

Social Media Vernacular and Literacy Skills of Students

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between social media vernacular and the literacy skills of Grade 12 students. Specifically, it determined the level of social media vernacular usage in terms of oral communication, formal communication, and technical writing, as well as the level of students' literacy skills in spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. It also investigated the relationship between social media vernacular usage and students' literacy skills and its influence on students' literacy development. The findings served as the basis for the development of a vocabulary-based learning material intended to enhance students' literacy skills. The study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design. The respondents were Grade 12 students from strands A and B, selected through a stratified random sampling technique to ensure proportional representation of the participants. Data were gathered using a validated questionnaire and literacy assessment tests. Statistical tools such as weighted mean, mean, standard deviation, proficiency-level metrics, Pearson r , and coefficient of determination (r^2) were used to analyze the data, while the vocabulary-based learning material was developed using the Modified ADDIE Model. The conclusions revealed that students moderately used social media vernacular and were rated as approaching proficiency in literacy skills, particularly in vocabulary and reading comprehension. Moreover, social media vernacular showed only a very weak to low influence on students' literacy skills. Based on the findings, a vocabulary-based learning material aligned with the DepEd MELCs was developed as a recommended instructional tool to support students' literacy development.

Keywords: Social Media Vernacular, Literacy Skills, Oral Communication, Formal Communication, Technical Writing.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

In today's digital age, students are constantly exposed to social media, where communication is often expressed through abbreviations, slang, emojis, and other forms of informal language known as social media vernacular. This type of communication allows users to express ideas quickly, creatively, and in a more relaxed manner. However, its widespread use raises concerns about its possible influence on students' literacy skills, especially in formal academic writing. As a result, questions arise regarding whether frequent exposure to such language strengthens or weakens students' ability to use standard English conventions.

Despite the growing presence of social media in students' daily lives, there is still a need to better understand how this exposure shapes their literacy development. Some studies suggest that social media enhances creativity, engagement, and linguistic flexibility among learners. On the other hand, other

perspectives argue that it may negatively affect students' adherence to proper grammar, spelling, and formal writing structures. This study is grounded in the idea that both perspectives may hold truth, but empirical evidence is needed to determine the actual relationship between social media vernacular and literacy skills.

Language continuously evolves as society changes, especially with the rapid development of digital technology and communication platforms. In recent years, social media has become an essential part of students' daily lives, serving as a space for interaction, information sharing, and self-expression. Through these platforms, students frequently use informal language such as abbreviations, acronyms, emojis, and shortened expressions collectively known as social media vernacular. From memes to hashtags, these language forms reflect cultural trends and spread rapidly across different online communities. Understanding how this digital language develops and spreads can provide deeper insights into society, identity, and modern communication practices. As a language teacher, the researcher believes that addiction to social media lessens the attention span of students inside the classroom and affects their language development. This study also aims to uncover how in particular social media vernacular helps in bridging the communication gap in their academic performance. Through this study, it hopes to contribute to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) or Quality Education which states:

Sec. 3 To accelerate Goal 4, countries must prioritize inclusive policies and financing that simultaneously address access, learning and equity. This includes scaling up quality early childhood education, enforcing legal guarantees for free and compulsory education, closing digital and infrastructure gaps – especially in LDCs – and expanding lifelong learning opportunities for adults and marginalized populations.

Every language and generation have slang, colloquial terms, or words with distinct uses. Often hear these slang words on the street before when the internet was just a mere concept. Long gone are the days when *gigil* and other uniquely Filipino words were considered “untranslatable” to English. The latest update from the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) includes several Filipino terms—proof that the exchange goes both ways: English influences us, but we're influencing English too. *Gigil's* global debut even made headlines in *The New York Times* and BBC, alongside other cultural staples like *lumpia*, *sando*, and *videoke*. Beyond these cultural exports, some entries reflect how English words take on new lives in the Philippines.

As a guiding principle to this study, the researcher adheres to the pronouncements in Section 7 of Article XIV, Section 7 of the Philippine Constitution provides that for purposes of communication and instruction, the official languages of the Philippines are Filipino and, until otherwise provided by law, English. The provision in the 1987 Constitution regarding the use of the English language was further enhanced and strengthened by then President Arroyo in her Executive Order 210 dated May 17, 2003. Section 1 of Executive Order 210 states that:

“The English language shall be used as the primary medium of instruction in all public and private institutions of learning in the secondary level, including those established as laboratory and/or experimental schools, and non-formal and vocational or technical educational institutions. As the primary medium of instruction, the percentage of time allotment for learning areas conducted in the English language is expected to be not less than seventy percent (70%) of the total time allotment for all learning areas in the secondary level.”

The reviewed literature and studies collectively established that social media vernacular had become a significant influence on students' communication practices and literacy development. Scholars such as

Baron (2017), Crystal (2018), Lee (2017), and Androutsopoulos (2018) consistently emphasized that digital communication reshaped language use by encouraging abbreviations, slang, code-switching, and multimodal forms of expression. These studies agreed that online discourse promoted linguistic flexibility and informality, particularly in oral and interpersonal communication. However, while these authors generally viewed digital language as an evolving communicative practice, they differed in their perspectives regarding its academic implications, with some highlighting its adaptive and expressive benefits while others cautioned against its possible effects on formal literacy skills.

In relation to literacy development, the reviewed studies revealed contrasting views regarding the effects of social media vernacular on students' academic language proficiency. Studies by Nation (2019), Webb (2020), and Schmitt (2017) emphasized that repeated exposure to language in meaningful contexts enhanced vocabulary acquisition and comprehension skills. Similarly, Snowling and Hulme (2021) and Duke and Cartwright (2021) stressed that reading comprehension developed through continuous interaction with language and contextual understanding, which digital environments may have supported. In contrast, Graham and Santangelo (2017), Treiman (2018), and Apel (2019) argued that literacy skills such as spelling required systematic instruction and reinforcement because informal digital communication could weaken orthographic accuracy and adherence to standard writing conventions. These contrasting findings suggested that while social media vernacular may have strengthened receptive literacy skills such as vocabulary and comprehension, it may have simultaneously challenged productive skills like spelling and formal writing accuracy.

The reviewed empirical studies further demonstrated mixed findings regarding the relationship between social media usage and academic communication. Asare and Adansi (2022) concluded that social media influenced students' individual writing practices through the use of abbreviations, clipping, and slang expressions, although collaborative academic tasks lessened these effects. Similarly, Ahmed and Hassan (2020) and Khan (2021) found that frequent engagement in online communication encouraged the transfer of informal language features into academic writing. Conversely, Jeresano and Carretero (2023) argued that Gen Z slang enhanced communication confidence, fluency, and interpersonal interaction despite its potential negative effect on formal writing. Ricaforte (2022) also emphasized that cyber slang did not entirely diminish literacy skills because students remained capable of adapting to academic conventions depending on context. These differences implied that the influence of social media vernacular was neither entirely detrimental nor entirely beneficial, but rather dependent on how students regulated language use across communication settings.

Although numerous studies had explored digital language and literacy, gaps remained in understanding how social media vernacular specifically related to students' literacy skills across oral communication, formal communication, and technical writing within the Philippine senior high school context. Most existing studies focused either on general writing behavior or isolated literacy skills without examining the combined relationship among spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. Furthermore, previous literature often emphasized either the positive communicative benefits or the negative academic consequences of digital language without providing a balanced analysis of both dimensions.

The study was conducted at Quipayo National High School due to observable challenges in students' literacy skills, particularly in spelling accuracy, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension. Teachers have noted that many students frequently incorporate informal social media language into their written academic tasks, which affects the quality of their formal writing. The increasing exposure of learners to digital platforms has also led to the use of slang, abbreviations, and non-standard expressions

even in classroom outputs. These issues highlight a gap in students' ability to distinguish between informal online communication and academic language requirements.

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to understanding how social media vernacular influences students' literacy skills, particularly in spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. It provides valuable insights for educators in identifying both the positive and negative effects of students' exposure to informal digital language on their academic performance. The findings may guide the development of appropriate instructional strategies and vocabulary-based learning materials to strengthen students' formal language use. Ultimately, this study supports efforts to improve students' overall literacy development while addressing the challenges posed by social media language practices.

However, while existing studies have explored language exposure and literacy development, limited research has specifically examined how social media vernacular relates to students' literacy skills within the context of senior high school learners. Many studies focus primarily on general digital communication or language learning, leaving a gap in understanding how informal online language practices interact with specific literacy components such as spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension in academic settings.

To address this gap, the present study uniquely investigates the relationship between social media vernacular usage and the literacy skills of Grade 12 students, particularly in terms of oral communication, formal communication, and technical writing. Furthermore, the study goes beyond examining relationships by developing a vocabulary-based learning material aimed at strengthening students' literacy skills in academic contexts. Through this approach, the study provides both empirical evidence and a practical instructional intervention that may help educators better respond to the evolving language practices of students in the digital age. The findings will help students understand language evolution and develop cultural and linguistic competence while providing teachers, school leaders, and parents with insights for improving instructional strategies, literacy programs, and home-school collaboration. Moreover, the results may guide schools, curriculum developers, and DepEd officials in crafting relevant policies and curricula and serve as a valuable reference for future researchers on digital language use and literacy development.

Research Objectives

This study determined the influence of social media vernacular on the literacy skills of Grade 12 students and served as a basis in crafting a vocabulary-based learning material at Quipayo National High School, Calabanga District, Division of Camarines Sur. Specifically, the study achieved the following:

1. To determine the level of social media vernacular usage as perceived by the students in terms of oral communication, formal communication, and technical writing.
2. To assess the level of students' literacy skills in terms of spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension.
3. To examine the significant relationship between the level of social media vernacular usage and the literacy skills of the students.
4. To evaluate the extent of influence of social media vernacular usage on the literacy skills of the students.
5. To develop a vocabulary-based learning material intended to enhance the literacy skills of the students.

Scope and Delimitations

This study focused on determining the influence of social media vernacular on the literacy skills of Grade 12 students at Quipayo National High School, Calabanga District, Division of Camarines Sur, during the School Year 2025–2026.

Specifically, it examined the level of students' social media vernacular usage in terms of oral communication, formal communication, and technical writing, as well as their literacy skills in spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. It also investigated the significant relationship between social media vernacular usage and literacy skills, evaluated the extent of its influence, and served as a basis for developing a vocabulary-based learning material aimed at enhancing students' literacy skills. The study employed a purposive sampling technique having sixty (60) Grade 12 students from Quipayo National High School, consisting of thirty (30) students from Strand A and thirty (30) students from Strand B. These respondents were selected as they represent senior high school learners who are actively engaged in both academic tasks and social media use, making them appropriate participants for examining the relationship between social media vernacular and literacy skills. The study utilized a teacher-made test and validated questionnaire to gather data on students' language usage and literacy performance within the specified variables.

However, the study focused only on selected literacy skills, specifically spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. Other literacy skills such as grammar proficiency, listening comprehension, creative writing, critical thinking, and academic writing were not included in the study. Moreover, the research was limited to the identified respondents, school, and school year; therefore, the findings may not be applicable to other populations or educational contexts.

Assumptions

The research study was anchored on the following assumptions:

1. The students at Quipayo National High School regularly utilize social media vernacular across different communication contexts, including oral communication, formal communication, and technical writing, indicating that informal digital language has become part of their everyday expression.
2. Students exhibit differing levels of literacy skills in spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension, which may be shaped or influenced by their frequent exposure to social media language practices.
3. The development of vocabulary-based learning materials will help improve students' literacy skills by strengthening their understanding and use of formal language, thereby reducing the negative effects of social media vernacular on academic writing.

Hypotheses

Objective: To assess the significant relationship of social media vernacular in terms of oral communication, formal communication, and technical writing.

Ho: There is no significant relationship between the usage of social media vernacular and literacy skills of students.

Ha: There is a significant relationship between the usage of social media vernacular and literacy skills of students.

Objective: To assess the extent of influence of social media vernacular to the literacy skills of the students.

Ho: There is no significant relationship between students' use of social media vernacular and the literacy skills of the students in terms of spelling, vocabulary, and reading.

Ha: There is a significant relationship between students' use of social media vernacular and the literacy skills of the students, particularly in spelling and reading comprehension, where social media vernacular shows significant influence on students' literacy performance.

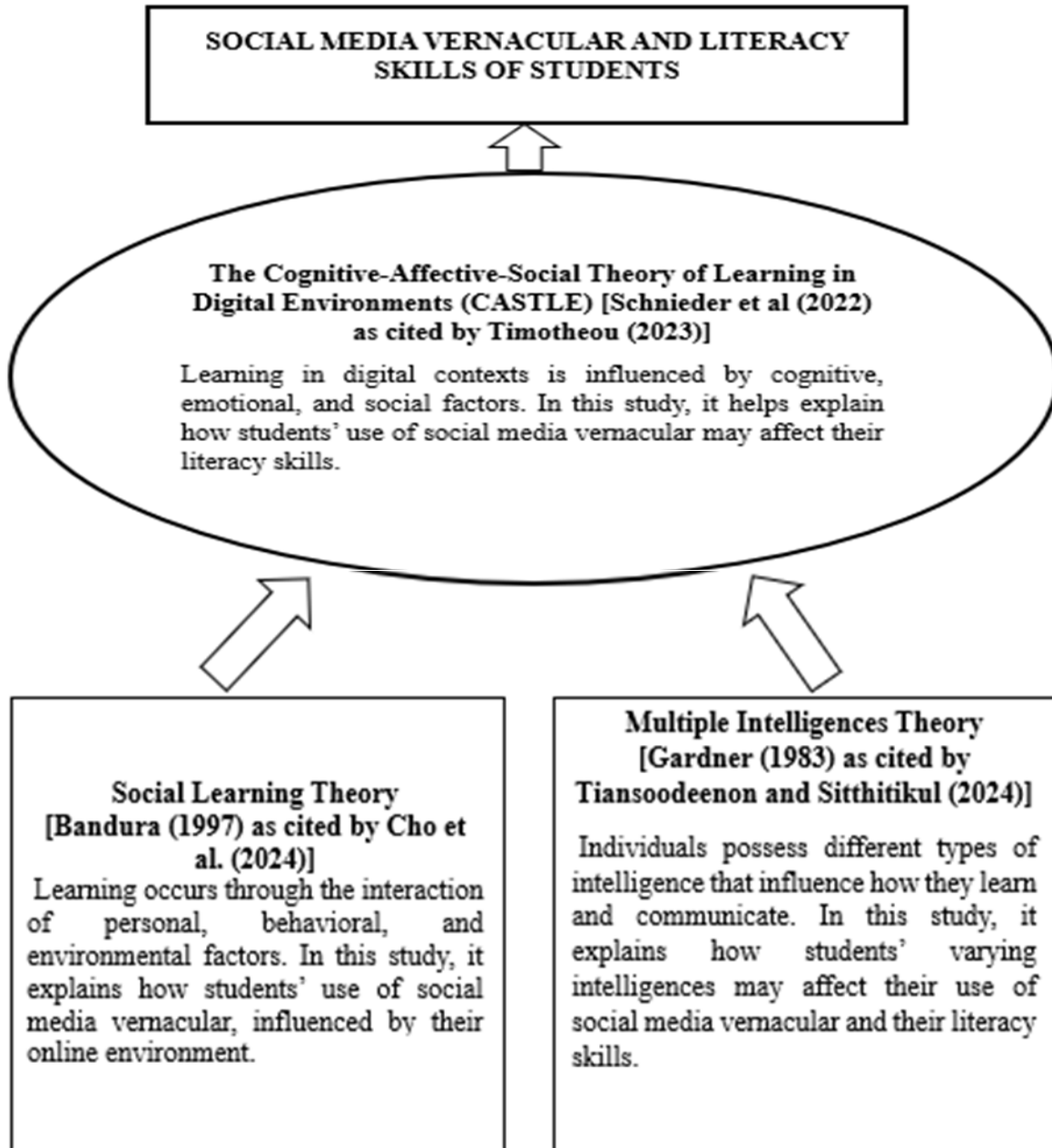
Theoretical Framework

Cognitive-Affective-Social Theory of Learning in Digital Environments (CASTLE 2022) was formally proposed by Sascha Schneider and colleagues (Schneider et al., 2022) and was cited by Timotheou (2023). It explains how learning in digital spaces is shaped by the interaction of cognitive processes, emotional responses, and social influences. It emphasizes that effective learning in online environments occurs when these three factors work together, especially in technology-mediated communication and interaction contexts.

The theory was introduced to explain how social cues embedded in digital learning environments such as conversational language, human-like interaction, informal expressions, and social presence activate learners' social schemata, thereby influencing learning processes beyond purely cognitive mechanisms. As cited by Timotheou (2023) in *Impacts of Digital Technologies on Education and Factors Influencing Schools' Digital Capacity*, emphasized that digital technologies significantly influence learners' cognitive engagement, emotional involvement, and social interaction, which in turn affect learning outcomes and the development of literacy skills in technology-mediated environments. The present study aims to examine the relationship between the level of usage of social media vernacular and the literacy skills of students. By exploring this connection, the study seeks to provide insights that may help educators become more aware of students' language practices and develop strategies that bridge informal and formal language use. Ultimately, this research hopes to contribute to improving literacy instruction in a way that is responsive to the realities of today's learners. This theory supports the present study by providing a clear explanation of how frequent exposure to social media vernacular may affect students' literacy skills, particularly in spelling, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and formal communication. The study assumes that the language practices students acquire in digital spaces may carry over into classroom learning and written academic tasks. Through the lens of the CASTLE Theory, the researcher recognizes that learning is not solely cognitive but is also shaped by emotional engagement and social interaction within technology-mediated environments.

Figure 1

Theoretical Paradigm



Thus, the theory serves as a strong foundation for examining the relationship between social media vernacular and students' literacy skills and for understanding how educators may bridge informal digital language and formal academic communication.

Social Learning Theory (2024) was originally proposed by Albert Bandura in the 1960s and was later expanded and recast as the Social Cognitive Theory in 1997 and adopted into Digital Self-Efficacy (2024) and was cited by Cho et al., (2024). Social Learning Theory explains that individuals learn behaviors, attitudes, and skills by observing others and imitating what they see within their environment. It also emphasizes that learning is influenced by cognitive processes, personal factors, and environmental

interactions, which was later expanded into Social Cognitive Theory and applied to digital self-efficacy in online learning contexts.

Bandura's revised theory emphasized that human learning and behavior are shaped by a dynamic interaction among personal, behavioral, and environmental factors, known as reciprocal determinism. This development positioned Social Cognitive Theory as a major framework for understanding learning, motivation, self-regulation, and behavior change. Since its reformulation in 1997, Social Cognitive Theory has been widely applied across educational research, particularly in studies on online learning, digital literacy, language acquisition, and media influence. Numerous studies have used the theory to explain how learners acquire knowledge and behaviors through observational learning in digital contexts, such as social media, online communities, and multimedia learning environments. Numerous studies have used the theory to explain how learners acquire knowledge and behaviors through observational learning in digital contexts, such as social media, online communities, and multimedia learning environments. Similarly, Chen and Zou 2025 found that continuous engagement in social media contributes to the development of students' literacy skills. These studies support the present research by explaining that students' exposure to social media vernacular, as part of their environment and behavior, may influence their literacy skills, making Social Cognitive Theory a relevant framework for examining the relationship between social media language use and students' literacy development. This theory strongly supports the present research because it explains how students' literacy skills may be influenced by their exposure to social media environments. As students engage with digital content and online communities, they develop communication behaviors that may affect their spelling, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and formal writing. Studies cited by Cho et al. (2024), Refugio and Bastida (2024), and Chen and Zou (2025) further strengthen this perspective by emphasizing that social media behavior, digital self-efficacy, and continuous online engagement contribute to learners' communication practices and literacy development. Thus, Social Cognitive Theory provides a solid theoretical foundation for the study by explaining how social media vernacular, learned through observation and interaction, may shape students' literacy skills and language use in academic contexts.

Multiple Intelligences Theory (Gardner, 1983). It was developed by Howard Gardner in 1983 through his book *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. Multiple Intelligences Theory, and was further applied in recent educational research by Kumar and Arora (2024), who examined its integration into the teaching-learning process to enhance instructional effectiveness. It was cited by Tiansoodeenon and Sitthitikul (2024) who examined the application of Multiple Intelligences Theory in English language teaching and highlighted its importance in addressing learner diversity and improving instructional strategies. Their study emphasized that Multiple Intelligences Theory remains highly relevant in addressing learner diversity by recognizing individual differences in cognitive abilities and by improving instructional strategies that support more inclusive and adaptive teaching practices.

Gardner challenged the traditional belief that intelligence is measured only through Intelligence Quotient (IQ) tests and academic performance. Instead, he proposed that human intelligence is multidimensional, meaning individuals possess different kinds of intelligences that influence how they learn, communicate, solve problems, and interact with others. According to Gardner (1983), learners have unique strengths and abilities, and intelligence should not be limited to linguistic and mathematical skills alone. Howard Gardner originally identified seven intelligences and later expanded them to eight and even nine, emphasizing that each person has a unique combination that influences how they learn, process information, and communicate. The core intelligences include linguistic intelligence, which involves

sensitivity to language, reading, and writing; logical-mathematical intelligence, which refers to reasoning and problem-solving abilities; visual-spatial intelligence, which involves the capacity to think in images and visualize concepts; bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, which relates to physical movement and coordination; musical intelligence, which includes sensitivity to rhythm, tone, and sound; interpersonal intelligence, which is the ability to understand and interact effectively with others; intrapersonal intelligence, which involves self-awareness and reflection; and naturalistic intelligence, which refers to the ability to recognize patterns in nature. Their study affirms that integrating multiple intelligences in classroom instruction enhances student engagement and supports differentiated learning. This indicates that Gardner's theory remains a valuable foundation for understanding students' varied cognitive abilities and designing inclusive educational practices. In relation to this study, the theory suggests that students' literacy skills and their use of social media vernacular may be influenced by their dominant intelligences. For instance, students with strong linguistic intelligence may be more sensitive to language rules, while those with interpersonal intelligence may be more influenced by social interaction and trends in communication, such as the use of social media language. This makes the theory relevant in understanding differences in students' literacy performance and communication practices. Similarly, students with high intrapersonal intelligence may reflect on their own use of language and self-correct informal expressions, whereas those with visual-spatial intelligence may prefer visual or multimedia representations of vocabulary. Understanding these differences can help educators tailor interventions that not only improve literacy but also guide students in navigating the informal-to-formal language transition effectively.

The present study is anchored on these theories that explain how students learn and use language in digital contexts. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory 1997 highlights the role of interaction between personal, behavioral, and environmental factors in shaping language use. Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory 1983 explains that students' varied intelligences influence how they develop and apply literacy skills. Meanwhile, the Cognitive-Affective-Social Theory of Learning in Digital Environments CASTLE 2022 emphasizes that learning in digital spaces is shaped by cognitive, emotional, and social factors. Together, these theories provide a strong foundation for understanding how social media vernacular influences students' literacy skills.

Conceptual Framework

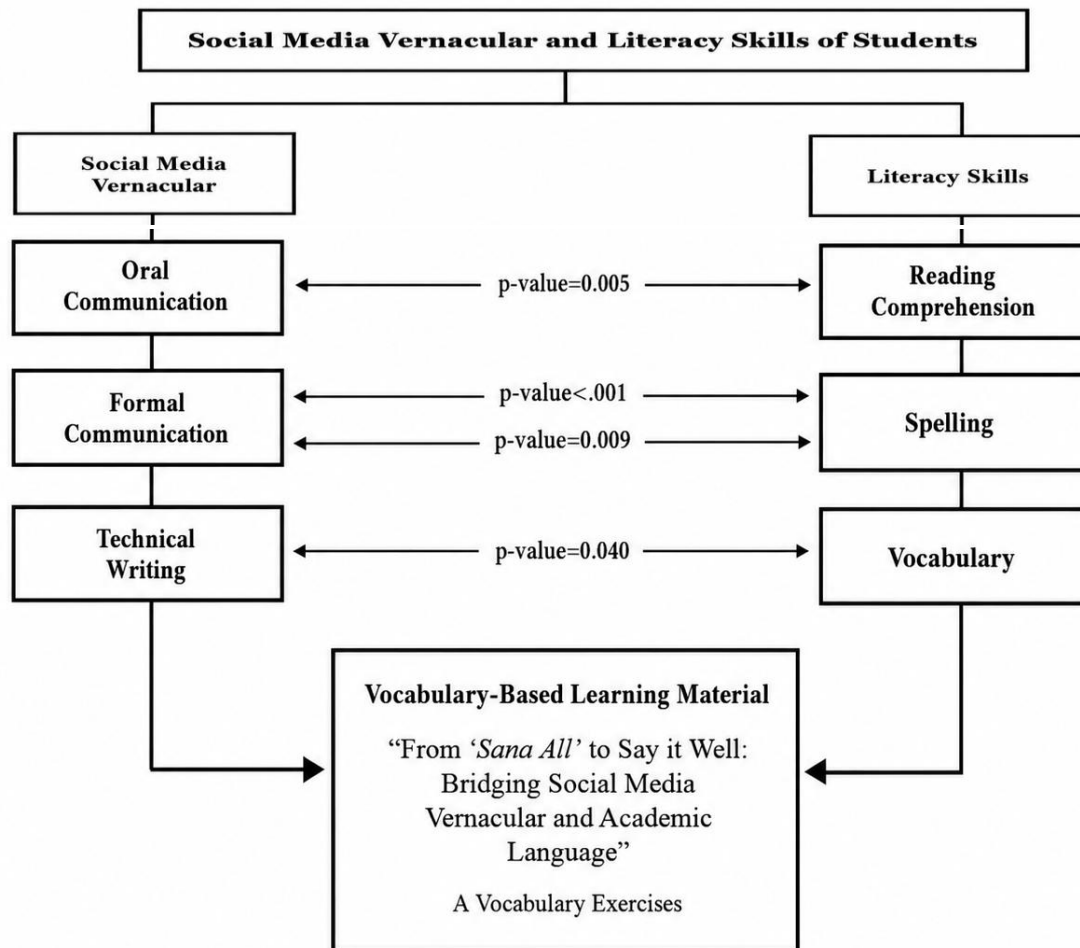
Figure 2 presents the conceptual framework of the study, illustrating the relationship between social media vernacular as the independent variable and literacy skills as the dependent variable. In this framework, social media vernacular is examined across three domains: oral communication, formal communication, and technical writing. Literacy skills are measured through spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension, which are essential components of academic communication. The framework highlights the interconnectedness of these variables and how students' habitual use of informal language on digital platforms may influence their ability to use language accurately and effectively in formal settings.

The study operates under the assumption that social media vernacular, as a form of informal, abbreviated, and often nonstandard language, can exert both positive and negative influences on students' literacy development. This variable represents a behavioral and environmental factor, reflecting the ways students interact with digital platforms, peers, and online communities. Meanwhile, literacy skills reflect the cognitive dimension of language proficiency, encompassing the ability to spell words correctly, understand and apply vocabulary, and comprehend written texts. The interaction of these variables is dynamic: frequent exposure to social media vernacular may challenge students' spelling and vocabulary as they

internalize informal forms, yet it may simultaneously encourage flexible thinking and adaptability in reading comprehension as students navigate diverse expressions and contexts.

To explore these interactions, the study employed a descriptive-correlational research design. Data were collected from senior high school students using a researcher-developed instrument that assessed their use of social media vernacular across the identified domains and measured their literacy skills in terms of spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. The instrument was carefully designed to reflect authentic digital language practices, ensuring that responses would provide meaningful insights into students’ real-world communication habits. Correlation analysis was applied to determine the strength and direction of relationships between the variables, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of how social media language use aligns with literacy outcomes.

Figure 2
Conceptual Paradigm



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direction of relationships between the variables, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of how social media language use aligns with literacy outcomes.

The study contends that social media vernacular does not uniformly impede or enhance literacy skills. Instead, its influence is nuanced and depends on the ways students engage with both informal and formal language. While excessive reliance on social media language may create challenges in accurate spelling and formal vocabulary usage, strategic exposure and guidance can transform these informal practices into opportunities for learning. This perspective directly informed the development of the vocabulary-based instructional material *From “Sana All” to “Say It Well”*, which aims to help students transition from casual online expressions to more academically appropriate language use. The material encourages students to recognize patterns in social media language while developing formal literacy competencies, bridging the gap between digital communication and academic expectations.

Overall, the conceptual framework emphasizes the importance of understanding the relationship and interaction between students’ social media language practices and their literacy skills. By recognizing that social media vernacular is both an influence and a reflection of students’ linguistic environment, educators can design interventions that harness students’ existing language habits to improve literacy outcomes. Through this framework, the study aims to contribute to the broader understanding of how contemporary communication practices align with students’ real-world experiences.

Definition of Terms

For clarification and a better understanding of this study, the following words and phrases were defined conceptually and operationally.

Literacy skills. In this study, this is a set of spelling, reading, and writing skills. This is now understood as a means of identification, understanding, interpretation, creation, and communication in an increasingly digital, text-mediated, information-rich and fast-changing world. It is a continuum of learning and proficiency in reading, writing and using numbers throughout life and is part of a larger set of skills, which include digital skills, media literacy, education for sustainable development and global citizenship as well as job-specific skills. Literacy skills themselves are expanding and evolving as people engage more with information and learning through digital technology. (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2021).

Spelling. It refers to the ability to correctly form words using the appropriate sequence of letters according to standard language conventions. It involves knowledge of phonological patterns, orthographic rules, and word structures that enable learners to accurately represent spoken language in written form. It is a fundamental component of literacy development because it supports writing accuracy and helps learners effectively communicate their ideas in written language. In this study, spelling refers to the students’ ability to correctly write words based on standard English conventions (Graham and Harris (2018)).

Vocabulary. It refers to the collection of words that an individual understands and uses in communication, including both spoken and written language. It plays a crucial role in language development and literacy because it allows learners to comprehend texts and express ideas clearly. It is essential for language proficiency since it enables learners to interpret meaning, understand context, and communicate effectively (I. S. P. Nation 2019). In this study, vocabulary refers to the range of words that students recognize, understand, and appropriately use in reading and communication.

Reading comprehension. It refers to the ability to understand, interpret, and derive meaning from written texts by integrating prior knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, and cognitive processes. It involves constructing meaning from text through active thinking and interpretation. Reading comprehension is a complex process that requires the coordination of decoding skills, language comprehension, and

background knowledge in order to fully understand written material (Snowling and Hulme 2021). In this study, reading comprehension refers to the students' ability to understand and interpret written texts presented in the literacy assessment.

Social media vernacular. It refers to the informal language commonly used in online communication platforms, including abbreviations, acronyms, slang, emojis, and shortened words used in digital interactions. This form of language reflects the evolving communication practices of internet users, particularly among young people. Digital communication has influenced language use by encouraging brief, informal, and creative forms of expression in online environments (Baron 2017). In this study, social media vernacular refers to the informal expressions and language patterns used by students when communicating through social media platforms.

METHODOLOGY

The study's objectives were accomplished through the deliberate use of suitable research methods and structured procedures. This chapter presents the research design, the respondents of the study, the research instruments, the procedure of investigation and the ethical consideration.

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between the level of usage of social media vernacular and the literacy skills of senior high school students. Descriptive-correlational design is appropriate when the objective is to determine the degree and direction of relationships between variables without manipulating them. According to recent studies, this design has been widely used in language and digital literacy research. For instance, Refugio and Bastida (2024) utilized a correlational approach to examine the relationship between social networking usage and students' digital literacy, emphasizing that such a design effectively captures naturally occurring behaviors in online environments. Similarly, Chen and Zou (2025) applied a descriptive-correlational method in analyzing how social media engagement influences students' literacy development, highlighting its suitability in identifying patterns between language exposure and learning outcomes. These studies support the appropriateness of the design used in the present research.

The respondents of the study were selected using a purposive sampling technique, a non-probability sampling method in which participants are chosen based on specific criteria relevant to the research. The inclusion criteria required that respondents be senior high school students, active users of social media, and willing to participate in the study. Coordination with the school administration ensured that the selected participants could provide meaningful and relevant data regarding their use of social media vernacular and their literacy performance.

In addition to data collection and analysis, the study also focused on the development of a vocabulary-based instructional material aligned with the Department of Education (DepEd) curriculum standards and the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs). The material was designed to support students' vocabulary development through structured, contextualized, and learner-centered activities. Its development underwent systematic phases to ensure its validity, reliability, and effectiveness as a learning resource. This approach was deemed appropriate as the findings of the study served as the basis for designing an intervention that addresses the identified needs of the learners.

Overall, the descriptive-correlational design, combined with a deductive approach, appropriate sampling technique, and a carefully developed research instrument, enabled the study to systematically examine the relationship between social media vernacular and literacy skills, while also providing a foundation for the

development of an instructional material that enhances students' language proficiency. This strengthens the practical significance of the study, as it not only identifies relationships between variables but also offers a concrete solution to improve students' literacy outcomes in the context of evolving digital communication practices.

Table 1

| <i>Respondents of the Study</i> | (%) |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Strand A | 50 |
| Strand B | 50 |
| Total | 100 |

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study consisted of 60 Senior High School students, with 30 Grade 12 students from Strand A and 30 Grade 12 students from Strand B who are officially enrolled at Quipayo National High School, located in San Antonio-Quipayo, Calabanga, Camarines Sur, under the Calabanga West District for the School Year 2025–2026. The study employed purposive sampling, wherein the researcher deliberately selected participants based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The inclusion criteria required that the respondents be currently enrolled as Grade 12 students, active users of social media platforms, and willing to participate in the study. These criteria ensured that the selected participants could provide appropriate and reliable data regarding their use of social media vernacular and its relationship to their literacy skills.

Research Instruments

The study utilized an evaluation checklist and a teacher-made test as its primary research instruments. The descriptive–correlational research method was employed to determine the relationship between the level of social media vernacular usage and the literacy skills of the students. Social media vernacular usage was measured using the following indicators: oral communication, formal communication, and technical writing. Meanwhile, the students' literacy skills were assessed in terms of spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension.

In addition, a researcher-developed questionnaire was used to gather relevant background information regarding the students' social media engagement. This included data on the students' active social media accounts, average daily screen time ranging from less than one hour to more than six hours, frequency of social media use per day, and the most frequently used social media platforms. The platforms identified in the questionnaire included Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, Messenger, X (formerly Twitter), and other similar applications.

Procedure of Investigation

The following procedures were undertaken to ensure the systematic collection of data and the accuracy, reliability, and validity of the results.

Preparation of the Research Instruments. The research instruments were prepared in accordance with the objectives of the study. These included a teacher-made test designed to assess the literacy skills of the Strand A & B students of Quipayo National High School.

Development of the Social Media Vernacular and Literacy Skills Teacher-Made Test. The social media vernacular and literacy skills questionnaire for students was developed and anchored on the identified research problems and variables of the study.

Dry Run and Validation of the Research Instruments. A dry run of the research instruments was conducted to determine their clarity, appropriateness, and validity. Necessary revisions were made based on the results of the validation process.

Data Gathering. After the validation of the research instruments, data gathering was conducted. The researcher administered the survey questionnaires and teacher-made tests to the identified respondents following the approved protocols.

Analysis of the Gathered Data. The data collected were tallied, organized, and presented in tabular form. Appropriate statistical tools were employed for data analysis. The results were analyzed, interpreted, and discussed in relation to the research problems.

Writing of the Research Report. Following the analysis and interpretation of data, the research report was written and organized. The manuscript underwent a series of revisions to improve clarity, coherence, and scholarly quality.

Research Presentation. The completed research report was presented to the research panel of the Graduate School of Naga College Foundation for evaluation and recommendations.

Revision of the Thesis Manuscript. The researcher revised the thesis manuscript in accordance with the comments and suggestions of the research panel to further enhance the quality of the study.

Submission of the Approved Thesis. After incorporating all required revisions, the final and approved thesis manuscript was submitted to the Graduate School.

Ethical Considerations

Informed Consent. The researcher first secured informed consent by clearly explaining the purpose, objectives, and procedures of the study to the participants. Students were informed that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty or negative consequence.

Parental Consent. Since some participants were minors, parental or guardian consent was also obtained prior to data collection. This ensured that parents and guardians were properly informed about the nature of the study and voluntarily approved their children's participation.

Voluntary Participation. The study strictly observed the principle of voluntary participation by allowing students to decide freely whether to participate or not. No participant was forced, pressured, or influenced to take part in the research process.

Responsible Use of AI Tools. The researcher ensured the ethical and responsible use of digital and AI-assisted tools, including OpenAI ChatGPT, in organizing related literature and references. These tools were utilized only to support academic research, improve the organization of information, and enhance the quality of the study while maintaining originality, critical analysis, and proper academic integrity.

Confidentiality of Data. Confidentiality was strictly maintained throughout the conduct of the study. All gathered information, responses, and research data were kept secure and were accessible only to the researcher to prevent unauthorized disclosure.

Anonymity and Privacy Protection. To protect the identity and privacy of the participants, names and other personal identifiers were not included in the questionnaires, records, or research outputs. This ensured that participants remained anonymous throughout the entire research process.

Cultural Sensitivity. The researcher ensured cultural sensitivity throughout the conduct of the study by respecting the diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and linguistic practices of the participants. Care was taken to use appropriate and non-discriminatory language in the questionnaire and data gathering process. The study also avoided any form of bias and ensured that all responses were treated with respect and fairness regardless of students' cultural or social backgrounds.

Data Privacy Act. The study strictly adhered to the provisions of the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173). All personal data collected from the participants were handled with utmost confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes. Necessary measures were implemented to ensure the protection of respondents' information against unauthorized access, disclosure, or misuse, in compliance with national data protection standards.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data gathered from the assessments were recorded, analyzed and were interpreted and treated by the following statistical methods and data analysis techniques.

Weighted Mean. This was used to determine the overall level of social media vernacular usage among senior high school students and their overall literacy skills. Specifically, summarized the students' responses to each item in the Likert-scale questionnaire. The use of the weighted mean in analyzing Likert-scale responses is supported by the study of Asare and Adansi et al. (2022), which utilized survey questionnaires to determine the effects of social media language on students' writing behaviors and communication practices. Their study employed descriptive statistical techniques to summarize respondents' perceptions and language usage patterns, making the weighted mean appropriate for determining the overall level of social media vernacular usage and literacy skills in the present study.

Mean. This was used to determine the level of usage of social media vernacular in terms of oral communication, formal communication, and technical writing. The computation of mean scores is consistent with the study of Jeresano and Carretero on Digital Culture and Social Media Slang of Gen Z, where the researchers examined the frequency and patterns of Gen Z slang usage in communication contexts. The use of mean scores helped identify the extent to which students utilize social media vernacular in oral communication, formal communication, and technical writing, which is likewise applied in the present study.

Standard Deviation (SD). This was used to determine how consistent or varied the students' social media vernacular usage and literacy skill scores were. The use of standard deviation is supported by Ricaforte (2022), whose study on cyber slang and academic writing conventions analyzed the consistency and variation of students' responses and writing performances. In the present study, standard deviation is appropriate in determining the variability of students' social media vernacular usage and literacy skill scores.

Proficiency Level Metrics. Students' literacy skills were classified into proficiency levels (e.g., Beginning, Developing, Proficient, Advanced) based on their test or assessment scores. The classification of students into proficiency levels is aligned with educational assessment practices used in literacy-related studies and DepEd learning assessments, where learners are categorized into levels such as Beginning, Developing, Proficient, and Advanced based on performance scores. This approach is relevant to the present study in evaluating students' literacy skills in spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension.

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r). This was used to determine the degree and direction of relationship between the use of social media vernacular and students' communication contexts (oral, formal, and technical writing). The use of Pearson r is supported by Ricaforte (2022), which

examined the relationship between social media exposure, cyber slang usage, and academic writing conventions among students. Similarly, the present study uses Pearson r to determine the degree and direction of relationship between social media vernacular usage and students' literacy skills across different communication contexts.

Coefficient of Determination (r^2). This was computed to determine the extent to which the use of social media vernacular explains variation in students' communication performance in oral, formal, and technical writing contexts. The computation of the coefficient of determination is appropriate in identifying the extent to which social media vernacular usage influences students' literacy performance. This is supported by correlational studies related to social media language and academic literacy, including Ricaforte (2022), which investigated the predictive relationship between cyber slang exposure and students' academic writing outcomes.

Modified ADDIE Model. Guided the development of the vocabulary-based instructional material '*From "Sana All" to "Say It Well."*' The analysis phase used the study's findings to identify students' vocabulary gaps and patterns in social media language use. The design and development phases translated these insights into structured, learner-centered activities aimed at improving spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. Implementation focused on ensuring the material is practical and aligned with DepEd curriculum standards, while the evaluation phase involves validation and refinement of the content based on expert feedback. By applying the Modified ADDIE Model, the study ensured that the instructional material directly addresses the literacy needs identified from the data. The application of the Modified ADDIE Model is supported by instructional material development studies that utilize learner-centered approaches in designing educational interventions. In the present study, the model is appropriate because it systematically guides the analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation of the vocabulary-based learning material, ensuring that the instructional content directly addresses the literacy gaps identified among students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and interprets the findings on the usage of social media vernacular and literacy skills of senior high school students. The results are organized based on the study's objectives, showing descriptive data and correlations between social media vernaculars and literacy skills of senior high school students. Each table is discussed with a supporting interpretation.

Level of Usage of Social Media Vernacular

The level of usage of social media vernacular refers to the extent to which students employ informal language forms commonly found on social media platforms, such as abbreviations, acronyms, slang, emojis, code-switching, and nonstandard spellings, in their daily communication. In this study, the level of usage was measured to determine how frequently students are exposed to and utilize these language forms in both oral and written contexts.

Oral Communication. Table 1a presents the level of usage of social media vernacular in terms of oral communication among students. The overall weighted mean is 3.30, interpreted as moderately used. Among the indicators, the highest-ranked item is the mixing of English and Filipino expressions influenced by social media with a weighted mean of 3.65, interpreted as highly used. This is followed by the verbal expression of emojis with a weighted mean of 3.55, also highly used. Meanwhile, imitation of trending tones or speech patterns has a weighted mean of 3.35, use of shortened words or slang has 3.02, and the use of expressions such as OMG, LOL, and Char has 2.95, all interpreted as moderately used.

Table 1a

Level of Usage of Social Media Vernacular in terms of Oral Communication

| Indicators | WM | Int | Rank |
|--|------|-----------------|------|
| Social media expressions such as “OMG,” “LOL,” and “Char” are commonly used when speaking with classmates. | 2.95 | MU | 5 |
| Shortened words or slang derived from social media are used in everyday conversations. | 3.02 | MU | 4 |
| English and Filipino expressions influenced by social media are mixed during oral communication. | 3.65 | HU | 1 |
| Popular tones or speech patterns that are trending online are imitated in spoken interactions. | 3.35 | MU | 3 |
| Emojis are verbally expressed using terms such as “smiley,” “heart,” or “sad face.” | 3.55 | HU | 2 |
| Average WM | 3.30 | Moderately Used | |

Note. WM refers to Weighted Mean and Int refers to Interpretation. The interpretation is based on 4.21 to 5.00 as Very Highly Used (VHU); 3.41 to 4.20 as Highly Used (HU); 2.61 to 3.40 as Moderately Used (MU); 1.81 to 2.60 as Less Used (LU); and 1.00 to 1.80 as Least Used (LU).

The results indicated that students actively incorporate elements of social media vernacular into their oral communication, particularly through code-switching and the verbal expression of emojis. The high usage of mixed English and Filipino expressions suggests that students rely on linguistic flexibility to convey meaning more effectively in social interactions. Additionally, the use of expressive forms such as emoji verbalization reflects a shift toward more dynamic and emotionally nuanced communication. However, the moderate use of slang and common social media expressions implies that students do not entirely depend on these forms but rather use them selectively based on context and communicative intent.

The findings suggested that social media vernacular functions as a supplementary linguistic resource in students’ oral communication. It enhances expressiveness, engagement, and relatability without displacing standard language structures. This indicates that students are capable of integrating digital language features while maintaining communicative clarity. Therefore, their oral communication reflects a hybrid form of language use, where traditional and emerging linguistic practices coexist to support effective interpersonal interaction.

These findings are consistent with the study of Parreño (2020), which found that Filipino students commonly use social media-influenced language in spoken communication to build rapport and ease interaction among peers. Mercado (2019) further supported this by noting that digital communication encourages the use of hybrid and expressive language forms in informal speaking contexts. Garcia (2018) also emphasized that exposure to social media promotes conversational and informal speech patterns among students. In addition, Lopez (2021) highlighted that learners adopt socially derived digital language features to enhance engagement and interpersonal connection in communication.

This can be explained through the Cognitive-Affective-Social Theory of Learning in Digital Environments (CASTLE) by Schneider et al. (2022), which states that digital platforms influence learners’ communication through social cues such as informal language, emotional expression, and interactive tone. The theory explains why students frequently mix languages and verbalize emojis, as these features

enhance emotional expression and social presence. It also aligns with the observation that students selectively use slang and trends depending on communicative intent and context. Furthermore, Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences Theory (1983), particularly linguistic and interpersonal intelligence, supports the idea that students use varied linguistic resources to effectively communicate and connect with others. Formal Communication. Table 1b presents the level of usage of social media vernacular in terms of formal communication among students. The overall weighted mean is 2.24, interpreted as less used. Among the indicators, the highest-ranked item is the unintentional use of social media shorthand such as u, pls, and idk in school-related communication with a weighted mean of 2.80, interpreted as moderately used. This is followed by the difficulty in shifting from informal to formal language with a weighted mean of 2.42, interpreted as less used. The inclusion of emojis or emoticons in formal messages has a weighted mean of 2.13, while mirroring informal writing styles in formal communication has 2.07, both interpreted as less used. The lowest-ranked item is the use of social media slang when communicating.

| Table 1b | | | |
|--|----------|--------------|----------|
| <i>Level of Usage of Social Media Vernacular in terms of Formal Communication</i> | | | |
| Indicators | W M | Int | Ra nk |
| Social media shorthand (e.g., “u,” “pls,” “idk”) is sometimes unintentionally used in school-related communication. | 2.8 0 | M U | 1 |
| Social media slang is occasionally inserted when communicating with teachers or school personnel. | 1.7 8 | L U | 5 |
| Informal writing styles commonly used on social media are mirrored even in formal communication. | 2.0 7 | L U | 4 |
| Emojis or emoticons are included in messages that require a formal tone. | 2.1 3 | L U | 3 |
| Shifting from informal language to formal language is found to be challenging. | 2.4 2 | L U | 2 |
| Average Weighted Mean | 2.2 4 | Less Used | |
| <i>Note.</i> WM refers to Weighted Mean and Int refers to Interpretation. The interpretation is based on: 4.21 to 5.00 as Very Highly Used (VHu); 3.41 to 4.20 as Highly Used (HU); 2.61 to 3.40 as Moderately Used (MU); 1.81 to 2.60 as Less Used (LU); and 1.00 to 1.80 as Least Used (LU). | | | |

The results showed that students generally restrict the use of social media vernacular in formal communication contexts. The moderate presence of shorthand usage indicates that lapses in formality may occur unintentionally, particularly in written communication. However, the low usage of slang, informal writing styles, and emojis demonstrates that students consciously avoid informal language features when communicating in academic or professional settings. The reported difficulty in shifting from informal to formal language further suggests that while students are aware of formal conventions, transitioning between language registers may require conscious effort.

The findings implied that students exhibit a strong awareness of linguistic appropriateness in formal communication, enabling them to regulate the influence of social media vernacular. While digital language habits may occasionally surface, they do not significantly interfere with students’ ability to maintain formality. The findings further indicate that although students demonstrate control over the use of social media vernacular in formal communication, traces of informal language still emerge due to habitual exposure to digital platforms. This suggests that language behavior is not entirely compartmentalized; instead, it reflects an interaction between learned academic conventions and frequently practiced online communication styles. The moderate use of shorthand highlights that automaticity in digital writing may occasionally override conscious efforts to maintain formality.

The findings are supported by Dita (2019), who emphasized that while digital communication influences student language use, academic writing remains relatively insulated due to its strict conventions. Borlongan (2016) also found that learners in the Philippine context can distinguish between informal digital discourse and formal academic writing. Similarly, David (2018) noted that exposure to social media does not significantly disrupt students’ ability to produce formal written outputs when proper academic guidelines are observed. Gonzales (2017) further highlighted that although informal language is prevalent in digital spaces, students adjust their writing style when tasked with academic requirements.

These findings can be explained through the Cognitive-Affective-Social Theory of Learning in Digital environments by Schneider et al. (2022), which explains that learners are influenced by digital exposure but actively regulate their language use depending on task demands. In technical writing, students suppress informal digital language because the academic context requires precision and formality. This supports the low level of social media vernacular usage observed in this study. Additionally, Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory (1997) reinforces this result by emphasizing that learners observe both formal academic models and informal online communication but selectively apply behaviors based on situational appropriateness.

Technical Writing. Table 1c presents the level of usage of social media vernacular in terms of technical writing among students. The overall weighted mean is 2.28, interpreted as less used. Among the indicators, the highest-ranked item is the reliance on simplified vocabulary shaped by online language trends with a weighted mean of 2.47, interpreted as less used. This is followed by sentence structure influenced by social media patterns with a weighted mean of 2.45, and maintaining an academic tone being overlooked with 2.42, both interpreted as less used. Meanwhile, the use of social media spelling or abbreviations has a weighted mean of 2.07, and the unintentional inclusion of social media slang has 2.02, both also interpreted as less used.

| Table 1c | | | |
|---|----------|--------|----------|
| <i>Level of Usage of Social Media Vernacular in terms of Technical Writing</i> | | | |
| Indicators | W M | Int | Ran k |
| Social media slang is unintentionally included in academic writing. | 2.0 2 | L U | 5 |
| Social media spelling or abbreviations are used when completing school-related tasks. | 2.0 7 | L U | 4 |

| | | | |
|--|------|-----------|---|
| Sentence structure is influenced by patterns commonly seen on social media. | 2.45 | L U | 2 |
| Simplified vocabulary shaped by online language trends is frequently relied upon. | 2.47 | L U | 1 |
| Maintaining an academic tone is sometimes overlooked due to frequent social media use. | 2.42 | L U | 3 |
| Average WM | 2.28 | Less Used | |
| <p><i>Note:</i> WM refers to Weighted Mean and Int refers to Interpretation. The interpretation is based on 4.21 to 5.00 as Very Highly Used (VHU); 3.41 to 4.20 as Highly Used (HU); 2.61 to 3.40 as Moderately Used (MU); 1.81 to 2.60 as Less Used (LU); and 1.00 to 1.80 as Least Used (LU).</p> | | | |

The findings indicated that students generally limit the influence of social media vernacular in technical writing tasks. The slightly higher ranking of simplified vocabulary suggests that students may unconsciously rely on familiar and accessible language shaped by online exposure. Additionally, the influence of social media on sentence structure implies that digital communication patterns may subtly affect how students construct their written responses. However, the low usage of slang and abbreviations shows that students make deliberate efforts to maintain academic standards in writing. Overall, the results suggest that while traces of social media influence exist, students largely prioritize clarity, formality, and structure in technical writing.

The results implied that students demonstrate a developing ability to regulate their language use in technical writing by minimizing the integration of social media vernacular. Although exposure to digital language may shape certain aspects such as vocabulary choice and sentence construction, these influences do not significantly dominate their academic writing. This suggests that students are aware of the expectations of technical writing and attempt to adhere to formal conventions. The presence of minor influences indicates that complete separation between informal and formal language is challenging but manageable. Therefore, students exhibit functional control over their writing skills, allowing them to balance digital language exposure with academic requirements.

The findings can be supported by Asare and Adansi 2022, who found that social media can influence students' writing, particularly through the use of abbreviations, clipping, and other informal features, although such effects are more evident in individual writing tasks. Similarly, Ricaforte 2022 established a relationship between cyber slang usage and academic writing conventions, indicating that while students are exposed to informal language online, they still attempt to follow formal writing structures. Furthermore, Jeresano and Carretero 2023 revealed that Gen Z slang enhances communication skills and fluency but may negatively affect writing skills, supporting the minimal yet present influence of social media vernacular in technical writing. In addition, Johri et al. 2023 emphasized that continuous exposure to social media reshapes language patterns, including informal language transfer, which may subtly influence vocabulary choice and sentence construction in academic writing.

The findings aligned with the Cognitive-Affective-Social Theory of Learning in Digital Environments CASTLE by Schneider et al. 2022, which explains that digital environments influence learners' cognitive

and linguistic processes. However, learners actively regulate these influences depending on context, particularly in formal and technical tasks. This supports the observed results where students demonstrate control over their writing by minimizing the use of social media vernacular while still showing traces of its influence in vocabulary and sentence structure. These theories and studies confirmed that while social media vernacular shapes students’ language exposure, its impact on technical writing is limited and regulated, allowing students to maintain academic standards while navigating digital language influences. Table 1d presents the overall level of usage of social media vernacular across three aspects of communication. The overall average weighted mean is 2.61, interpreted as moderately used. Among the aspects, oral communication ranks first with an average weighted mean of 3.30, interpreted as moderately used. This is followed by technical writing with 2.28, interpreted as less used. Formal communication ranks last with an average weighted mean of 2.24, also interpreted as less used.

| <i>Table 1d</i> | | | |
|--|------|-----|------|
| <i>Level of Usage of Social Media Vernacular</i> | | | |
| Aspects | AWM | Int | Rank |
| Oral Communication | 3.30 | MU | 1 |
| Formal Communication | 2.24 | LU | 3 |
| Technical Writing | 2.28 | LU | 2 |
| <i>Note.</i> AWM refers to Average Weighted Mean and Int refers to Interpretation. The interpretation is based on 4.21 to 5.00 as Very Highly Used (VHU); 3.41 to 4.20 as Highly Used (HU); 2.61 to 3.40 as Moderately Used (MU); 1.81 to 2.60 as Less Used (LU); and 1.00 to 1.80 as Least Used (LU). | | | |

The findings indicated that the use of social media vernacular varies depending on the communication context. Students show greater use of social media language in oral communication, suggesting that informal and interactive environments encourage the integration of digital expressions. In contrast, the lower usage in formal communication and technical writing implies that students consciously regulate their language when academic expectations are present. The difference in rankings highlights students’ awareness of context-appropriate language use and their ability to adjust accordingly. Overall, the results demonstrate that while social media vernacular is present in students’ communication, its application is selective and influenced by the level of formality required.

The results suggested that students possess adaptive communication skills that allow them to navigate between informal and formal language contexts effectively. The moderate overall usage indicates that social media vernacular is a contributing factor in communication but does not dominate students’ language practices. The higher usage in oral communication reflects the natural and spontaneous nature of spoken interaction, where expressive and informal language is more acceptable. Meanwhile, the lower usage in formal and technical contexts shows that students are capable of maintaining linguistic appropriateness in academic settings. Therefore, students demonstrate an ability to balance digital language influences with the demands of formal communication, indicating functional control over their language use.

The findings are supported by Jeresano and Carretero (2023), who found that Gen Z slang can enhance communication but varies in use depending on context and setting. Ricaforte (2022) also emphasized that students exposed to cyber slang are still capable of adapting to formal academic writing conventions. Similarly, Johri et al. (2023) noted that while social media reshapes language patterns, it does not fully

replace formal language use in educational environments. In addition, Asare and Adansi (2022) highlighted that students can manage the influence of social media language depending on whether communication tasks are formal or informal.

These findings can be explained through Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory (1997), which states that behavior is shaped through the interaction of personal, behavioral, and environmental influences. Students learn informal language from social media environments while simultaneously being guided by academic contexts that require formal communication. This dual exposure allows them to selectively apply language based on situational demands. Furthermore, the Cognitive-Affective-Social Theory of Learning in Digital Environments (CASTLE) by Schneider et al. (2022) supports these results by explaining that digital exposure influences communication patterns but is regulated by learners depending on task requirements and context.

Level of Literacy Skills of Students

The level of literacy skills of students was assessed through three main areas: spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. These skills are essential indicators of academic language proficiency and overall literacy development. The evaluation aimed to determine students’ ability to use correct spelling, understand and apply vocabulary, and interpret written texts accurately.

Table 2 presents the level of literacy skills of students across spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. Vocabulary achieved the highest mean of 8.50, interpreted as approaching proficiency, followed closely by reading comprehension with 8.40, also approaching proficiency. Spelling obtained the lowest mean of 7.00, interpreted as developing. The overall average across the three components is 23.90, with a proficiency level of approaching proficiency. These results indicate that students demonstrate moderate literacy skills, with strengths in vocabulary and comprehension, but lower performance in spelling.

| Table 2 <i>Level of Literacy Skills of Students</i> | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|------|-------|-------------------------|------|
| Literacy Skills | Items | Mean | SD | PL | Int | Rank |
| Spelling | 15 | 7.00 | 2.03 | 46.67 | D | 3 |
| Vocabulary | 15 | 8.50 | 2.04 | 56.67 | AP | 1 |
| Reading Comprehension | 15 | 8.40 | 1.88 | 56.00 | AP | 2 |
| Overall | 45 | 23.90 | 3.43 | 53.11 | Approaching Proficiency | |
| <i>Note.</i> PL refers to Proficiency Level and Int refers to Interpretation. Thus, the Interpretation values are based on the following ranges: 75.0 to 100 = Proficient (P); 50.0 to 74.9 = Approaching Proficiency (AP); 25.0 to 49.9 Developing (D); and 0 to 24.9 = Beginning (B). | | | | | | |

The findings suggested that students are generally capable of understanding and using words effectively, as reflected in their relatively higher vocabulary and reading comprehension scores. However, their lower performance in spelling indicates difficulties in accurately encoding words according to standard conventions. This pattern may reflect limited practice in orthography, reliance on informal digital communication, and exposure to nonstandard spelling in social media contexts. The close proximity of vocabulary and reading comprehension scores indicates that students can comprehend meaning and

context but struggle to consistently transfer that understanding to correct spelling. Overall, these results show that students possess foundational literacy skills but require support to enhance spelling accuracy and reinforce language conventions.

The results implied that social media exposure may influence students' literacy patterns, particularly in spelling, by introducing informal or nonstandard language forms that are reinforced online. While vocabulary and reading comprehension remain relatively strong, spelling appears more susceptible to digital language habits. This suggests that students can effectively interpret and understand language in context but may internalize unconventional forms of written language from social media use. The findings indicate a need for targeted instructional interventions, such as vocabulary-based exercises and spelling drills, to bridge the gap between informal digital language exposure and formal literacy requirements. Therefore, students demonstrate approaching proficiency in overall literacy but require structured support to improve spelling and fully develop their language competence.

These findings are supported by Nurhayati and Hidayat (2020), who found that students who are frequently exposed to social media communication tend to develop stronger contextual understanding and vocabulary familiarity but may experience difficulties in spelling accuracy and formal writing conventions. Similarly, Abbas, Aman, and Nurunnabi (2019) emphasized that digital communication platforms influence learners' literacy practices by encouraging rapid and informal language use, which can affect orthographic precision. According to Klimova and Pikhart (2020), social media interaction contributes positively to language exposure and reading engagement, particularly in vocabulary acquisition and comprehension development. In addition, Wahyuningsih and Afandi (2022) noted that while online communication enhances students' communicative competence, excessive reliance on abbreviated and informal expressions may weaken mastery of standard spelling patterns.

These findings can be explained through Connectivism Theory by Siemens (2018), which explains that learning occurs through continuous interaction within digital networks and online environments. The theory suggests that students acquire vocabulary knowledge and comprehension skills through constant exposure to diverse digital language inputs and social interactions. However, because digital communication often prioritizes speed and convenience, learners may also internalize informal writing habits that influence spelling accuracy. Furthermore, the New Literacies Theory by Leu et al. (2021) supports the findings by explaining that literacy in digital environments involves adapting to evolving communication practices, where learners develop comprehension and interpretive skills through online engagement while simultaneously facing challenges in maintaining traditional language conventions such as spelling and formal writing accuracy.

Significant Relationship between Level of Usage of Social Media Vernacular and Level of Literacy Skills of Students

Table 3 presents the relationship between the level of usage of social media vernacular and the level of literacy skills of students. The findings reveal that oral communication shows a very low correlation with spelling and vocabulary, and both relationships are not significant. However, oral communication and reading comprehension show a very low negative correlation that is statistically significant. In terms of formal communication, the results indicate a low negative correlation with spelling that is significant. Vocabulary shows a very low negative correlation that is not significant. On the other hand, reading comprehension exhibits a low positive correlation that is statistically significant.

| Table 3 <i>Relationship between Level of Usage of Social Media Vernacular and Level of Literacy Skills of Students</i> | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------|-------------|
| Usage of Social Media Vernacular | Literacy Skills of Students | r-value | Int | p-value | Int |
| Oral Communication | Spelling | -0.011 | VLC | 0.933 | N/A |
| | Vocabulary | -0.007 | VLC | 0.958 | N/A |
| | Reading Comprehension | -0.245* | VLC | 0.005 | Sig. |
| Formal Communication | Spelling | -0.335* | LC | 0.009 | Sig. |
| | Vocabulary | -0.245 | VLC | 0.059 | N/A |
| | Reading Comprehension | 0.450** * | LC | <.001 | Sig. |
| Technical Writing | Spelling | -0.201* | VLC | 0.040 | Sig. |
| | Vocabulary | -0.178 | VLC | 0.175 | N/A |
| | Reading Comprehension | -0.057 | VLC | 0.663 | N/A |
| Overall Level of Usage of Social Media Vernacular | Overall Level Literacy Skills | -0.348 | Low Correlation | 0.006 | Significant |

Note. Int. refers to interpretation, Sig. refers to Significant, N/A refers to Not Applicable, and N.Sig. refers to Not Significant. The r-value interpretation is based on the following 0.90 to 0.99 as Very High Correlation (VHC); 0.70 to 0.89 as High Correlation (HC); 0.50 to 0.69 as Moderate Correlation (MC); 0.30 to 0.49 as Low Correlation (LC); and 0.01 to 0.29 as Very Low Correlation (VLC). While the p-value is interpreted as Significant when < 0.05.

For technical writing, spelling demonstrates a very low negative correlation that is significant. Meanwhile, vocabulary and reading comprehension both show very low negative correlations that are not significant. Overall, the level of usage of social media vernacular and the overall level of literacy skills reveal a low negative correlation that is statistically significant, indicating that increased use of social media vernacular is associated with a decrease in students' literacy skills.

The results indicated that the influence of social media vernacular on literacy skills is generally limited and varies depending on the communication context. Oral communication shows negligible impact on spelling and vocabulary, suggesting that informal digital language use does not strongly affect students' basic language mechanics. However, the significant negative correlation with reading comprehension may

Table 4
Extent of Influence of the Level of Usage of Social Media Vernacular on the Level of Literacy Skills of Students

| Usage of Social Media Vernacular | Literacy Skills of Students | r-value | r ² -value | Int |
|---|-------------------------------|---------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Oral Communication | Reading Comprehension | -0.245 | 0.060 | VWI |
| Formal Communication | Spelling | -0.335 | 0.112 | VWI |
| Formal Communication | Reading Comprehension | 0.450 | 0.203 | WI |
| Technical Writing | Spelling | -0.201 | 0.040 | VWI |
| Overall Level of Usage of Social Media Vernacular | Overall Level Literacy Skills | -0.348 | 0.121 | Very Weak Influence |

Note. The r²-value interpretation is based on the following 0.80 to 1.00 as Very Strong Influence (VSI); 0.60 to 0.79 as Strong Influence (SI); 0.40 to 0.59 as Moderate Influence (MI); 0.20 to 0.39 as Weak Influence (WI); and 0.00 to 0.19 as Very Weak Influence (VWI).

indicate that habitual exposure to social media language slightly interferes with processing structured text. In formal communication, the negative correlation with spelling highlights the potential influence of informal digital language on students’ accuracy in academic writing, while the positive correlation with reading comprehension suggests that exposure to varied digital language may enhance students’ ability to interpret meaning. Overall, the low negative correlation between social media usage and literacy skills suggests that although digital language affects certain areas, students maintain functional proficiency across multiple literacy domains.

These findings implied that social media vernacular has a mixed effect on students’ literacy skills. While exposure to informal language does not appear to significantly compromise vocabulary, it may subtly challenge spelling accuracy, particularly in formal communication and technical writing contexts. Conversely, the positive relationship with reading comprehension in formal communication suggests that engagement with social media language may support contextual understanding and interpretation skills. The overall low negative correlation confirms that social media vernacular exerts limited influence on overall literacy, indicating that students can balance informal digital language with academic literacy demands. Therefore, while social media affects some aspects of literacy, its impact is nuanced and context dependent.

Extent of Influence of Social Media Vernacular on Students’ Literacy Skills

Table 4 shows the extent of influence of social media vernacular usage on students’ literacy skills. Oral communication has a very weak influence on reading comprehension, while formal communication shows a very weak influence on spelling and a weak influence on reading comprehension. Technical writing has a very weak influence on spelling. Overall, the level of social media vernacular usage exerts a very weak influence on the literacy skills of students, with an r² value of 0.121. This suggests that while social media language is present in students’ communication, its direct impact on literacy performance is limited. The results indicated that the influence of social media vernacular on literacy skills is generally minimal. The highest observed influence is in formal communication and reading comprehension, suggesting that structured academic contexts may allow some transfer of digital language exposure. In contrast, spelling

and technical writing show very weak influence, reflecting the challenges informal social media language poses to conventional writing accuracy. Overall, the low r^2 values suggest that other factors, such as classroom instruction, learner motivation, and exposure to formal texts, play a larger role in literacy skill development. The findings highlight that while students frequently engage with social media vernacular, this does not strongly predict their literacy outcomes.

The findings are supported by Ahmed and Hassan (2020), who found that excessive exposure to social media language contributes to spelling inconsistencies and reduced attention to grammatical accuracy among students. Similarly, Alakrash and Razak (2021) emphasized that online communication practices influence students' writing habits, particularly through the frequent use of abbreviations, acronyms, and informal expressions. In contrast, Sundari, Febriyanti, and Saragih (2021) noted that digital communication can improve students' comprehension and vocabulary acquisition because learners are exposed to diverse forms of language and contextual interactions online.

These findings can be explained through the Digital Literacy Theory by Eshet-Alkalai (2018), which explains that learners develop literacy skills through interaction with digital environments that shape how language is processed, interpreted, and applied. The theory supports the idea that students gain contextual understanding and communication skills from online exposure while also becoming vulnerable to informal writing habits that affect spelling accuracy. In addition, the Cognitive-Affective-Social Theory of Learning in

Digital Environments (CASTLE) by Schneider et al. (2022) explains that digital platforms influence learners' cognitive and linguistic behaviors through continuous social interaction and exposure to informal communication styles. This explains why students demonstrate both adaptive comprehension skills and occasional weaknesses in formal literacy conventions when frequently exposed to social media vernacular.

From 'Sana All' to Say it Well! Vocabulary-Based Learning Material

In developing this material, the researcher utilized the ADD Model derived from the ADDIE Model of instructional design, specifically focusing on the phases of Analysis, Design, and Development. The Analysis phase involved identifying the literacy needs and language challenges of students based on the study's findings; the Design phase focused on planning the learning objectives, vocabulary activities, and instructional strategies appropriate for the learners; while the Development phase centered on the creation and organization of the vocabulary-based learning material.

Analysis Phase. The findings of the study revealed that while students demonstrated adequate performance in vocabulary and reading comprehension, there were noticeable gaps in spelling accuracy and in the consistent application of formal language, particularly in technical and formal communication contexts. Moreover, the moderate presence of social media vernacular indicates that informal language habits occasionally influence students' literacy performance. These findings underscored the need for a vocabulary-based learning material that strengthens word knowledge, reinforces correct language conventions, and promotes appropriate language use across different contexts.

Design Phase. The vocabulary-based learning material was systematically designed to enhance students' literacy skills by integrating vocabulary development, spelling, and reading comprehension across different communication contexts. The structure of the material reflects a competency-based approach aligned with MELCs, ensuring that each activity promotes meaningful language use in both informal and formal settings. It consists of multiple sets of exercises focusing on context clues, synonyms, multiple meanings, reading comprehension, and the transformation of social media vernacular into academic language.

Worksheet Activities-The material is organized into progressive worksheet activities, allowing learners to build understanding from basic vocabulary recognition to higher-order application. Activities are grouped into thematic sets, including academic vocabulary in context, synonym recognition, contextual meaning, and reading comprehension vocabulary, which collectively develop learners' ability to interpret and use words accurately.

Bridging Social Media Vernacular and Academic Language- A distinct component of the material is the inclusion of exercises that bridge social media vernacular (e.g., "Sana All," "TBH," "LOL," "SKL") with formal academic expressions. This design feature guides learners in converting informal expressions into appropriate academic vocabulary, strengthens register awareness and language control, and addresses the impact of digital language on formal communication, promoting literacy in a modern context.

Communication Context Integration- The material incorporates varied communication contexts through dedicated sections on oral communication, formal writing, and technical writing. These sections provide learners with opportunities to apply vocabulary knowledge in authentic situations, reinforcing appropriate use depending on context and purpose.

Activity Structure and Support -Each activity includes clear instructions, multiple-choice formats, and structured tasks that promote comprehension, application, and critical thinking. The inclusion of answer keys and Tables of Specifications (TOS) ensures content validity, alignment with MELCs, and balanced distribution of cognitive levels.

Overall Design Coherence-Overall, the material ensures progressive skill development from basic recognition to higher-order application, provides contextualized learning experiences relevant to both social media and academic settings, and aligns with the study's objective of improving students' literacy skills while addressing the influence of social media vernacular on academic language use.

Development Phase. The reading selections and activities were carefully developed to integrate vocabulary, spelling, and reading comprehension skills within authentic and culturally relevant contexts. The material emphasizes correct language use while gradually guiding students from informal social media expressions toward formal and academic language, ensuring a balanced and functional approach to literacy development. Activities were crafted to build progressively on learners' skills, reinforcing the transformation of digital vernacular into appropriate academic expressions and supporting meaningful application in both oral and written communication.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Students moderately use social media vernacular in oral communication, less in formal and technical writing.
2. Students are approaching proficiency in literacy skills, with vocabulary and reading comprehension higher than spelling.
3. Social media vernacular usage shows very weak to low correlation with literacy skills, with some significant relationships in formal communication and reading comprehension.
4. Social media vernacular has a very weak to weak influence on students' literacy skills overall.
5. A vocabulary-based learning material aligned with DepEd MELCs and study findings was developed as a recommended instructional tool.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Teachers should guide students on the appropriate use of language by integrating classroom activities that distinguish informal and formal communication contexts. This may be realized through writing exercises, sentence reconstruction activities, role-playing, and comparative analysis of social media language and academic language to help students recognize when formal language should be applied.
2. Schools and teachers should incorporate targeted spelling and vocabulary exercises into regular classroom instruction to strengthen students' literacy skills. This can be achieved through vocabulary enrichment activities, contextual reading tasks, spelling drills, word journals, and interactive learning materials that encourage continuous language development.
3. Educators should monitor students' use of social media language and provide structured interventions to minimize its possible negative effects on literacy skills. This may be done by checking written outputs for the use of slang or abbreviations, conducting feedback sessions, and implementing corrective writing activities that reinforce proper grammar, spelling, and formal writing conventions.
4. Teachers should promote guided exposure to digital language while reinforcing academic literacy through balanced classroom instruction. This can be realized by discussing the advantages and limitations of social media language, encouraging critical evaluation of online content, and integrating digital literacy activities that teach students how to appropriately shift between informal online communication and formal academic writing.
5. The developed learning material, "From Sana All to Say It Well!", should be implemented in classroom instruction to further improve students' spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension skills. Teachers may utilize the material during remedial classes, enrichment activities, group tasks, and literacy sessions to provide engaging and contextualized learning experiences for senior high school students.

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