X:

"I can say social media is helping learners a lot towards their schoolwork. Social media allows them to get information of projects, assignment, tasks and other schoolwork. Social media help them to achieve academically. They watch and listen to educational programmes to enrich their knowledge which enable them to be successful in their studies. They can even get soft copies of past exam papers which will help them revise for their exams".

4.3.3 Analysis of learners' and teacher's answers to semi structured interview

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of social media on Grade 10 Learners' Creative Essay at Vhumbedzi Circuit, Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province, South Africa. Semi-structured interview was used to get the experiences, opinions and challenges of 9 learners and their teacher about the phenomenon under investigation, the impact of social media influence on learners' mastery of writing Creative Essay. Their viewpoints about this phenomenon were presented and the following themes emerged and discussed during the analysis of data:

1. **Social media as a means of interactions among people**
2. **Social media language is easy to write and saves time**
3. **The amount of time spent on social media**
4. **Strategies used to alleviate social media language**
5. **Parent involvement in fighting against the usage of social media language by learners when writing academic writing**

Social media as a means of interactions among people

Based on the results, all nine learners view social media primarily as a "*platform for communication, allowing them to connect and interact with others. They see it as a space where they can share ideas, exchange messages, and engage in conversations with people both near and far*". On the other hand, two learners perceive social media differently, focusing more on its role as a tool for staying informed about global events and current affairs. They value social media as a "*means to keep up to date with what's happening around the world, using it to access news, trends, and updates from various sources*". This suggests that while social media is widely recognized for its communicative functions, some learners also appreciate its role as a source of information and awareness. This was also supported by Smith and Anderson (2022)'s study, which illustrates that for many young users, social media serves as a primary communication channel with friends and family, while also serving as an important tool for staying informed about global events. This supports the idea that social media's appeal lies in both personal interaction and its role as a source of information and news.

All learners indicated that the social media platforms they use the most are Facebook and WhatsApp. This was the general consensus across the group, with the majority of learners mentioning these platforms as their primary means of online communication and social interaction. This was supported by Owusu-Acheaw and Larson (2015), whose study found that the most commonly used social media platforms by learners are Facebook and WhatsApp. However, there was one exception: one learner reported that they predominantly use Instagram instead, highlighting a slight variation in platform preferences among the group. Despite this, Facebook and WhatsApp remain the most popular choices overall.

Social media language is easy to write and saves time

The shift in communication styles observed among learners on social media, as noted in this study, aligns with broader research on digital communication and its impact on writing practices. Many scholars argue that social media platforms have led to a relaxation of traditional writing conventions, as users prioritize speed, brevity, and ease over formal language rules (Crystal, 2008; Thurlow, 2003). The tendency to use abbreviations, shortcuts, and informal grammar in online communication is well-documented in the literature, with studies showing that such practices are intended to facilitate quick and efficient interaction (Danet et al., 2009). This trend can be seen in Learner G's statement about not following grammar rules when texting and using abbreviations to save time, which mirrors findings by Tagg (2012), who notes that digital environments often encourage shortcuts and informal language use to accommodate fast-paced, real-time conversations.

Furthermore, Learner C’s observation about the inconsistent use of grammar in social media interactions reflects the understanding that social media platforms prioritize communicative efficiency over formal correctness, a view supported by studies on online discourse (Chung, 2014). The notion that clarity is often sacrificed in favor of speed and ease of communication on social media is consistent with research by Baron (2008), who found that many users of online platforms value the freedom to express thoughts quickly without worrying about the potential for misunderstanding, believing that any ambiguity can be easily clarified in follow-up

exchanges. This shift in writing habits has been shown to influence how learners approach more formal contexts, with some researchers suggesting that frequent exposure to informal, fast-paced writing may affect their academic writing, where more attention to grammar, structure, and coherence is expected (Jones, 2016; Shraibman, 2013). Thus, the flexibility in communication on social media could have broader implications for learners' academic and formal writing practices, where linguistic accuracy and clarity are paramount.

The amount of time spent on social media and learners' use of social media during lesson delivery.

According to the teacher, learners are frequently distracted by their mobile phones during a lesson, which significantly impacts their focus and engagement. The teacher pointed out that, despite the school's clear policy prohibiting the use of mobile devices, including access to the internet and social media, many learners continue to be preoccupied with their phones. The teacher explained, *"Even though mobile devices that enable internet connectivity and access to social media are prohibited in class and within the school yard, you still find some learners busy scrolling through their social media pages"*. This suggests that, despite rules in place to minimize distractions, the temptation of social media remains strong for many learners, and they are often unable to resist the urge to check their feeds during class time. Junco's (2012) research also supports this, showing that when learners use their smartphones during class, their grades tend to drop. Phones are a major source of distraction. This matches the teacher's observation that learners are often distracted by their phones, even though the school has rules against it. Supporting this, one learner shared a personal perspective, stating that, "*Social media is influencing me negatively; it's distracting me because I spend a lot of time on it*". This student's comment highlights a common concern among learners: social media is becoming a significant source of distraction, pulling attention away from academic activities and contributing to a decrease in focus and productivity. Samaha and Hawi's (2016) study found that using smartphones too much harms both learners' grades and their emotional health. This shows that smartphones are a major distraction in school, even when there are rules to limit their use. The combination of the teacher's observations and the learners experience underscores the growing

influence of digital distractions in the classroom and the challenges teachers face in maintaining student concentration.

Strategies used to alleviate social media language

According to the teacher's responses, he usually does dictation activities with them so that they can master spelling. He went on to highlight a common issue he faces, noting that learners often feel that spelling instruction is unnecessary or even patronizing because they consider themselves too old for such activities. Here is what he said, *"Learners think that we undermine them when we teach spelling since they are old enough for it."* However, the teacher pointed out that when he examines their writing, it becomes clear that many learners still struggle with spelling, which reveals a gap in their understanding and application of spelling rules. In response to this challenge, the teacher adopted dictation exercises as a strategy to reinforce proper spelling, emphasizing its importance in improving overall writing skills. According to Lems (2015), dictation exercises help learners recognize and correct errors in their writing, especially when they engage with the text actively and critically. Additionally, the teacher acknowledged the growing influence of social media on learners' writing habits, where informal language and shortcuts are common. To counter this, dictation activities not only address spelling issues, but also serve as a way to encourage more formal, academic writing practices, helping learners to distinguish between casual and academic contexts. Through these methods, the teacher hopes to better equip learners with the tools they need to express themselves clearly and correctly in their written work. Time-bound interventions can help individuals to be more deliberate in their social media engagement, which can potentially reduce the prevalence of shorthand or "social media language" in everyday communication. A paper by Lin., Sidani., Shensa., Radovic., Colditz., Radom., and Miller (2017) found that interventions to limit screen time, especially among youth, also indirectly influenced their communication patterns by reducing reliance on fast, informal communication styles.

On the teacher's aspect, the teacher is making a concerted effort to combat the use of social media language in learners' academic writing. To support the discussion on strategies used by the teacher to address the influence of social media language on

student writing, several scholarly sources can be cited. For instance, research has demonstrated that consistent writing of essays play a crucial role in helping learners develop formal writing skills and avoid the shorthand often found in social media communication (Casanave, 2012; Hyland, 2009). These regular assignments also encourage learners to refine their academic voice and engage with higher-order language skills (Williams, 2016).

The inclusion of peer assessment as a tool for improving academic writing is another well-supported strategy. Studies show that peer review fosters critical thinking and allows learners to identify errors in both content and language, thereby improving their overall writing proficiency (Liu & Carless, 2006; Topping, 2009). Furthermore, the value of creating a space for collaborative learning, where learners can engage in dialogue about language usage, reinforces the importance of academic writing norms (Vygotsky, 1978).

Finally, the appreciation shown by the learners for their teacher's dedication underscores the effectiveness of these strategies. Learners tend to respond positively to teachers who are proactive in addressing writing issues, particularly in helping them shift away from informal, online communication habits and toward a more formal academic style (Williams, 2016; Hyland, 2009).

Parent involvement in fighting against the usage of social media language by learners when writing academic essays

When asked about their parents' involvement in helping them to limit and manage their social media usage, four out of nine learners reported that their parents are actively trying to assist in managing their online behaviour. These learners highlighted that their parents have implemented various strategies, such as setting time limits, encouraging breaks from screens, or monitoring social media use to ensure it does not interfere with academic responsibilities or well-being (Smith, 2021; Jones & Miller, 2020). In contrast, the remaining five out of nine learners indicated that they feel unsupported in this area, as they receive little to no assistance from their parents or guardians in managing their social media usage. These learners expressed that they are essentially left to navigate the challenges of social media

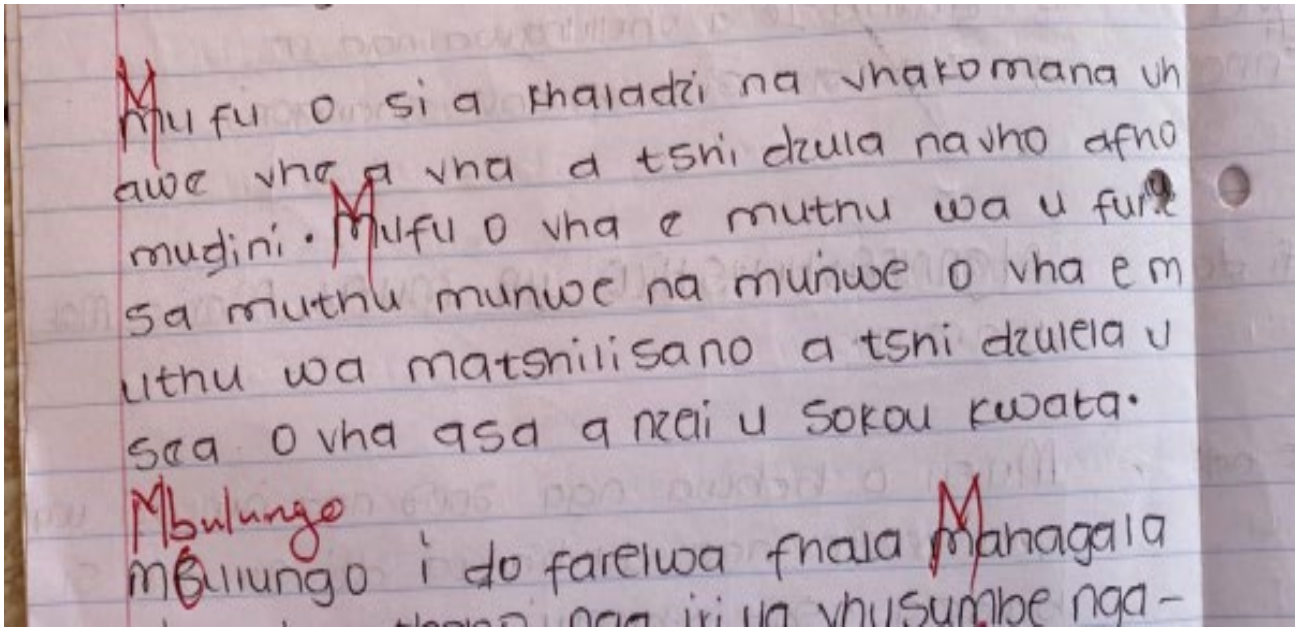
use on their own, without any significant guidance or intervention from their families (Khan & Hussain, 2019). This division in parental involvement reflects broader concerns about the role of family support in promoting healthy digital habits among young people (Lee, 2022).

4.4. TEXT ANALYSIS

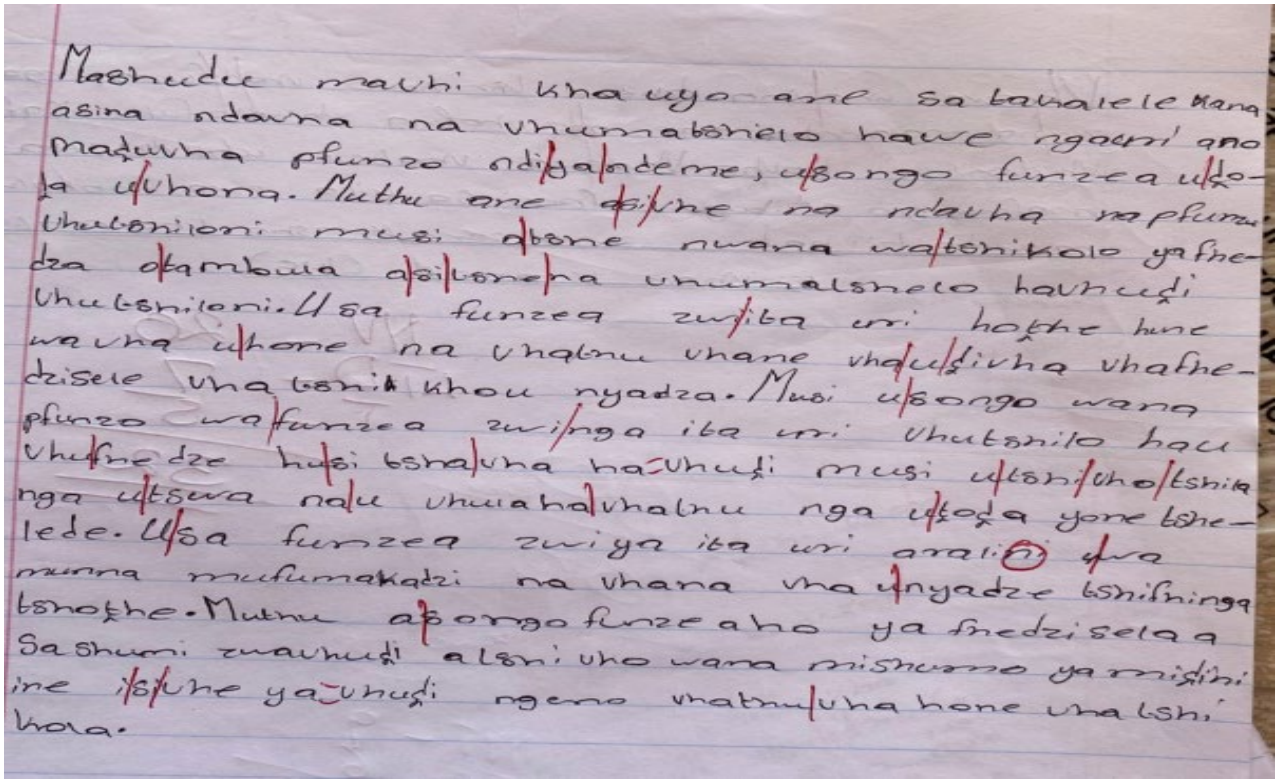
4.4.1 Data from learners' written samples

The figures presented below (Learners A-I) show how Grade 10 learners from the selected school write their Tshivenḓa Home Language creative essays.

Written sample of LEARNER A

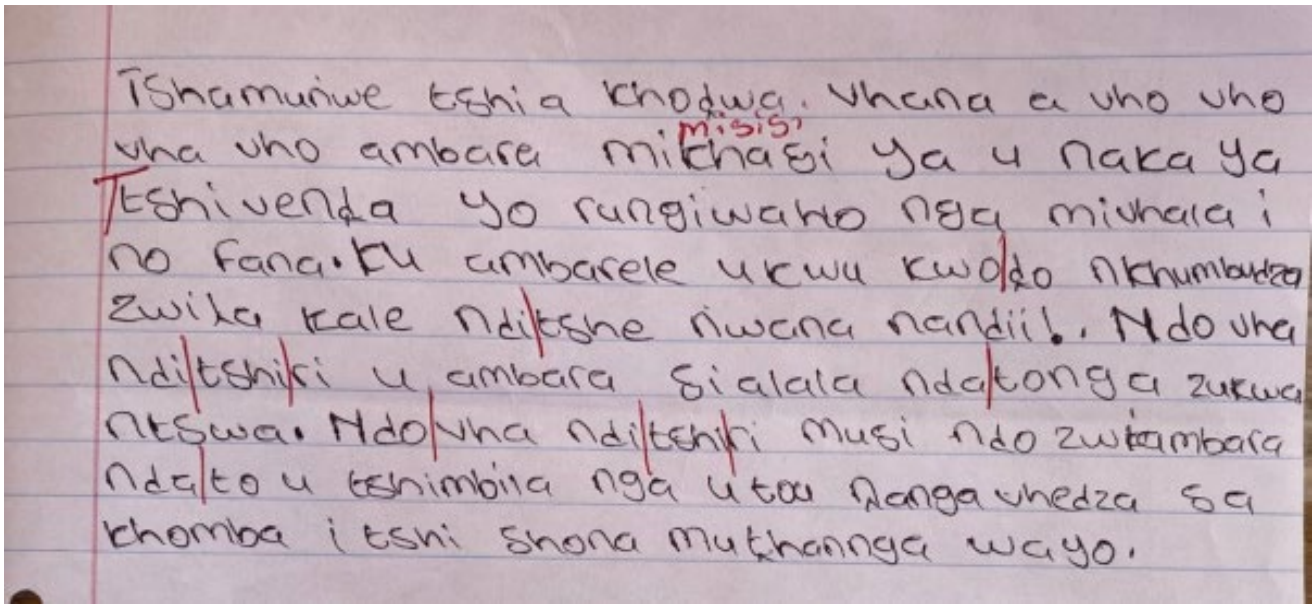


Written sample of LEARNER B



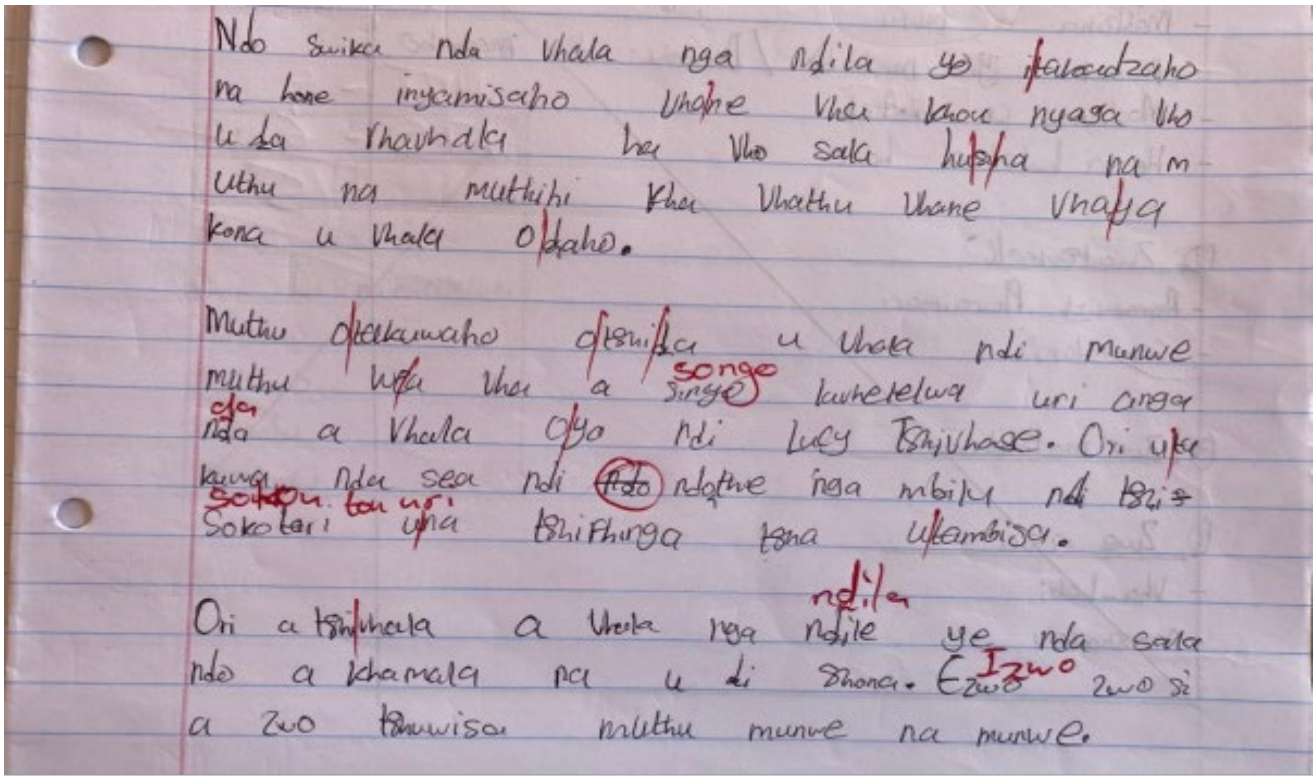
Mashudu mavhi kha uya ane sa tahalele Mana asina ndavha na vhumatshelo hawe ngauri ano mafuvha pfunzo ndi ya ndeme, u songo funzea u lo- ya u vhona. Muthu ane o ine na ndivha mapfumo Vhutshilonini musi o bone nwana wa tshikolo ya fhe- dza o tambula a ili tshena vhumatshelo havhudi Vhutshilonini. U sa funzea zwi ita uri hofhe hune wa vha vhone na vhalivhu vhane vha u ivha vhathe- dzisele vha tshi khou nyadza. Musi u songo wana pfunzo wa funzea zwinga iba uri vhutshilo hau Vhufhe dze hufi tshaluvha ha-Vhudi musi u tshi vho tshila nga u tswa nalu vhuvaha vhalivhu nga u fola yone tshe- lede. U sa funzea zwiya iba uri arali o dza nnna mufumakadzi na vhana vha u nyadze tshifhinga tshofhe. Muthu a songo funze aho ya fhedzisela a Sa shumi zwavhudi a tshi vho wana mishumo ya midini ine i fune ya-Vhudi ngeno vhatuvha hone vha tshi khala.

Written sample of LEARNER C



Tshamuiwe tshia khodwa. Vhana a vho vho vha vho ambara mikhasi (misisi) ya u naka ya Tshivenda yo rungiwaho nga mivhala i no fana. Ku ambarele u kwu kwo do nkhumbadza zwika kale ndi tshe niwana nandii!. Ndo vha ndi tshiki u ambara sialala nda tonga zukwa ntswa. Ndo vha ndi tshiki musi ndo zwi ambara nda to u tshimbila nga u tou ranga vhedza sa khomba i tshi shona mukhanga wayo.

Written sample of LEARNER D

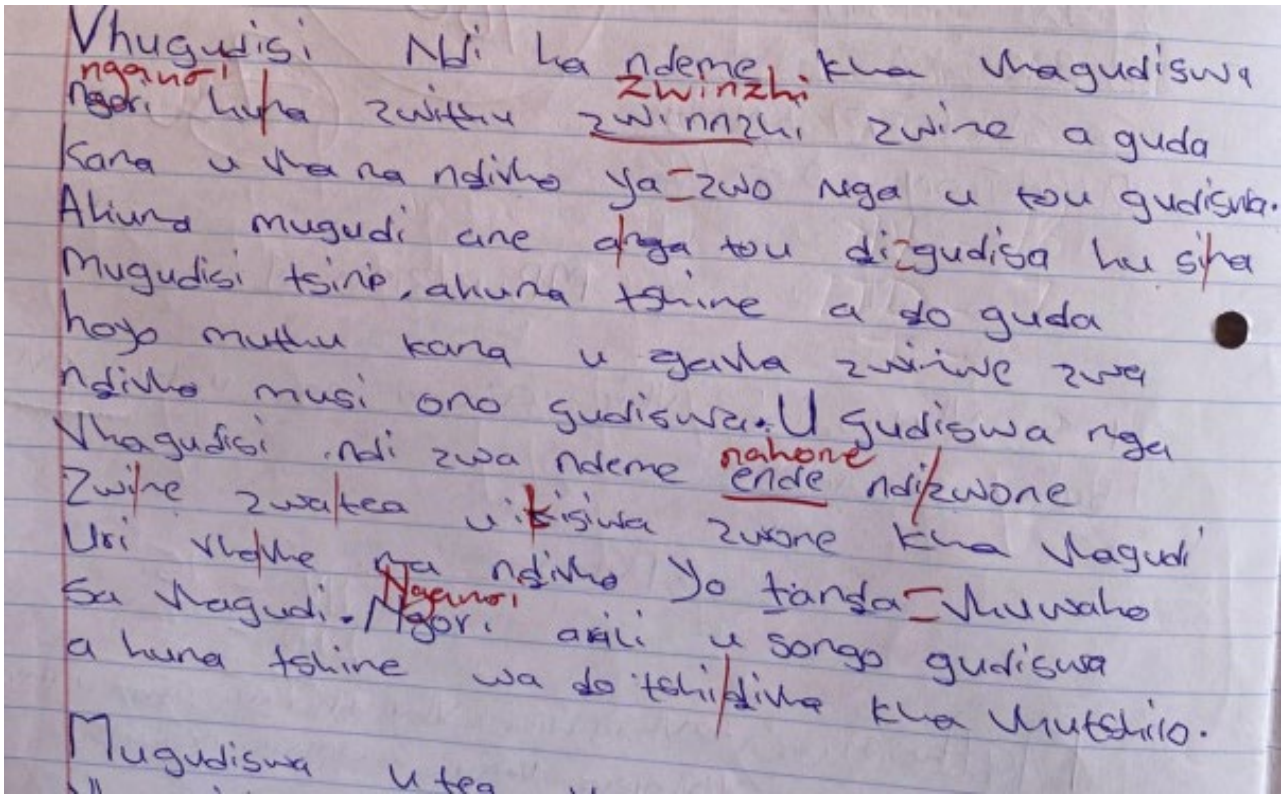


Ndo swika nda vhala nga ndila ye ndo dzaho na hone inyamisaho vhone vhe khou nyasa vho u ya vhavhalo hee vho sala hupfa na m uthu na muthihi khe vhathu vhane vhafa kona u vhala o ddaho.

Muthu o ddamaho o swika u vhala ndi munwe muthu wa vhe a songo sungo kwetelwa uri anga ndo a vhala o yo ndi Lucy Tshivhase. Ori u ka kuvha nde sea ndi ndo ndothe nga mbilu na tshi Sokolari una tshithunga tsha u tambisa.

Ori a tshi vhala a vhala nga ndile ye nda sala ndo a khamala na u di shona. Ezwo Izwo zwo si a zwo tshi wisa muthu munwe na munwe.

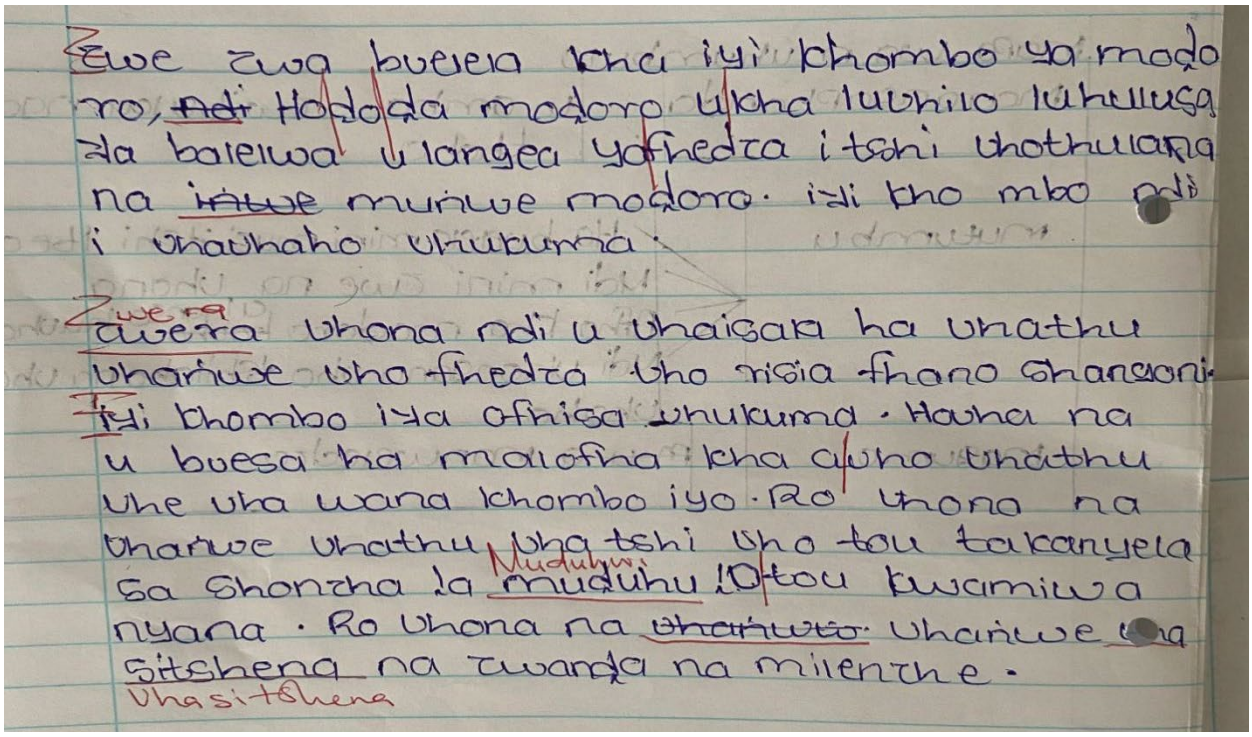
Written sample of LEARNER E



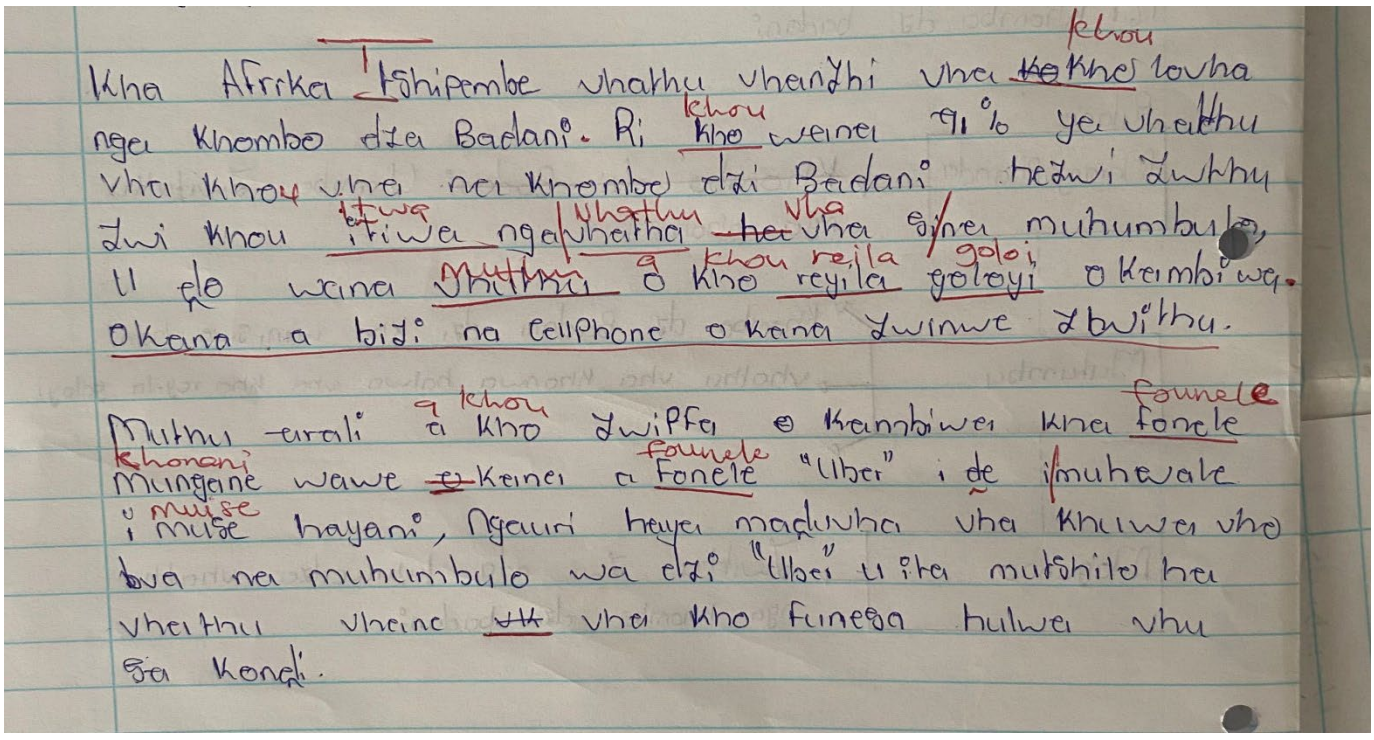
Vhugudisi Ndi ha ndeme kha vhagudiswa ngauno ngori hufa zwithu zwinazhi zwine a guda kana u vha na ndivho ya zwo nga u tou gudiswa. Ahuna mugudi ane anga tou dzugudisa hu si na Mugudisi tsini, ahuna tshine a do guda hoyo muthu kana u gavha zwine zwa ndivho musi ono gudiswa. U gudiswa nga Vhagudisi ndi zwa ndeme nahone ende ndi zwone Zwine zwa tea u tshi swa zwone kha vhagudi Uri vhathe na ndivho yo tanda vhuvhaho Sa vhagudi. Ngauno ngori arali u songo gudiswa a huna tshine wa do tshi divha kha vhutshilo.

Mugudiswa u tea

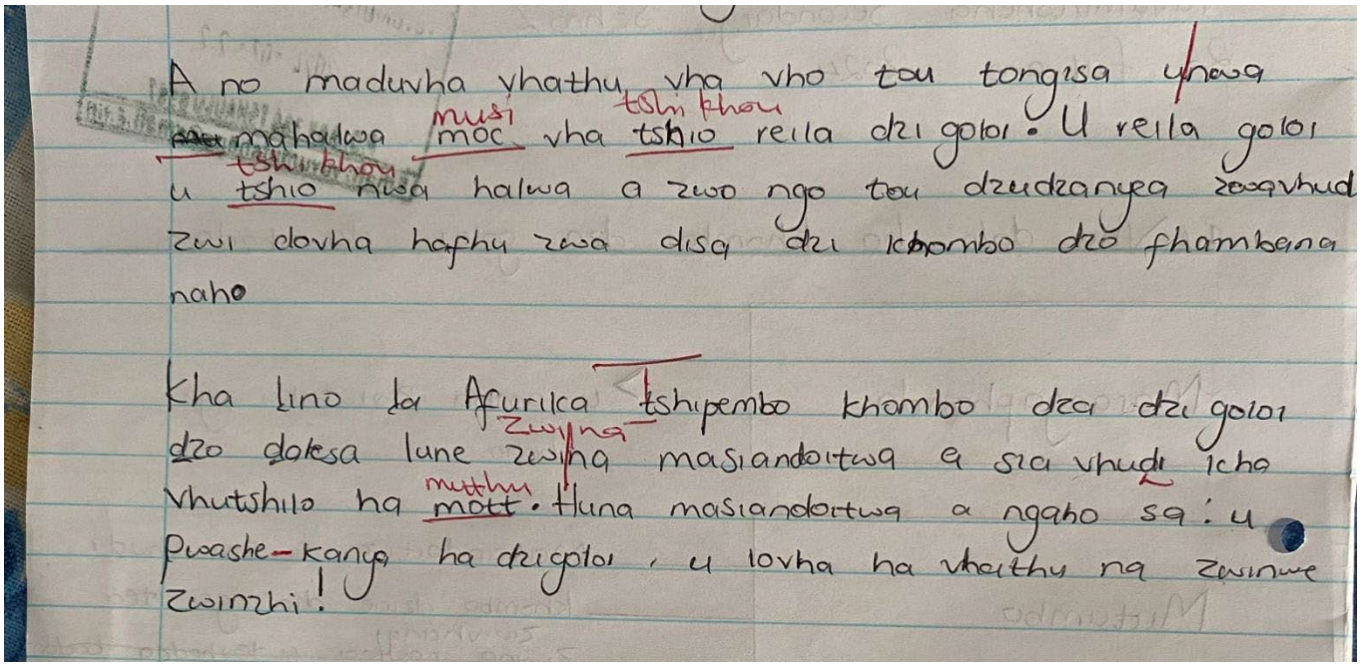
Written sample of LEARNER F



Written sample of LEARNER G



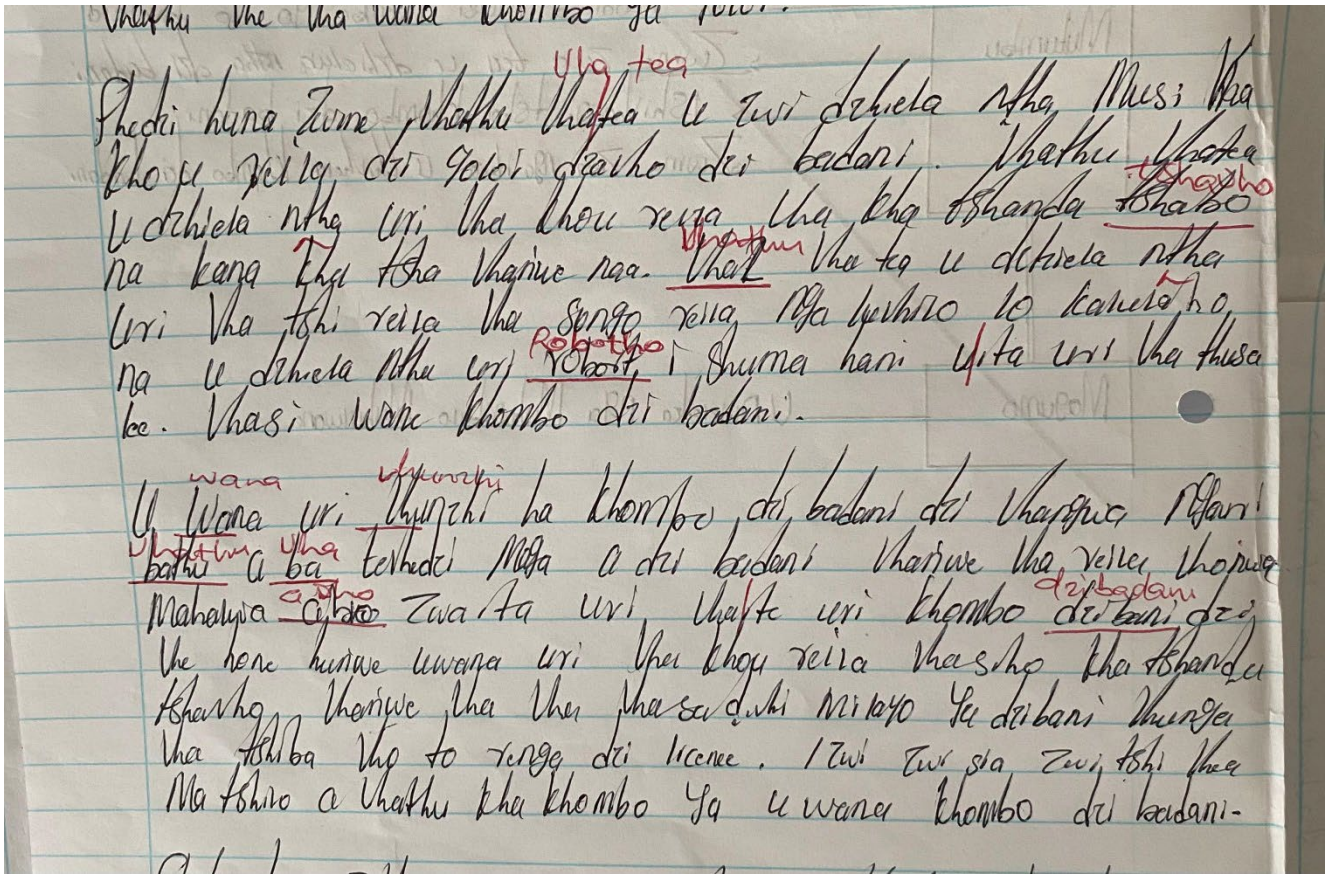
Written sample of LEARNER H



A no maduvha vhathu vha vho tou tongisa uhwa
~~aaa~~ mahalwa musi moc vha tshi tshio reila dzi golo. U reila golo
u tshio nisa halwa a zwo ngo tou dzudzanya zoqvhud
zwi dovha hafhu zwa disa dzi khombo dzo fhambana
naho

Kha lino la Afurika tshipembo khombo dza dzi golo
dzo dokesa lune zwina masiandoitwa a sia vhudi icha
vhutshilo ha matthu matt. Huna masiandoitwa a ngaho sa: u
pvashe-kanya ha dzigolo, u iovha ha vhathu na zwinwe
zwinzhi!

Written sample of learner I



Shedi huna zwine vhathu vhafhea u zwi dzhiela nfha Musi vha
kho u reila dzi golo dzavho dzi badani. Vhathu vhafhea
u dzhiela nfha uri vha khou renga vha kha dshanda dshabo
na kanga fha dsha vhanwe naa. Vhat vha fha u dzhiela nfha
uri vha tshi reila vha songo reila nga hufhio lo kanela ho,
na u dzhiela nfha uri Robot i humana hani Uita uri vha thusa
kae. Vhasi wone khombo dzi badani.

U wana uri vhunzhi ha khombo dzi badani dzi vhanga nfani!
vhathu a ba tevhedzi nga a dzi badani vhanwe vha reila khoiwa
Mahalwa a dzho Zwa fta uri vhafte uri khombo dzi badani dzi
vhe hone hunwe uwana uri vhen khoy reila vhasho kha dshandu
dshavho vhanwe vha vhen vha sa dzhi Mikano ya dzibani vhunga
vha tshiba vho to renga dzi licence. Izwi zwi sia zwi tshi vhea
Ma tshino a vhathu kha khombo ya u wana khombo dzi badani.

The figures presented above (Learners A-I) show how Grade 10 learners from the selected school write their Tshivenḓa Home Language creative essays. Among other things, these figures portray the application of grammatical mechanics such as syntax, spelling, orthography and punctuation marks. The perusal of the written samples also revealed how Tshivenḓa teacher flag grammatical errors when doing assessment. It shows that the teacher highlights grammatical errors by underlining, encircling, or writing short descriptions of the identified errors.

4.4.2. Analysis of data from text analysis.

Discussed here-under are the most common recurring language errors associated with the use of Social Media language, which affect meaning construction when learners write their Creative essays. These language errors are presented as emergent sub-themes that surfaced when analyzing the sampled 9 learners' essays:

- **Incorrect capitalization and proper nouns**
- **Non-punctuated creative writing**
- **Word division**
- **Borrowing of word**
- **Shortening of word**
- **Sentence initial and conjunction**
- **Spelling error**

Incorrect capitalization and proper nouns

According to Arif (2021), capitalization means using capital letters (uppercase letters) at the start of sentences or for proper nouns (specific names). For example, we use capital letters at the beginning of a sentence or when writing the name of a place, like "Mahagala," which is a village and should start with a capital letter.

In the sample from learner A, it seems they do not fully understand how to apply these capitalization rules in Tshivenḓa Home Language creative essay writing. The learner writes words that are not proper nouns with an initial capital letter. For

instance, they write "mufu" instead of "Mufu" at the beginning of a sentence. Similarly, the learner writes "mBulungo" with an incorrect capital "B" in the middle of the word instead of "Mbulungo." These mistakes show a misunderstanding of when and where capital letters should be used.

Research by Arif (2021) and other studies on language learning (Ramutsindela, 2019) highlight that mastering capitalization is an important part of writing correctly. It helps clarify the meaning of a sentence and ensures proper grammar. The learner's errors suggest they need more practice with these basic rules of writing.

Table: 4
Other examples from learners' written samples:

Incorrect capitalization words	**Correct capitalization words**
From the learner written sample G the learner writes 'tshipembe' in small letter • Afurika tshipembe	• Afurika Tshipembe
From the learner written sample C the learner write 'Tshivenḓa' in small letter 't' and Tshivenḓa is a name, it must always start with a capital letter. • Tshivenḓa	• Tshivenḓa
From learner written sample F learner begins the sentence with a small letter 'z' • zwe ra	• Zwe

Word division

Word division is a crucial aspect of writing, especially for emerging writers and second language learners. It refers to the ability to segment words correctly, which includes both the internal structure (morpheme division) and appropriate use of spaces between words. Poor word division can affect readability, comprehension, and overall writing fluency (Smith & Matthews, 2021). In written Tshivenḓa Home

Language, it is important to divide words correctly to maintain clarity and readability. Another factor that is observable from the above learners' written sample A-I, learners have a problem with Tshivenḓa Home Language words division.

Table: 5

Examples from learners' sample are as follow:

Incorrect word division	Correct word division
Refer to Written sample of Learner B Utoda	U toda
Refer to Written sample of Learner B Isivhe	I si vhe
Refer to Written sample of Learner C kwoḓo	Kwo do
Refer to Written Learner C Nditshe	Ndi tshee
Refer to Learner C Nditshiri	Ndi tshi ri
Refer to Written sample of Learner D Odaho	O ḓaho
Refer to Written sample of Learner B Vhathuvha	vhathu vha
Refer to Written sample of Learner F Hododa	Ho ḓo ḓa
Refer to Written sample of Learner F Zwera	Zwe ra
Refer to Written sample of learner E Ndizwone	Ndi zwone
Refer to Written sample of leaner B Usongo	U songo
Refer to Written sample of Learner H Pwashe kanya	pwashekanya
Refer to Written sample of Learner E	

ṱanḓa vhuwaho	ṱanḓavhuwaho
Refer to Written sample of Learner E ya zwo	 Yazwo

Non-punctuated creative writing

Another trend that is observable across the data of the learners is the non-usage of punctuation. The data presented in learner B written sample show that learners do not use punctuation mark. Sentences of a paragraph size (about 7 to 10 lines) are written without commas, periods and question marks. Tarchi and O'Hara (2019) suggest that Social media may encourage the non-punctuated, fragmented writing style that is becoming increasingly common in creative essays and other forms of communication. It can also be seen as part of a larger tradition of writing that bends or breaks conventional rules for artistic and expressive purposes.

Borrowing of word

Another factor observable in learners' written work is borrowing of word from English Language to Tshivenḓa Language. Borrowing words is the process of transferring linguistic objects from one language system into another (Malmus, 2019). Social media also accelerates the evolution of Tshivenḓa itself, creating new lexicons and expressions in response to the digital age. van der Merwe (2014), in his work on African language evolution in the digital age, suggests that as Tshivenḓa speakers adapt to new digital tools, they create new ways of expressing themselves. In many cases, this involves borrowing English words for things that did not previously exist in the language (e.g., technology terms like "computer," "Internet," and "email"). These borrowed words often come from social media usage and are incorporated into every day and creative writing.

Examples of borrowed words from learners' creative essay sample A-I are as follows:

Instead of using the Tshivenḓa equivalents for borrowed words, learners tend to write them in their English forms. For instance, a student from Sample G might write "cellphone" in English rather than using the Tshivenḓa term "Luṱingo thendeleki." This trend seems to stem from the excessive influence of social media, which often promotes the use of English. Similarly, learner I writes "license" in English instead of the Tshivenḓa equivalent, "Ṱhanziela ya u reila." This shift in language usage highlights the impact of globalization and technology on local languages, raising concerns about the preservation of linguistic heritage among younger generations.

Shortening of words

The use of shorthand by learners when writing in their home language, particularly Tshivenḓa in creative essays, has been influenced by several factors, one of which is the excessive use of social media. The advent of social media has led to a widespread use of informal, abbreviated language, which learners often carry over into their academic writing (Jones, 2020). After a thorough analysis of the learners' scripts, the study identified that some learners continue to shorthand in their essays.

Examples from learners' sample are as follow:

1. From the learners' written sample above, learner H shorthand the word 'mott' instead of writing 'muthu'. 'mott' does not have meaning in Tshivenḓa Home Language.
2. From the learners' written sample above, learner I shorthand the word 'abo' for "a vho'. 'abo' does not have any meaning in Tshivenḓa Home Language.
3. From written learner's written sample above, learner I shorthand the word 'aba' for "a vha'. 'aba' does not have any meaning in Tshivenḓa Home Language.
4. From learner's written sample above, learner H shorthand the word 'moc' for 'musi'. 'moc' does not have any meaning in Tshivenḓa Home Language.
5. From learner's written sample above, learner H shorthand the word 'vha2' for 'vhathu'. 'vha2' does not have any meaning in Tshivenḓa Home Language.
6. From learner's written sample above, learner I shorthand the word 'tshabo' for "tsha vho. 'tshabo' does not have any meaning in Tshivenḓa Home Language.

Sentence initial conjunction

After a thorough analysis of the learners' scripts, the study identified that some learners continue to use sentence-initial conjunctions, such as “fhedzi” (equivalent to "but" in English), to begin their sentences. While the use of sentence-initial conjunctions is permissible in academic writing, it is generally recommended that they not be used to start a new paragraph or the first sentence of an argument (Swales & Feak, 2012). Instead, they are more appropriate when extending or building upon a preceding thought (Hyland, 2005).

The prevalence of sentence-initial conjunctions in the learners' writing, however, seems to stem from the influence of social media, where informal and colloquial language patterns, including frequent use of conjunctions at sentence beginnings, are more common (Tagg, 2017). This aligns with findings in sociolinguistics, which suggest that digital communication platforms tend to reinforce casual language habits, and these patterns can transfer into more formal contexts such as academic writing (Thurlow & Mroczek, 2011). Therefore, the learners’ reliance on sentence-initial conjunctions may be attributed to the pervasive linguistic norms of online communication, where such structures are more socially acceptable.

Spelling errors

Farina and Lyddy (2011:147) argue that “non-standard spelling follows legitimate letter-sound correspondence in a language, but they are not the conventional spelling for that particular word”. Misspelling and typos are also defined by Barasa (2010:88) as “the accident use of non-standard spelling”. Verheijen (2015) adds by stating that spelling and typos errors also include the use of visual spelling characters or numbers, which substitute letters by graphically resembling non-alphabetic symbols, as in the following example: from learners’ written sample A-I

Table: 7

Incorrect spelling	Correct spelling

From learner in written sample E ‘Ngori’	Ngauri
From learner in written sample D ‘Singo’	Songo
From learner in written sample D ‘Ndile’	nḍila
From learner in written sample H ‘Mott’	Muthu
From learner in written sample G ‘Goloyi’	Goloi
From learner in written sample E ‘Ende’	nahone
From learner in written sample I ‘tshabo’	tshavho
From learner in written sample D ‘ezwo’	lzwo
Learner in written sample G write incorrect spelling ‘itiwa’	iṭwa

4.4. Observation

Observation was the final method used to collect data in this study. According to Waller (2016), observation involves closely monitoring or noticing something to gather information or make a judgment. The researcher followed a structured observation schedule (**see data instrument 3 page 119)** to guide the process, with a view to giving the researcher a focal direction. Additionally, data on the learners'

classroom writing practices was collected to identify their behavioral patterns during writing activities assigned by teachers in Tshivenḓa Home Language class. As a teacher at the same school, the researcher acted as a passive observer. This means that the researcher watched behaviors, events, or interactions without changing anything or joining in with the group. The researcher took detailed notes on what he saw by writing them down. Thematic analysis technique was used to analyze the data collected in line with the observation schedule to point to the direction towards which the earmarked data were to be collected.

4.4.1 Observation data presentation

The collected contextual data revealed that the school lacks key facilities such as a computer lab or library, where learners could access reading materials. Furthermore, there is no writing or reading competitions to encourage greater participation in writing activities. The school also does not display any posters or visual aids that showcase examples of writing beyond the classroom. In fact, there are no large visual learning resources such as posters or materials on the school walls, noticeboards, or even in the teachers' staff room that could support learners in improving their spelling or mastering the formal language needed for essay writing.

In the classroom, the researcher noticed that when learners were assigned Tshivenḓa Home Language essay tasks, they spent a significant amount of time using their cell phones. However, teachers did not intervene to either discourage this behavior or guide the learners in using their phones as a focused learning tool. It was clear that much of the content learners were reading or writing on their phones was unrelated to the task at hand. Such tendencies often have a negative impact on their learning outcomes.

4.4.2 The following sub-themes were derived through observation

1. Social media posters on classroom walls
2. Teachers’ written instructions, issued out to learners during lesson presentation
3. Tshivenḓa Home Language Creative essays writing given to learners by the teacher
4. Usage of cellphones by learners

Social media posters on classroom walls

During my classroom observation, I noticed a significant absence of visual aids related to social media or real-world writing examples that could engage learners and motivate them to apply proper grammar rules in their writing. One of the reasons learners may not feel inspired to use social media as a tool for improving their language skills is the lack of representation of such platforms within the school environment. By not integrating visuals or posters that reference social media, the school misses an opportunity to connect learners' everyday communication with academic writing standards.

Additionally, the classroom and the broader school environment lack visual resources such as posters, charts, or materials that could help learners understand and apply language concepts. There are no clear examples displayed on walls, noticeboards, or in the staff room that showcase good writing practices or offer guidance on spelling, grammar, and formal writing. These kinds of resources could serve as constant reminders of writing expectations, helping learners develop their essay-writing skills and master the formal language required in academic settings. Without these visual aids, learners are left without tangible support to guide their writing beyond the confines of the classroom, which could be a contributing factor to their struggles in producing well-structured, grammatically correct work.

Teachers' written instructions issued out to learners during lesson presentation

When the teacher arrived in class, he provided instructions to the learners on how to write a creative essay in Tshivenḓa Home Language. This session was intended as a revision, as the teacher had already previously taught them the necessary skills for composing a well-structured essay. Though some learners expressed their familiarity with the essay structure, this may reflect their desire for more challenging or engaging tasks, which aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development. When learners feel that they already understand the material, they may resist repetitive instruction, unless it is connected to more complex or meaningful tasks that promote higher-order thinking.

Tshivenḓa Home Language Creative essays writing given to learners by the teacher

The teacher assigned the learners a creative essay task based on a topic in Tshivenḓa. After giving the instructions, the teacher allowed the learners to begin writing their essays. While they worked, the teacher actively monitored their progress, walking around the classroom to observe each learner. As the learners wrote, the teacher also checked their work periodically, offering guidance when needed, and ensured that their books were properly signed to track their participation and progress. This approach not only kept the learners engaged, but also provided an opportunity for the teacher to offer personalized support and feedback.

Usage of cellphones by learners

In the classroom, the researcher observed that when learners were given Tshivenḓa Home Language essay tasks, they spent a considerable amount of time on their cell phones. Those seated at the back of the class often used their phones throughout the lesson, with some playing games or listening to music through their headphones. However, teachers did not intervene to discourage these behaviors or guide learners in using their phones as a focused learning tool. It was evident that much of the content learners were engaging with on their phones was unrelated to the assigned task, and such distractions often negatively affected their learning outcomes.

Although schools occasionally permit learners to bring cellphones for educational purposes, teachers often find that many learners become distracted by social media or engage in online activities like betting apps (e.g. Betway), rather than focusing on their studies. Research highlights that while digital devices can support learning, they can also lead to distractions and decreased academic performance when not properly managed (Ravizza, Hambrick, & Fenn, 2014). Notably, it tends to be only those learners seated at the front who use their cellphones as reference tools, such as when writing Tshivenḓa creative essays, suggesting a selective, perhaps more engaged use of technology for learning.

In a study on classroom distractions, researchers found that learners who used technology without clear educational goals or guidelines were more likely to become

disengaged and use devices for non-academic purposes (Junco, 2012). This discrepancy highlights the need for teachers to implement strategies that ensure cellphones are used effectively as tools for learning, rather than sources of distraction (Gikas & Grant, 2013).

The data collected by the researcher indicates that a significant number of learners were using their cellphones during both long and short break periods. Some learners even went so far as to play games and listen to music on their phones during these breaks. Despite the school's policy, which prohibits cellphones on the school grounds unless there is an emergency, many learners are still seen with their phones in hand. According to the school's rules, learners are expected to hand over their cellphones to the class teacher at the start of the day upon arrival, with the exception of cases where a genuine emergency requires them to keep their device. However, it appears that this policy is not being strictly followed, and cellphone usage remains prevalent among the learners during break times.

Pictures below were taken at the selected school during the long break. The learners were seen busy with their cell phones.

PICTURE A

PICTURE B

4.5. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research study was to investigate the impact of social media on Grade 10 Tshivenḓa Home Language learners when writing creative essays. Therefore, this is one of the core chapters in the research study because it analyzes

all the data collected, so that findings can be made. In this chapter, the research study analyzed all the data collected from various sources. The interview questions were directed at a sample of nine learners and their Tshivenḓa Home Language teacher in Grade 10 at the selected school. The text analysis samples of the learners were obtained during Tshivenḓa Home Language period. Observation was done in the Grade 10 Tshivenḓa Home Language class during teacher's lesson delivery. The findings of this research study are detailed in the following chapter of the research study.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented, discussed, and interpreted data collected from the study's participants. This chapter concludes the study by summarizing its findings and highlighting the researcher's recommendations and conclusion. This study further explored the impact of social media on Grade 10 Learners when they are writing Tshivenḓa Home Language creative essays. This study described the challenges that learners face when writing Tshivenḓa Creative essays in class. The study also sought to identify the factors that contribute to the learners' failure to adhere to the academic writing rules concerning language usage. The study's summary is provided in cognizance of the research questions. The conclusion is based on the study's findings. Recommendations based on the major study findings also suggested areas for further studies.

5.2 Summary of the research findings

This study was premised and explored through the research questions, comprised of the main and sub-questions as they originally appeared in proposal document. All the data collected were presented, analyzed and discussed in chapter 4. This chapter presents the summary of findings, recommendations and conclusions. The research findings are summarized by answering the following research questions. The main question:

- What is the impact of social media on learners when writing creative essays in Tshivenḓa Home Language?

The main research question was underpinned by the following research questions:

- How can teachers alleviate the impact of Social Media in their Grade 10 classrooms?
- What are strategies that can come into play to improve the writing skills of learners?
- What is the relationship between the language that is used on social media and the language produced by learners at school?

5.3. Summarizing findings through answering the research questions

- Main question: What is the impact of social media on learners when writing creative essays in Tshivenḓa Home Language?

The objective of this question was to find out the full implications of the excessive use of social media by Grade 10 Tshivenḓa Home Language learners of a selected school. The analysis of the research findings found that:

Social media platforms, particularly WhatsApp and Facebook foster a culture of rapid, informal communication that often prioritizes speed over accuracy (Tagg, 2013). Learners who use these platforms tend to write in a casual, conversational style, frequently ignoring conventions of grammar, spelling, and punctuation. This is consistent with studies that show how informal digital communication encourages shortcuts such as abbreviations, slang, and incomplete sentences, contributing to a more relaxed approach to language (Sutherland & Jowitt, 2015). In turn, this behavior spill over into academic writing, where learners are unconsciously carrying these habits into their Tshivenḓa Home Language Creative essays.

This has caused a drop in the quality of their academic writing. They are not using correct grammar, formal vocabulary, or following the rules of sentence structure. This change in their writing style is making it harder for them to communicate clearly in professional settings, where clear and precise language is important.

- Sub-question 1: How can teachers alleviate the impact of Social Media in their Grade 10 classrooms?

The purpose of this question was to explore the strategies and actions that teachers are implementing to mitigate the negative impact of social media usage among learners. Specifically, it aimed to identify what steps teachers are taking to guide responsible online behavior and reduce the potential harm caused by excessive or inappropriate use of social media. The analysis of the research findings found that:

Teachers have increasingly turned to the dictation method as a tool to help learners develop their writing skills while adhering to proper grammar rules. This method, where teachers read a passage aloud and learners write it down, is believed to

reinforce both spelling and grammatical accuracy. According to research, dictation offers several benefits for language learners, including improved attention to detail, better retention of grammatical structures, and a deeper understanding of sentence formation (Hinkel, 2004).

In addition to using dictation method, teachers are also closely monitoring learners' usage of cellphones in the classroom. With the pervasive influence of social media and texting language, there is growing concern that learners may adopt informal, non-standard grammar in their written work. This is a legitimate concern, as studies have shown that frequent engagement with social media platforms encourages the use of abbreviated and often grammatically incorrect forms of communication, which can spill over into academic writing (Tagg, 2013). By monitoring cell phone usage, teachers aim to limit these distractions and help learners focus on developing more formal writing skills.

Furthermore, teachers often assign essay tasks every two days within a single week. This strategy not only encourages consistent writing practice, but also provides frequent opportunities for learners to refine their grammar and composition skills. Research supports the idea that regular, purposeful writing tasks can significantly enhance learners' grammatical proficiency. According to Graham and Perin (2007), consistent writing exercises, particularly those that emphasize the revision and correction of errors, are crucial for improving writing outcomes in the long term.

By combining dictation exercises with regular essay writing assignments and limiting distractions like social media, teachers aim to cultivate a more structured approach to writing. The goal is to help learners master proper grammar and develop a more formal and academic writing style, free from the influence of casual online communication. Through this process, learners are better equipped to communicate effectively in both academic and professional settings.

- Sub-question 2: What are strategies that can come into play to improve the writing skills of learners?

The objective of this question was to identify and explore effective strategies and methods that can be implemented to enhance the writing skills of learners, fostering their ability to express ideas clearly, coherently, and creatively in written form. This inquiry aims to gather practical insights and approaches that teacher or learners themselves can apply to support skill development in writing. The analysis of the research findings found that:

The teacher's efforts to address the impact of social media language on learners' academic writing are supported by a range of educational research. Social media platforms often promote informal language, including shorthand and casual tone, which can negatively affect learners' academic writing (Tagg, 2012). The teacher's strategy of assigning regular writing tasks, as mentioned by Learners, reflects a widely recognized approach to help learners refine their writing skills. Research shows that frequent writing assignments help learners develop more formal and structured language, while also deepening their understanding of academic conventions (Graham & Perin, 2007). Additionally, the use of peer assessment, as highlighted by Learners, is a proven method for improving writing. Peer feedback encourages learners to engage critically with writing conventions and become more aware of formal language expectations (Topping, 2009; Liu & Carless, 2006). Learners' recognition of the teacher's commitment also aligns with research that demonstrates learners perform better when they perceive their teachers as genuinely invested in their development (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Together, these strategies, grounded in research, show that the teacher's proactive efforts are effectively helping learners transition from informal language habits to the more formal language required in academic writing.

- Sub-question 3: What is the relationship between the language that is used on social media and the language produced by learners at school?

The objective of this question was to investigate and gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between social media and the language used by learners in a school setting. The analysis of the research findings found that:

The relationship between the language used on social media and the language produced by learners at school is characterized by both divergence and

interconnection, reflecting the distinct functions and expectations of each context. Social media language tends to be informal, conversational, and heavily influenced by real-time interaction, with features such as abbreviations, spelling and typo errors, and shorthand (Tagg, 2013). The language used in academic settings is typically more formal, structured, and adherent to established conventions of grammar, punctuation, and style. Social media can influence the way learners express themselves in school, especially in writing (Thurlow, 2006). For instance, learners might transfer informal, abbreviated forms of expression into their academic work, potentially challenging the expectations for formal writing (Lee & Street, 2012). Social media language and school language often differ in formality and function, they are not entirely separate; rather, they influence each other in complex ways, reflecting a broader shift toward more multi-modal and interactive forms of communication in both digital and educational environments.

5.3.1 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- The main finding based on the purpose of this study revealed that the learners' use of social media language in the academic Tshivenḓa Home language Creative Essays distorts the meaning they strive to convey when they are given writing tasks, especially when given under controlled circumstances. The study revealed that distortion is inevitable because:
- Learners commit many language errors that are caused by deliberate deformation of words from their original meaningful state in attempts to shorten what they say through their wrong use of omission and substitution of the key words or phrases that help construct meaning in their Tshivenḓa Creative essays writing.
- Secondly, the study also established that learners perceive the use of social media language in academic writing as an effective tool for them, which helps them save time without writing in full sentences.
- Thirdly, teachers do not have effective language error-correction strategies. Their current use of dictation to deal with their learners' social media-driven language errors do not work for them, since the problems evidently continue unabated.

- Lastly, many parents and guardians are failing to provide adequate support and oversight when it comes to managing their children's social media usage. Instead of actively setting boundaries or monitoring their children's time online, they often allow unrestricted access to social media without considering the potential risks.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Firstly, the study established that any language error that is committed through the word division, word borrowing, or omission of the word, phrase, incorrect capitalization and proper nouns, which serve as a backbone of meaning in each sentence, carry a degree of meaning distortion in the learners' academic writing essay. Teachers should reinforce peer-proof reading or review to allow learners to check out the use of social media language in their peers' piece of writing.

Secondly, teachers should not only make learners aware of the impact of using social media language on meaning, but should also thoroughly teach them what the concept of formal academic writing entails. This would expose learners to the knowledge of the concept and put it in practice. It is always good to see learners showing their ability to describe their language structures and conventions as applied in real life texts.

Thirdly, it is crucial for learners to be encouraged to eliminate the use of social media language in their writing, as this practice has been shown to negatively impact their essay scores. The informal and often abbreviated nature of social media communication can lead to a lack of clarity and coherence in academic writing. When learners rely on slang, emojis, and shorthand typical of platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook, they risk undermining the seriousness and professionalism expected in their essays.

Fourthly, parents should encourage their children to use social media in ways that are productive and educational, such as following accounts or joining groups that promote learning or academic interests. By fostering a healthy relationship with social media, parents can help their children maintain a balance between their online

and offline lives, ensuring that their academic performance and writing skills remain strong.

Fifthly, beyond correcting the learners' language errors through raising awareness of the impact of the social media language on meaning construction, and using dictation to instill correct language form, there is a need for educational stakeholders to find concrete remedial strategies that can curb the production of social media-based language errors in the learners' writing habits.

Sixthly, in the light of the range of language errors learners commit through the influence of social media language interference in their academic essays, teachers and learners unanimously admitted that social media language does largely distort intended meaning when learners write. Therefore, educational stakeholders should stop fighting this and work together on designing a common writers' manual or a dictionary fit for universally shared social media language.

Lastly, the government must introduce clear and comprehensive rules on how social media is used in schools to address the growing concerns surrounding its impact on learners' well-being, academic performance, and behavior. As social media continues to play a significant role in the daily lives of young people, it is crucial that schools establish guidelines to ensure that it is used in a responsible, safe, and productive manner.

5.5. RECOMANDATION FOR FURTHER STUDY

The research study offers several recommendations for future researchers, including language experts, and the Limpopo Department of Basic Education. Future studies could explore the positive impact of social media on learners when writing Tshivenḓa Home Language Creative essays. Moreover, primary learners as well, in order for them to better understand the broader positive impact of social media when learners are writing in academic setting. Lastly, future studies should also consider whether there are other factors beyond social media, which contribute to learners' challenges with writing in Tshivenḓa Home Language in the classroom.

5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

A study's limitations refer to the constraints, weaknesses, or biases that may influence the validity, reliability, or generalizability of its findings (Creswell, 2014). These limitations can originate from various sources, such as methodological factors (e.g., sampling bias, measurement error), data collection challenges (e.g., participant fatigue), issues with data quality, analytical constraints (e.g., statistical power, data interpretation), and time limitations (Brynman, 2016; Sekeran & Bougie, 2016; Kumar, 2019). In the current study, participant fatigue and time constraints were notable limitations. Participants frequently reported fatigue, as the data collection period coincided with formal assessment tests. Moreover, time limitations were a significant concern, as the allotted duration for school visits was insufficient for comprehensive data collection.

5.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the summary of findings, recommendations and conclusion related to the impact of social media on Grade 10’s ability to write error free creative essays. It further tables the recommendations this study puts forth for further studies regarding the need to explore further the area of the impact of social media. In the light of what this study raised about the distortion of meaning the use of social media platform brings, unless teachers find an effective way to curb this new wave, the foundation of meaning distortion that is rife at high school level poses threats to constructive writing beyond high school.

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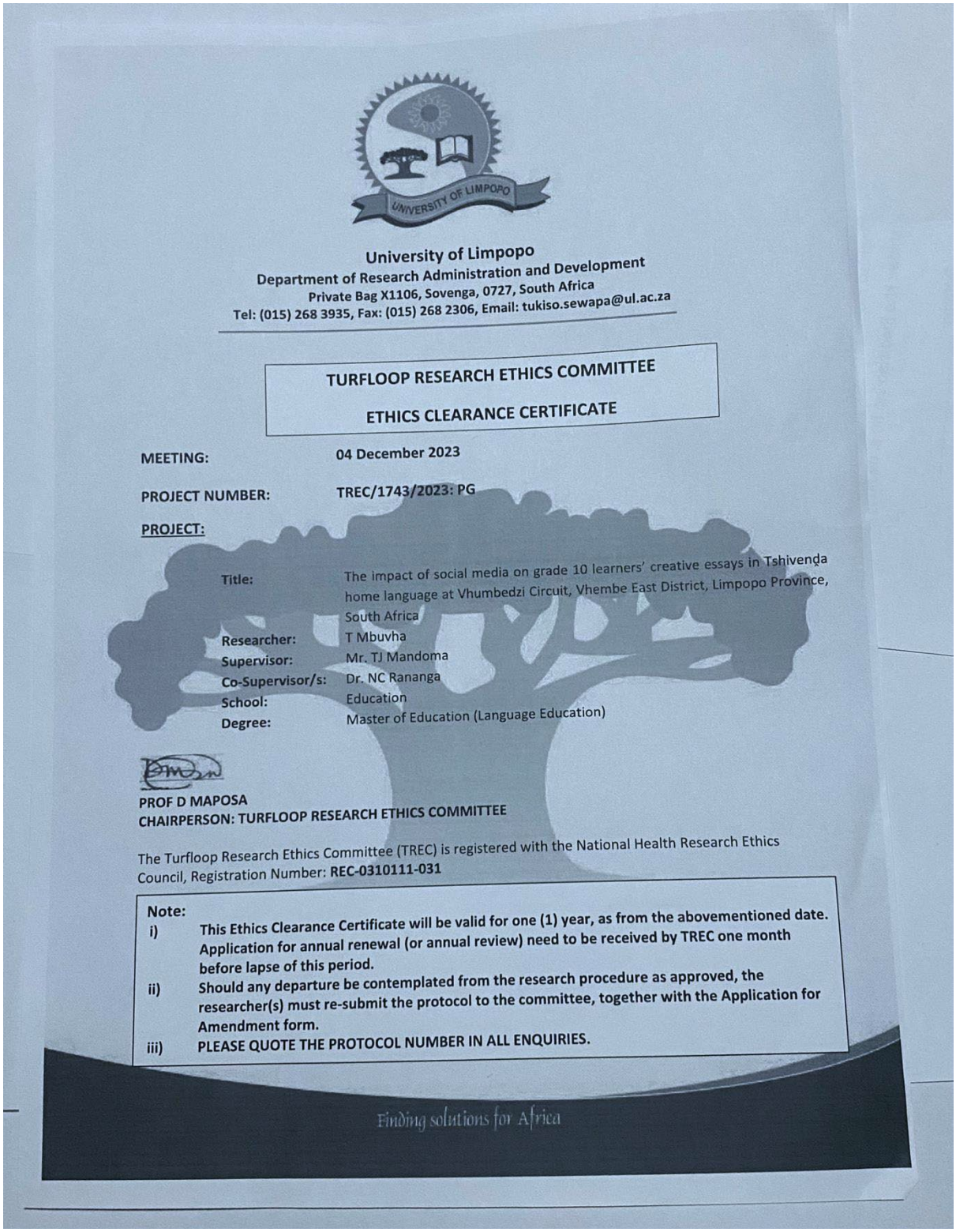
APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: Clearance Certificate (TREC)



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TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 04 December 2023

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/1743/2023: PG

PROJECT:

Title:	The impact of social media on grade 10 learners' creative essays in Tshivenḓa home language at Vhumbedzi Circuit, Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province, South Africa
Researcher:	T Mbuvha
Supervisor:	Mr. TJ Mandoma
Co-Supervisor/s:	Dr. NC Rananga
School:	Education
Degree:	Master of Education (Language Education)

PROF D MAPOSA
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: **REC-0310111-031**

Note:

i) **This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.**

ii) **Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.**

iii) **PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.**

Finding solutions for Africa

APPENDIX B: Department Of Education Permission

CONFIDENTIAL

LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

Office of the Premier
Research and Development Directorate
Private Bag X9483, Polokwane, 0700, South Africa
Tel: (015) 230 9910, Email: mokobij@premier.limpopo.gov.za

LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL RESEARCH ETHICS

COMMITTEE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Review Date: 07 August 2024

Project Number: LPREC/51/2024: PG

Subject: The Impact of Social Media on Grade 10 learners' Creative Essays in Tshivenda Home Language at Vhumbedzi Circuit, Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Researcher: Mbuvha T

Chairperson: Prof I Swarts

Swarts

Chairperson: Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee

The Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee (LPREC) is registered with National Health Research Council (NHREC) Registration Number **REC-111513-038.**

Note:

i. **This study is categorized as a Low Risk Level in accordance with risk level descriptors as enshrined in LPREC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**

ii. **Should there be any amendment to the approved research proposal; the researcher(s) must re-submit the proposal to the ethics committee for review prior data collection.**

iii. **The researcher(s) must provide annual reporting to the committee as well as the relevant department and also provide the department with the final report/thesis.**

iv. **The researchers will be required to make presentations of the study findings and recommendations at the Provincial Research Conference/Departmental Research Day.**

v. **The ethical clearance certificate is valid for 12 months. Should the need to extend the period for data collection arise then the researcher should renew the certificate through LPREC secretariat. PLEASE QUOTE THE PROJECT NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.**

APPENDIX C: Letter to Vhembe East District

The Head of Department

Limpopo Department of Education

Vhembe East

Sibasa

0970

Sir

Application for permission to collect data at schools in Vhembe East district Vhumbedzi circuit

1. The above matter refers.
2. I'm a Masters Student conducting research on this topic: The impact of Social Media on Grade 10 learners' Creative Essays in Tshivenḓa Home Language at Vhumbedzi Circuit, Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province, South Africa.
3. I would like to request permission to collect data from Grade 10 Tshivenda Home Language learners and one Grade 10 Tshivenda Home Language teacher at Vuvumutshena Secondary School in Vhumbedzi circuit.
4. Data collection would involve classroom observation of Grade 10 Tshivenda Home Language creative essays writing lessons, interview of the teacher and learners.
5. Both learner and teacher participants would be given a consent form to fill in before the commencement of the research.
6. The school identified for the research is Vuvumutshena Secondary School.
7. The purpose of the research is to explore the impact of Social Media impact on Grade 10 Learners when writing Creative Essays in Tshivenḓa Home Language at Vhumbedzi Circuit, Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province.
8. Hoping that permission to conduct the research will be granted.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully

_____

MBUVHA T (Mr)

APPENDIX D: Letter to the principal

P O BOX 673

THOHOYANDOU

0950

10 MARCH 2023

TO THE PRINCIPAL

P.O.BOX.386

TSHAULU

0987

10 August 2024

A letter to school requesting permission to carry out research.

Candidates: Mbuvha T

Cell No: 0792333859

Email: tshilijoe@gmail.com

Dear School principal,

I Mbuvha Tshilisanani from University of Limpopo, masters candidate under School of Education in Department of Languages would like to request permission to conduct my research in your school premise. My supervisor on the study is Mr Mandoma TJ. My research topic is “The impact of Social Media on Grade 10 learners’ Creative Essays in Tshivenda Home Language at Vhumbedzi Circuit, Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province, South Africa”.

You are welcome to contact me regarding the above requests and to enquire if need be.

Yours sincerely

Mbuvha T

APPENDIX E: Parent/Guardian Consent Form

Research topic: The impact of Social Media on Grade 10 learners' Creative Essays in Tshivenḓa Home Language at Vhumbedzi Circuit, Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province, South Africa.

The Researcher: T MBUVHA

Cell no: 079 233 3859

Email: tshilijoe@gmail.com

I confirm that I...……..……as the parent/legal guardian of ……..…….… at ……..…… Secondary School

Consent to the above-mentioned child participating in the stated research project. I confirm that I have read and understood the information about the research project as provided by the researcher. I understand that my child's contribution will not have any harm in her/his life in any way. I understand that my child's participation in the study is voluntary and that she/he can freely withdraw at any time without being questioned. I have been assured that my child will remain anonymous as her/his name will not be recognizable and that any data about my child will be kept confidential.

Parent/Guardian signature: …… Date: ……..

Researcher signature ……Date……

FOMO YA THENDELO YA MUBEBI KANA MUUNḒI YO PINDULELWAHO KHA TSHIVENḒA

Nṋe _____ mubebi/muunḓi wa _____ ndi ṋea thendelo ya uri ṅwana`nga ane a vha kha gireidi ya vhufumi (10) a vhe tshipiḓa

tsha ṱhoḓisiso, a ṋee mafhungo a no ḓo thusa kha ṱhoḓisiso iyi. Ndi a pfesesa uri ṱhoḓisiso iyi a i na mbuyelo nahone a si ya u ṱoḓa u dzhenisela ṅwana`nga kana tshikolo maṱo. Ndi dovha hafhu nda zwi ḓivha uri madzina a ṅwana`nga a nga si bviselwe khagala na zwe a amba zwi ḓo vha tshiphiri tshi re vhukati hawe na muṱoḓisisi.

Ndi na fhulufhelo ḽa uri ṱhoḓisiso ino i ḓo thusa zwihulu uri kuphasele kwa vhagudi, ro sedza thero ya Tshivenḓa Luambo Lwa Hayani, ku ḓo khwinifhadzea.

Tsaino ya mubebi/muunḓi: _____ Datumu : _____
Tsaino ya muṱoḓisisi…… Datumu…….

APPENDIX F: Underage Assent Form

Research topic: The impact of Social Media on Grade 10 learners' Creative Essays in Tshivenḓa Home Language at Vhumbedzi Circuit, Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province, South Africa.

The Researcher: T MBUVHA

Cell no: 079 233 3859

Email: tshilijoe@gamil.com

I ……..……as a learner in …… Secondary School,

Confirm that I have read and understood the information about the research project. I also confirm that I have had the opportunity to ask questions and the researcher has answered every question about the study to my satisfaction. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I can freely withdraw at any time as the participant from the study without being questioned. I have been assured that my anonymity will be shielded as my name will not be recognisable and that any data about me will not be kept confidential.

So, I would like to give my informed consent to participate in the study.

Learner signature: …… Date: ……..

Researcher signature: …… Date:……

ASENTE FOMO YA MUGUDI YO PINDULELWAHO KHA TSHIVENDA

Nṋe _____ (Mugudi), ndi khou tenda u vha tshipiḓa tsha ṱhoḓisiso ino ine ya khou amba nga thuthuwedzo ine nyanḓadzamafhungo ya vha nayo kha vhagudi vha gireidi ya vhufumi (10) musi vha tshi ṅwala maanea a Tshivenḓa Luambo Lwa Hayani kha tshikolo tshino. Ṱhoḓisiso ino i khou itwa nga Vho Mbuvha T, vhane vha khou gudela digiri yavho ya masiṱasi fhala Yunivesithi ya Limpopo fhasi ha mufhaṱusi Vho-Mandoma T.J

Ndi khou tenda uri mafhungo oṱhe aṋe nda ḓo ṋea Vho-Mbuvha T a ḓo vha a tshidzumbe nahone a si ḓivhee, a thi na ndavhelelo ya u wana malamba kha u ṋekedza hanga mafhungo ayo kana u dzhenelela kha ṱhoḓisiso ino.

Ndi a zwi ḓivha uri u vha tshipiḓa tsha ṱhoḓisiso ino ndi khou tou ḓiṋekedzela, nahone ndi nga kha ḓi ḓibvisa tshifhinga tshiṅwe na tshiṅwe kha ṱhoḓisiso ino hu si na ndaṱiso.

Tsaino ya mugudi: _____ Datumu: _____

Tsaino ya muṱoḓisisi …….. Datumu……

APPENDIX G: Teacher's Consent Form

Informed consent form (Teacher)

Title of the research: The impact of Social Media on Grade 10 learners' Creative Essays in Tshivenḓa Home Language at Vhumbedzi Circuit, Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province, South Africa.

Researcher: MBUVHA T

Contact Email: tshilijoe@gmail.com

As a teacher in …….. Secondary School, I hereby acknowledge the following:

1. The purpose of this study has been explained to me. I had the opportunity to ask questions, and was given the assurance that I may contact the researcher for more information throughout the duration of this study.
2. I have given permission for the researcher to observe in my classroom any time until he finishes collecting data.
3. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any stage without any penalty.
4. I understand that the school and all participants in the study will remain anonymous.

Signed: ……..

Date: ……

Place: …….

APPENDIX H: Proof of Editing

Dr Mathobela's Chipmunk Language Editing Service
"Where Professional and Corporate Language matters"

To whom it may concern

Re: Confirmation of Professional Language Editing Service

This is to certify that I, Dr. Moodiela Victor Mathobela (MA, Linguistics, PhD, Higher Education Studies: Linguistics Specialization) language edited **Mr TSHILISANANI MBUVHA's Master's Dissertation/Thesis** entitled:

"THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON GRADE 10 LEARNERS' CREATIVE ESSAYS IN TSHIVENḐA HOME LANGUAGE AT VHUMBEDZI CIRCUIT, VHEMBE EAST DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA"

For further inquiries, please feel free to contact me.

I hope you find the above in order.

Kind regards,

Dr. Moodiela Mathobela
Professional Language Editor
C: 063 073 3135
E: moodiela@yahoo.com
Date: 8 November 2024

APPENDIX I: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

INSTRUMENT NO 1: LEARNERS' SEMI STRUCTURE INTERVIEW QUESTION.

The researcher will ask learners the following questions:

1. By your understanding what is social media and what are the social media platform do you use the most?
2. What do you do most of the time when you have logged into a social media platform? do you follow page that teaches correct grammar usage?
3. Which language do you use on social media?
4. Do you follow grammar rules when texting or writing statuses on social media?
5. What type of language do your peers or friends use on social media to text or share thoughts? Is it a formal or informal language?
6. Is your teacher giving you enough work on essay writing to help you to write language that is social media free?
7. Do you sometimes use social media language or SMS language unconsciously when writing in a formal setting like at school?
8. Are your parents and guardians helping you to limit and manage the usage of social media?
9. According to you is social influencing you positively or negatively when writing school work?

Mbudziso dzine dza do livhiswa kha vhagudi

1. Nga kupfesesele kwaṋu nyandadza mafhungo ndi mini? Hone ni shumisesa siaṱari lifhio la nyandadza mafhungo?
2. Ndi zwifhio zwine na ita tshifhinga tshoṱhe tshine na dzhena kha nyanḓadza mafhungo ni a tevhelela zwithu zwine zwa funza kuṅwalele kwone kwa Tshivenḓa?
3. Ndi lufhio luambo lune na shumisa musi ni kha mbanḓe dza nyanḓadza mafhungo?
4. Vha ya shumisa milayo ya luambo musi vha tshi ṅwala milaedza kha mbanḓe dza nyanḓadza mafhungo?
5. Vha a shimisa luambo lwa fomaḽa kana inifomaḽa musi vha tshi davhidzana na khonani dzavho, luambo ulwo lu a tevhelela na milayo ya luambo kana ndi luambo lusa tevhedzeli milayo na?
6. Mugudisi wanu vha a ni ṉea naa mishumo yau ṅwala maanea na u shumisa luambo lwo teaho vhatshi ṅwala hu u itela uri ni vhe na vhukoni khau ṅwala maanea
7. Zwi a itea na musi vha tshi khou ṅwala mishumo ya tshikolo vha ṅwala nga luambo lwa nyanḓadza mafhungo kana nga nḓila ine vha amba ngayo vha tshi rumela milaedza kha nyandadza mafhungo vha sa zwipfi naa?

8. Vhabebi kana vhaunḓi vhavho vha ya dzhenelela naa kha u lingedza u thusa kushumisele kwavho kwanyanḓadza mafhungo naa?
9. Uya nga ha vheini vhaṋe ni vhona nyandadza mafhungo I khou ni fhaṱa nga nḓila yavhuḓi kana isi ya vavhudi naa musi ni tshi ṅwala maanea a Tshivenḓa Luambo Lwa Hayani?

INSTRUMENT NO. 2: TEACHERS' INTERVIEW SCHEDULE.

1. In your own understanding what is social media?
2. Do you use social media? And which social media platform do you use the most?
3. What is your general experience about learners' form of writing, when they write the Tshivenḓa Home Language in the classroom?
4. Do you experience any writing challenges or problems when assessing learners' written work? If yes, please specify and explain.
5. When assessing social media, we had observed a special writing style, which has deviated from the standard writing of the Tshivenḓa Home Language. If you have experienced such kind of writing, which of the following characteristics did you come across when assessing learners' written work in the classroom?
   Grammatical (syntactic and morphological) deviations

   Spelling deviations

   Punctuation deviations
6. Which methods do you use to develop and encourage grammatical writing in the classroom by learners since they over uses social media?
7. Do you see the influence of social media in learners' essays writing of Tshivenḓa Home Language?
8. When busy with lesson presentation are there learners who focus on their social media rather than lesson presentation?
9. Is social media helpful to learners towards their school work?

INSTRUMENT NO 3. : OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Key focal points:

	Focal point	**Observation notes**
1	Social media posters on classroom walls	
2	Teacher's written instructions, issued out to learners during lesson presentation	
3	Tshivenḓa Home Language Creative essays writing given to learners by the teacher	
4	Use of cell phones in school inside classroom by the learners	
5	Use of cell phones as a reference tool during Tshivenḓa essays writing	
6	Usage of cellphones by learners inside school yard.	

Annexure X: Learners Tshivenda Home Language questions and answers.

1. **Nga kupfesesele kwaṉu nyandadza mafhungo ndi mini? Hone ni shumisesa siaṱari lifhio la nyandadza mafhungo?**

Mugudi A:
“Nyandadza mafhungo ndi mbade dzine kha dzo muthu uya kona u amba na muṅwe a dovha hafhu a senda kana u ṅwala mihumbulo yawe kana kuvhonele kwawe kwa zwithu, a do vha hafhu a amba nga mafhungo awe a vhune, nne kanzhi ndi shumisa Watsapu na Feisibugu”

Mugudi B:
“Nyandadza mafhungo ndi mbande dzo yaho nga u fhambana hafha kha ithanethe dzine dzi a tendela vhathu vha tshi ṅwala nga ha kuvhonele kwavho kwa zwithu na u phadaladza mafhungo na vhaṅwe vhashumisi vhayo. Nne ndi anzela u shumisa Watsapu, Feisibugu na Inistagramu”

Mugudi C:
“Nyandadza mafhungo ndi mbande dzi ne vhathu vha ya kona u amba na vhaṅwe vhathu vha re tsini na kule, I kha divha heneyi nyandzadza mafhungo ri a kona u wana maswa maswa ane a khou itea lifhasini nga u bonya ha ito. Nne ndi ambesa na u konana na vhathu nga Watsapu na Feisibugu”.

Mugudi D:
“Nyandadza mafhungo ndi mbade dza thekhinolodzhi dzi ne a vhathu vha ya kona u amba na vhaṅwe vhathu vha re tsini na kule vha do vha vha vhudza vhathu nga kuvhonele kwavho kwa zwithu, I kha divha heneyi nyandzadza mafhungo ri a kona u wana maswa maswa ane a khou itea lifhasini nga u bonya ha ito. Nne ndi ambesa na u konana na vhathu nga Watsapu na Feisibugu”.

Mugudi E:
“Nga kupfesesele kwanga nyandadza mafhungo ndi fhethu hune vhathu vha ya kona u amba na vhaṅwe vhathu vha re tsini na kule, I kha divha heneyi nyandzadza mafhungo ri a kona u wana maswa maswa ane a khou itea lifhasini nga u bonya ha ito. Nne ndi ambesa na u konana na vhathu nga Watsapu na Feisibugu”.

Mugudi F:
“Nga kupfesesele kwanga nyandadza mafhungo ndi fhethu hune vhathu vha ya kona u amba na vhaṅwe vhathu vha re tsini na kule wa dovha hafhu wa ita khungedzelo ya zwine wa rengisa. Nne ndi ambesa na u konana na vhathu nga Feisibugu”.

Mugudi G:
“Nyandadza mafhungo ndi mbade dzine kha dzo muthu uya kona u amba na muṅwe a dovha hafhu a senda kana u ṅwala mihumbulo yawe kana kuvhonele kwawe kwa zwithu, nne kanzhi ndi shumisa Watsapu”.

Mugudi H:
“Nga kupfesesele kwanga nyandadza mafhungo ndi fhethu hune vhathu vha ya kona u amba na vhaṅwe vhathu vha re tsini na kule. Nne ndi ambesa na u konana na vhathu nga Watsapu”.

Mugudi I:
“Nyandadza mafhungo ndi masiaṱari ane a ya tendela vhashumisi vhao vha tshi sendelana, u amba na u konana henefha khao. Nne kanzhi ndi shumisa Watsapu na Feisibugu”

2. **Ndi zwifhio zwine na ita tshifhinga tshoṱhe tshine na dzhena kha nyanḓadza mafhungo ni a tevhelela zwithu zwine zwa funza kuṅwalele kwone kwa Tshivenḓa?**

Mugudi A:
“Ndi soko amba henefha kha zwileludzi zwavhudavhidzani na dzi khonani dzashu, u shavha hone u borea. Ri vhudzisana uri hu khou iteani mahayani avho, ra dovha hafhu ra sendelana mabammbiri a dzi mbudziso a tshikolo arali a hone ra kona u thusana nga tshashu henefha kha zwileludzi zwavhudavhidzani. U to amba ngoho nne a thi tevheleli masiaṱari a funza nga ha kuṅwalele kwone kwone”.

Mugudi B:
“Ndi shumisa zwileludzi zwavhudavhidzani musi ndi tshi amba na dzikhonani dzanga. Ri dovha hafhu ra di talutshedza kha vhathu uri vhathu vha u divhe. Ri dovha hafhu ra shumisa nyandadza mafhungo u di borolosa na u bvisa vhuludu. Ee ndi a tevhelela masiaṱari a no funza nga kuṅwalele kwone kwa luambo”.

Mugudi C:
“Musi ndi kha nyandadza mafhungo dzi ne nda anzela u dzi shumisa Feisibugu na Watsapu ndi fhindula milaedza ine nda vha ndo sendeliwa nda dovha hafhu nda sedza zwine vhaṅwe vha khou zwinambatedza kha masiaṱari a vho hunga vha milaedza kana zwinepe. Nne u to amba ngoho a thitevheleli masiaṱari ano funzwa kuṅwalele kwone kwa luambo”.

Mugudi D:
“Nne ndi sendela dzithama dzanga milaedza nda vha founela nda dovha hafhu nda vhala zwine thama dzanga dzo nambatedza kha masiaṱari avho a

nyandadza mafhungo. Nne u to amba ngoho a thitevheleli masiaṱari ano funzwa kuṅwalele kwone kwa luambo”.

Mugudi E:
“Ndi soko amba henefha kha zwileludzi zwavhudavhidzani na dzi khonani dzashu, u shavha hone u borea. Ri vhudzisana uri hu khou iteani mahayani avho, ra dovha hafhu ra sendelana mabammbiri a dzi mbudziso a tshikolo arali a hone ra kona u thusana nga tshashu henefha kha zwileludzi zwavhudavhidzani. U to amba ngoho nne a thi tevheleli masiaṱari a funza nga ha kuṅwalele kwone kwone”.

Mugudi F:
“Tshifhinga tshinzhi ndi tshi dzhena kha nyandadza mafhungo ndi amba na dzithama dzanga ra sendelana zwinepe zwine ndo zwi foda kana ndo fodiwa asi kale, nda dovha hafhu nda talelela dzi vidio. U to amba ngoho nne ndi a tevhelela masiaṱari a funza nga ha kuṅwalele kwone kwone”.

Mugudi G:
“Nne ndi muthu wau di funela ẓi mvumvusa, musi ndo dzhena kha masiaṱari anga a nyandadza mafhungo ndii tevhelela vhaimbi vha ne nda vha takalela na u talela dzi vidio dza vho ramitambo. nne a thi tevheleli masiaṱari a funza nga ha kuṅwalele kwone kwone”.

Mugudi H:
“Nne ndi tshi dzhena hafha kha masiaṱari anga a nyandadza mafhungo ndi di talelela vidio dza u seisanda amba na mashaka na dzi khonani dzanga dza ngei tshikoloni. Ee ndi a tevhelela masiaṱari a u funza nga ha luambo, luambo lwa luisimane ndi khou luguda zwavhudi henefha”.

Mugudi I:
“Ndi soko dzhena nda sedza maswa maswa ane a khou bvelela lifhasini nda dovha hafhu nda sedza maswa maswa a zwa mitambo. U to amba ngoho nne a thi tevheleli masiaṱari a funza nga ha kuṅwalele kwone kwone”.

3. **Ndi lufhio luambo lune na shumisa musi ni kha mbanḓe dza nyanḓadza mafhungo?**

Mugudi A:
“Ndi amba na mashaka anga na vhahashu nga luambo lwa ḓamuni sa izwi vhabebi vha sa pfesesi zwa Luisimane, fhedzi ha musi ndi tshi amba na thama dzanga ndi shumisa Luambo lwa Luisimane, luambo ulu lu ita uri ri ambe zwavhudi musi ndi tshi khou amba na thama dzanga”.

Mugudi B:

“Nne ndi shumisa luambo lwo teaho lwau ṅwala kha mbande dza zwileludzi zwavhudavhidzani”.

Mugudi C:
“Nne ndi shumisa luamba lwa Tshivenda na English kha mbande dza zwileludzi zwavhudavhidzani”.

Mugudi D:
“Nne ndi shumisa luambo lwo ṱanganaho Tshivenda na Luisimane”

Mugudi E:
“Nne tshifhinga tshothe ndi shumisa Tshivenda na Luisimani”

Mugudi F:
“Nne ndi shumisa luamba lwa Tshivenda na English kha mbade dza zwileludzi zwavhudavhidzani”

Mugudi G:
“Nne ndi shumisa luamba lwa English fhedzi kha mbade dza zwileludzi zwavhudavhidzani”

Mugudi H:
“Nne ndi shumisa luambo lwa Tshivenda fhedzi musi ndi kha mbande idzi thi todi u shumisa dziṅwe nyambo”.

Mugudi I:
“Nne ndi shumisa English kha mbade dza zwileludzi zwavhudavhidzani fhedzi ha ndi tshi amba na mashaka anga na vhahashu ndi a shumisa luambo lwa Tshivenda”

4. Vha ya shumisa milayo ya luambo musi vha tshi ṅwala milaedza kha mbanḓe dza nyanḓadza mafhungo?

Mugudi A:
“Nne a thi tevheleli milayo ya luambo musi ndi tshi ṅwala kha zwileludzi zwa vhudavhidzani”

Mugudi B:
“Hai a thi tevheleli milayo ya luambo, madzuloni a u ṅwala vhathu ndi a di ṅwalela vha2 ndi tshi ṅwala uri Tshikovhi nda ṅwala chikobi. Ri soko ṅwala nga ndila ine rapfesesanana ngayo na vhaṅwe vhaswa”.

Mugudi C:

“Ndi a tevehelela milayo ya luambo musi ndi tshi shumisa mbande dza nyandadza mafhungo, tshiṅwe tshifhinga thi tevheleli milayo ya luambo musi ndi khou ṅwala ndi tshiitela u vhulunga tshifhinga sa izwi mitaladzi ya musi u khou tevhelela milayo ya luambo ivha yo lapfa”.

Mugudi D:
“Nne ndi soko ṅwala hafha kha mbande dza nyandadza mafhungo hu tenda ane nda khou muṅwalela mulaedza a pfesesa, a thi sedzi na mupeleto uri ndi wone kana asi wone, maṅwe a maipfi aya itiwa mapfufhi ha fhira na maṅwe maipfi”.

Mugudi E:
“Nn̰e ndi shumisa ndila kwayo ya kuṅwalele”.

Mugudi F:
“U to amba ngoho nne ndi a digeda musi ndi tshiṅwala hafha kha mbande dza nyandadza mafhungo thi sedzi milayo ya luambo sa izwi nyandadza mafhungo I tshi tutuwedza luambo lu sa tevheleli milayo”

Mugudi G:
“Ndi a tevehelela milayo ya luambo musi ndi tshi shumisa mbande dza nyandadza mafhungo, tshiṅwe tshifhinga thi tevheleli milayo ya luambo musi ndi khou ṅwala ndi tshiitela u vhulunga tshifhinga sa izwi mitaladzi ya musi u khou tevhelela milayo ya luambo ivha yo lapfa”.

Mugudi H:
“Nne ndi soko ṅwala hafha kha mbande dza nyandadza mafhungo hu tenda ane nda khou muṅwalela mulaedza a pfesesa, a thi sedzi na mupeleto uri ndi wone kana asi wone, maṅwe a maipfi aya itiwa mapfufhi ha fhira na maṅwe maipfi”.

Mugudi I:
“Hai a thi tevheleli milayo ya luambo. Ri soko ṅwala nga ndila ine rapfesesanana ngayo na vhaṅwe vhaswa. Tshiṅwe tshifhinga ndi a shumisa luambo lu sa tanganedzei vhathuni”.

5. **Vha a shimisa luambo lwa fomaḽa kana inifomaḽa musi vha tshi davhidzana na khonani dzavho, luambo ulwo lu a tevhelela na milayo ya luambo kana ndi luambo lusa tevhedzeli milayo na?**

Mugudi A:
“Nne ndi a shumisa luambo lwa fomala nda dovha hafhu nda shumisa luambo lu sa tevhedzeli milayo zwi tshi bva na kha uri ane nda khou amba nae ndi nnyi, hu thangana murole ingaho nne ria ita ri tshi amba na matamba”.

Mugudi B:
“Kanzhi ndi shumisa luambo lu sa tevheleli milayo hafha kha nyandadza mafhungo ngauri rine vha shimisi vha nyandadza mafhungo ri a lupfesesa ngau tavhanya luambo lwa hone”.

Mugudi C:
“Nne ndi a shumisa luambo lwa fomala nda dovha hafhu nda shumisa luambo lu sa tevhedzeli milayo zwi tshi bva na kha uri ane nda khou amba nae ndi nnyi, hu thangana murole ingaho nne ria ita ri tshi amba na matamba”.

Mugudi D:
“Nne na thama dzanga ri shumisa luambo lu sa tevheleli milayo ya luambo, ri ita izwi uri nyambedzano yashu ivhe pfufhi na maipfi ri na maipfi an era a shumisa ane asi a vhukuma ndi a luambo lwa nyandadza mafhungo”.

Mugudi E:
“Zwine ndo no zwivhona hafha kha mbande dza nyandadza mafhungo musi rine thangana murole ri tshi rumelana milaedza, ri a tukufhadza na u mila maṅwe a maipfi ra dovha hafhu ra ṅwala nga ndila I songo fanelaho”.

Mugudi F:
“Nne ndi shumisa Luisamane lwa henefha kha nyandadza mafhungo, Luisimane lwa hone lwo dala maipfi a songo ṅwalwaho a fhelela”.

Mugudi G:
“Nne ndi shumisa luambo lwa tshitaratani lu ne ndi luambo lu sa tevhedzeli milayo”.

Mugudi H:
“Musi ndi khou haseledza na khonani dzanga hafha kha nyandadza mafhungo ndi shumisa luambo lwa luisimane na lwa hayani lwa Tshivenda. Nne ndi khetha u ṅwala nga ndila yone yone ino tevhedzela milayo ya luambo”.

Mugudi I:
“Kanzhi ndi shumisa luambo lu sa tevheleli milayo hafha kha nyandadza mafhungo ngauri rine vha shimisi vha nyandadza mafhungo ri a lupfesesa ngau tavhanya luambo lwa hone”.

6. **Mugudisi wanu vha a ni n̰ea naa mishumo yau ṅwala maanea na u shumisa luambo lwo teaho vhatshi ṅwala hu u itela uri ni vhe na vhukoni khau ṅwala maanea**

Mugudi A:
“Ee, mugudisi wanga vha khou lingedza nga ndila dzothe u rifha mishumo ya maanea vhege nga vhege u lingedza u lwa nau thivhela u shumisa luambo lu ne ra lu guda kha nyandadza mafhungo”

Mugudi B:
“Ee, u to amba ngoho mugudisi washu vha khou lingedza nga ndila dzothe u fhelisa thaidzo ine rine vhagudi ra vha nayo ya u shumisesa luambo lwa nyandadza mafhungo musi ri tshi ṅwala maanea”.

Mugudi C:
“Ee, mugudisi washu vha ya rifha maanea manzhi uri ri ṅwale vha do vha hafhu vha tutuwedza uri ri korekelane nga tshashu ri tshi sumbedzana vhukhakhi”.

Mugudi D:
“Ee, u to amba ngoho mugudisi washu vha khou lingedza nga ndila dzothe u fhelisa thaidzo ine rine vhagudi ra vha nayo ya u shumisesa luambo lwa nyandadza mafhungo musi ri tshi ṅwala maanea”.

Mugudi E:
“Ee, vhege iṅwe na iṅwe ri a ṅwala mbudziso ya maanea kha bugu dzashu dza ndowedzo, vha do vha hafhu vha ri fha tshuṅwahaya. Mugudisi washu vha khou ita zwofanelaho uri vhagudi vha kone u ṅwala nga ndila yone”.

Mugudi F:
“Ee, mugudisi washu vha ya rifha maanea manzhi uri ri ṅwale vha do vha hafhu vha tutuwedza uri ri korekelane nga tshashu ri tshi sumbedzana vhukhakhi”

Mugudi G:
“Ee, vhaṅwe vhashu u khwinisa ndila ya kuṅwalele mugudisi vha khou ri thusa uri ri tane dzi mpho dza shu dzo dzumbamaho”.

Mugudi H:
“Ee, maduvha mavhili a vhege iṅwe na iṅwe ri a ṅwala mbudziso ya maanea kha bugu dzashu dza ndowedzo. Mugudisi washu vha khou ita zwofanelaho uri vhagudi vha kone u ṅwala nga ndila yone”.

Mugudi I:
“Ee, mugudisi washu u khou ita zwothe zwo fanelaho u thusa nne na vhaṅwe vhagusiwa sa nne”

7. **Zwi a itea na musi vha tshi khou ṅwala mishumo ya tshikolo vha ṅwala nga luambo lwa nyanḓadza mafhungo kana nga nḓila ine vha amba ngayo vha tshi rumela milaedza kha nyandadza mafhungo vha sa zwipfi naa?**

Mugudi A:
“Ee, ndi a ita ndi tshi hangwa ipfi lo fanelaho nda shumisa ipfi line nda shumisa kha Feisibugu na Watsapu. Ndi vhona u nga mihumbulo yashu yo no dowela u

ńwala nga ndila ine ra ńwala ngayo kha nyandadza mafhungo zwine a si zwavhudi na luthihi".

Mugudi B:
"U to amba ngoho nne luambo lwa nyandadza mafhungo khan ne lu sala haningei a thi lu shumisi kha zwithu zwanga zwa tshikolo, ndi ńwala nga ndila yo teaho ya luambo lwa fomala uri maraga dzanga dzi sa fhungudziwe. Ndi a dovha hafhu nda ri I zwi ndo fhedza u ńwala nda vhalulula mushumo wanga u itela u sedza uri a hu na na he nda ita thidza".

Mugudi C:
"Nyandadza mafhungo I khou kwashekanya ngauri ndi ńwala maipfi a si one ane ha todei kha mushumo wa tshikolo zwa ita uri ndi wane maraga dza fhasi fhasi. Mugudisi wanga uya fhungudza maraga arali u sa khou ńwalisa zwone zwi no todea, vha ya ri fha maanea uri ri ńwale nga Tshivenda vha dovha hafhu vha rifha na tshivhalo tsha maipfi na tshifhinga tshine wa tea u fhedza nga tsho fhedzi ha nga u vhona tshifhinga na mapa wa muhumbulo u ne nda vha ndo u ńwala fhasi ndi a guma ndi tshi shumisa luambo lwa nyandadza mafhungo uri ndi fhedze zwa ita uri maraga dzanga dzi mbure dzivhe thukhu".

Mugudi D:
"Hai, nne ndi shumisa luambo lwo ne lwo teaho lwa fomala musi ndi tshi ńwala mishumo yanga ya tshikolo"

Mugudi E:

"Zwi to bva khauri muthu ene mune u shumisisa hani nyandadza mafhungo, arali u tshi twesa kha nyandadza mafhungo na mińwalo yau ido vhonala uri yo tutuwedzea nga nyandadza mafhungo, arali u sa I shumisesi na luambo lwau lu do kuna lwavha lwa vhudi".

Mugudi F:
"U to amba ngoho nyandadza mafhungo kha nne a yo ngo godombela, ndi a dzhiela ntha nga maanda milayo ya luambo musi ndi tshi ńwala mishumo ya tshikolo"

Mugudi G:
"U to amba ngoho nne ndi tshi ńwala mishumo ya tshikolo ndi ńwala nga ndila ine nda ńwala ngayo kha nyandadza mafhungo , ngoho ngoho nyandadza mafhungo I khou mbulaya nne na vhańwe vhaswa nga nne ngauri a ri tsha divha phambano ya luambo lwa fomala na lusi fomala".

Mugudi H:

“Nne a thi tsha divha phambani vhukatini ha luambo lwa fomala lune lwa todea musi muthu a khou ṅwala mishumo ya tshikolo na luambo lwa inifomala. Nne ndi tshi ṅwala na mishumo ya tshikolo ndi ṅwala unga ndi khou ṅwala kha Feisibugu”

Mugudi I:

“U to amba ngoho nyandadza mafhungo kha nne a yo ngo godombela, ndi a dzhiela ntha nga maanda milayo ya luambo musi ndi tshi ṅwala mishumo ya tshikolo”

8. **Vhabebi kana vhaunḓi vhavho vha ya dzhenelela naa kha u lingedza u thusa kushumisele kwavho kwanyanḓadza mafhungo naa?**

Mugudi A:
“Vhabebi vha khou lingedza nga ndila dzothe u ri thusa uri ri shumise nyandadza mafhungo nga ndila yo linganelaho sa izwi vho tsivhudzwa nga vhadededzi uri vhana vha vho vha khou shumisesa nyandadza mafhungonga ndila yo kalulaho zwa ita uri vha wane maraga thukhu”.

Mugudi B:
“Ee, nne thin go tendeliwa u shumisa lutingo ya vhuya ya fhira awara ya sumbe nga madekwana. Ya vhuya ya tshaya iri ya sumbe madekwana ndi a thoma u vhala bugu dzanga lutingo lwo vheiwa kule”.

Mugudi C:
“Hai, vhavevi vhanga ndi vhahulwane a vha divhi tshithu nga tekhinolodzhi”

Mugudi D:
“Ee ngauri vhaya ntsivhudza nauri ndi vule mato ndi dzhiele ntha tshifhinga tshi ne ndo neiwa uri ndi ite zwa nyandadza mafhungo”.

Mugudi E:
“Ee, vha ya nthusa ngauri vha ya ntsimela vhutamani ha inthanethe u itela uri nda sa kone u tamba kana u dzhena kha nyandadza mafhungo”.

Mugudi F:
“Hai, nne vhabebi vhanga a vha na ndavha na zwithu zwa tshikolo, ndi shumisa nyandadza mafhungo nga nine nda funa”.

Mugudi G:
“Nne ndi dzula na makhulu wanga vha ne vho no divha muthu wa maduvha, ahuna a no thivhela kana u langa kutambele kwanga kwa nyandadza mafhungo”.

Mugudi H:

“Vhaundi vhanga ndi khaladzi dzanga khulwane vhane ha vho vhathu vha khou dzhena tshikolo nga Unisa a vha na tshifhinga tsha sedzana nanne nau nthivhela u shumisa nyandadza mafhungo”

Mugudi I:

“Vhabebi vhanga vha dzula ngei tshikhuwani, ndi ita zwine nda funa sa izwi ndi tshi dzula na khaladzi na mukomana wanga”

9. Uya nga ha vheini vhaṋe ni vhona nyandadza mafhungo I khou ni fhaṱa nga nḓila yavhuḓi kana isi ya vavhudi naa musi ni tshi ṅwala maanea a Tshivenḓa Luambo Lwa Hayani?

Mugudi A:
“Nne nyandadza mafhungo I khou tutuwedza zwavhudi ngauri ndi a kona u amba na vhaṅwe vhagudi sa nne ndi siho tsini na vho nda dovha hafhu nda kona u amba na vhagudisi vhanga musi ndi hayani”.

Mugudi B:
“Nne nyandadza mafhungo I khou tutuwedza zwavhudi ngauri ndi a wana mafhungo manzhi khayo ndi a thusalea na kha mafhungo a tshikolo”.

Mugudi C:
“Nne nyandadza mafhungo ina thuthuwedzo mmbi kha nne ngauri iya nthithisa kha zwa tshikolo, ndi fhedzesa tshifhinga tshinzhi kha mbade idzi”.

Mugudi D:
“Nne nyandadza mafhungo I khou tutuwedza zwavhudi ngauri ndi a wana mafhungo manzhi khayo”.

Mugudi E:
“Kha nne ina thuthuwedzo yavhudi ngauri nyandadza mafhungo ina tshiṅwe na tshiṅwe., hu tshikatelwa na zwine zwavhudziswa tshikoloni zwia vhudziswa na kha nyandadza mafhungo”.

Mugudi F:
“Kha nne nyandadza mafhungo ina thuthuwedzo yavhudi nga maanda ngauri tshifhinga tshothe musi ndi na tshuṅwahaya kana asaimenthe ine I khou nkondela u talukanya ndi a dzhena kha nyandadza mafhungo nda toda dzi thalutshedzo”.

Mugudi G:

“Uya nga ha nne nyandadza mafhungo iya tutuwedza lwa u vhuedza tshiṅwe tshifhinga lusa vhuedzi, kha sia lau vhuedza iya mpha mafhungo mazhi na ndila

dza u ṅwala dzo ya ho nga u fhambana. Fhedzi ha nyandadza mafhungo iya dovha hafhu ya tutuwedza uri muthu a shumise luambo lusili lu sa tanganedziwiho kha maṅwalo a tshikolo a fomala".

Mugudi H:

"Nyandadza mafhungo I khou nthusa nga maanda musi ndi tshi ṅwala dzi phurojekithi dza tshikolo na dzi tshuṅwahaya dzanga".

Mugudi I:

"Nyandadza mafhungo I khou thusa nga maanda kha sia la zwatshikolo, ndi a kona u wana thuso nau swikelela zwatshikolo".