IQRO JURNALI , IQRO JOURNAL, ИКРО ЖУРНАЛИ
ISSN:2181-4341| wordlyknowledge.uz/index.php/iqro
Volume 22 Issue 01 IYUN 2026

WRITING FOR DIGITAL PLATFORMS:NEW CHALLENGES FOR EFL LEARNERS

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Abstract: The rapid expansion of digital technologies has significantly transformed the way people communicate and write. Social media platforms, blogs, websites, online forums, and other digital environments have created new forms of written communication that differ considerably from traditional academic writing. As a result, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners are required to develop new writing competencies that meet the demands of digital communication. This study explores the challenges and opportunities associated with writing for digital platforms among EFL learners. Digital writing involves not only linguistic competence but also the ability to adapt content to different online audiences, purposes, and formats. Learners must understand how to produce concise, engaging, and audience-oriented texts while maintaining grammatical accuracy and coherence. Furthermore, digital platforms often encourage multimodal communication through the integration of text, images, videos, hyperlinks, and interactive elements. Consequently, students need to acquire both writing skills and digital literacy to communicate effectively in online environments. This study reviews existing literature on digital writing and language learning to identify the major challenges faced by EFL learners. The findings indicate that students often struggle with balancing informal and formal language, maintaining academic standards in digital contexts, and evaluating the credibility of online information sources. Additionally, issues related to digital literacy, audience awareness, and technological competence may affect the quality of students' written production. Despite these challenges, digital platforms provide valuable opportunities for authentic communication, collaboration, and increased writing practice. Online environments enable learners to interact with global audiences, receive immediate feedback, and develop practical communication skills relevant to the twenty-first century. The study concludes that educators should integrate digital writing activities into language instruction to prepare students for contemporary communication demands. By fostering both writing competence and digital literacy, teachers can help learners become effective communicators in an increasingly digital world.

Keywords: Digital writing, EFL learners, digital literacy, online communication, writing skills, social media, academic writing, educational technology.

Introduction: The digital revolution has transformed communication practices across the world. With the widespread use of social media, blogs, online forums, websites, and learning management systems, writing has become one of the most essential skills in the digital age. Unlike traditional forms of writing, digital writing requires learners to adapt their language, style, and content to various online platforms and audiences. Consequently, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners face new opportunities as well as challenges in developing effective writing skills for digital environments. Digital platforms have created authentic contexts in which students can communicate with global audiences. However, successful participation in online communication requires more than grammatical knowledge. Learners must understand audience expectations, digital etiquette, multimodal communication, and information literacy. Therefore, writing instruction should address both linguistic competence and digital literacy. This article explores the challenges EFL learners encounter when writing for digital platforms and discusses strategies that can help students develop the skills necessary for effective digital

communication. Digital writing has become an important area of research in language education. According to Warschauer (2010), technology has fundamentally changed literacy practices by expanding opportunities for communication and collaboration. Learners are now expected to produce texts in various digital formats, including emails, blogs, social media posts, online discussions, and multimedia presentations. Researchers emphasize that digital literacy involves the ability to access, evaluate, create, and communicate information through digital technologies. Gilster (1997) defines digital literacy as the capacity to understand and use information from multiple digital sources. In language learning contexts, digital literacy supports students in developing both technical and communicative competencies. Previous studies have shown that online writing activities increase student motivation and provide authentic opportunities for language use.

However, researchers also note that digital communication presents unique challenges related to language accuracy, audience awareness, and information credibility. One of the major challenges faced by EFL learners is distinguishing between formal and informal writing styles. Social media platforms often encourage abbreviated language, emojis, and informal expressions. As a result, students may transfer these habits into academic writing, negatively affecting language accuracy and professionalism. Digital platforms connect writers with diverse audiences. Students must learn how to adapt their writing according to the needs, interests, and expectations of readers. Failure to consider audience characteristics may reduce the effectiveness of communication. The internet provides access to vast amounts of information. However, not all online sources are reliable. EFL learners often struggle to evaluate the credibility of digital content and may unintentionally use inaccurate or misleading information in their writing. Effective digital writing requires technological competence. Students must learn how to use digital tools, manage online resources, create multimedia content, and navigate digital environments.

Limited digital literacy skills can hinder successful communication. The speed of online communication often encourages learners to prioritize efficiency over accuracy. Consequently, grammatical errors, spelling mistakes, and inappropriate vocabulary choices may become more frequent in digital writing contexts. Despite these challenges, digital platforms offer numerous educational benefits. Digital environments allow students to interact with real audiences beyond the classroom. This authenticity increases motivation and encourages meaningful language use. Online communication provides learners with regular opportunities to write. Frequent writing practice contributes to the development of fluency, vocabulary, and overall writing competence. Digital platforms facilitate collaboration among students. Learners can share ideas, review each other’s work, and receive immediate feedback from peers and instructors. Such interactions support continuous improvement.

Digital writing often combines text, images, audio, video, and hyperlinks. Through these activities, students develop multimodal literacy skills that are increasingly important in contemporary communication. The internet enables learners to communicate with individuals from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This exposure promotes intercultural competence and enhances communication skills. This study employs a qualitative research approach based on a review of existing literature related to digital writing and EFL education. Academic journals, books, and research reports were analyzed to identify common challenges and opportunities associated with writing for digital platforms. Relevant findings were synthesized to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic. The analysis demonstrates that digital writing significantly influences language learning. Students who participate in online writing activities generally show higher levels of engagement and motivation. Digital platforms create authentic communication opportunities that encourage learners to apply language skills in meaningful contexts. However, the findings also indicate that many EFL learners struggle with

digital literacy, audience awareness, and maintaining academic standards in online environments. These challenges highlight the need for instructional approaches that integrate language learning with digital competence development. Teachers play a critical role in guiding students toward effective digital communication practices. Writing instruction should include activities that promote critical thinking, source evaluation, audience analysis, and responsible digital citizenship. Furthermore, educational institutions should provide access to technological resources and training programs that support digital literacy development.

Conclusion: The growing importance of digital communication has transformed the nature of writing in language education. EFL learners must develop not only traditional writing skills but also digital literacy competencies that enable them to communicate effectively across various online platforms. Although digital writing presents challenges related to language accuracy, information evaluation, and technological competence, it also offers valuable opportunities for authentic communication, collaboration, and skill development. By integrating digital writing activities into language instruction, educators can better prepare students for the demands of the twenty-first-century communication landscape. Future research should investigate the long-term effects of digital writing practices on language proficiency and explore innovative teaching strategies that support both writing competence and digital literacy.

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