# Instagram Stories as a Creative Tool

# for Assessing Students Writing

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## Abstract

Writing is among the most challenging skills for most students, especially EFL students. Learning to write can be enjoyable if instructors employ diverse pedagogical techniques. Instagram is a digital platform for reviewing students writing. This study examines the potential of Instagram as a tool for assessing students' writing abilities. The dataset was taken from the Management and Informatics classes from Horizon University Indonesia, together with relevant scientific literature. The author applied H. Douglas Brown and Heekyong Lee's Teaching by Principle theory for the analysis. The results indicate that the writing of Management and Informatics students involves specific grammatical and mechanical issues.   Nevertheless, it did not constrain their attempts to enhance their writing ability. Instagram could serve as one of the most engaging digital platforms for writing.

**Keywords**: *assessment; digital platform; Instagram; writing skills; grammatical errors*

## Introduction

According to Walvoord (1996), scholars have focused on improving the writing skills of university students, especially those studying English as a foreign language since the beginning of the Writing Across the Curriculum movement over three decades ago. Enhancing writing proficiency is crucial for them, as the primary goal is to articulate their views in written form (Wahyuni et al., 2019). Nonetheless, Writing is inevitably perceived as the most challenging skill to master (Zoghipour & Nikou, 2016). Foreign language learners encounter challenges in Writing since it is a productive skill (Erkan & Saban, 2011). Cheng (2002) presents a different viewpoint. He contends that Writing is both a cognitive and emotional endeavour. It necessitates both cognition and effect (Cheng, 2002).

The author contends that the aforementioned concerns influence university students' perspectives, resulting in worry. Numerous reasons cause university students' anxiety; nevertheless, higher standards for writing throughout the educational system are likely to induce writing anxiety, hence diminishing students' desire and eagerness to participate in writing courses. Writing anxiety correlates with students' low scores on English writing assessments and in writing-intensive occupations (Cheng, 2004). Kondo and Ying-Ling (2004) assert that anxiety can diminish cognitive resources, posing significant difficulties for even the most proficient students. Anxiety is acknowledged as a primary factor contributing to writing challenges in second or foreign language acquisition (Dacwag, 2014). Consequently, it is not unexpected that EFL students refrain from writing in the language they aspire to acquire (Pazhakh, 2007).

Hanna Sundari and Rina Husnaini (2017) assert that certain educators often deliver critical feedback when students commit writing errors in writing classes. Moreover, they provide negative feedback instead of ideal remarks. These characteristics may diminish learners' motivation and willingness to exert more significant effort on their subsequent writing projects. Consequently, the intricate writing process, assessment criteria for Writing, and adverse educator comments may induce anxiety during the writing task (Sundari & Febriyanti, 2017). Thus, writing anxiety is a considerable issue for university faculty. The students' dislike of Writing may stem from nervousness, inadequate academic performance, and an inability to recognize the importance of writing in their everyday lives (Martinez et al., 2011). Consequently, every college community member must participate in the evaluation process to enhance the quality of students' Writing (Flateby, 2005). The writers propose multiple methods to enhance pupils' writing skills. One method is the pedagogical approach utilized by the instructors.

Puji Lestari and Lambok Hermanto Sihombing (2022) assert that instructional strategies impact students' understanding. "A teacher's creativity directly correlates with the enjoyment of the class" (Sihombing & Lestari, 2022) (407). The writers assert that the creativity of teachers or lecturers in fostering an engaging setting influences students' comprehension. The teachers are anticipated to exhibit greater creativity and independence in the method of instruction and learning. Consequently, advances in technology may serve as a remedy to the problem.

In the 21st century, technology is an essential issue in various areas, including education (Lestari & Sihombing, 2022d). Technological advancements enhance the interactivity and efficacy of the teaching and learning process (Lestari & Sihombing, 2022c). Thus, new and innovative instructional methods will enhance the engagement of students. The students will not experience boredom as frequently due to the engaging environment (Lestari & Sihombing, 2022a). Their argument is

supported by Pertiwi (2020). Technological advancements have transformed the globe, facilitating human chores, information acquisition, communication, and learning (Pertiwi, 2020). Moreover, technology significantly influences education by creating innovative learning and teaching methodologies and resources across all disciplines (Amelia & Witri Oktavia, 2021). The current younger demographic exhibits a significant competency and comfort with technology. They encompass accessible and unimpeded access to technical advancements. Technological advancement facilitates the online operation of society, permitting learners to participate in online education (Holmes & Gardner, 2011), as argued by Sihombing & Lestari (2022). Implementing an online educational system in the classroom is one method to enhance student engagement and enthusiasm for studying. There are many educational resource strategies that instructors can implement to engage students in language learning (Lestari & Sihombing, 2022b). The samples of numerous online educational resources are Nearpod, Peardeck, Quizziz, and Padlet, can enhance student engagement. In addition, social media may also be utilized in the educational process. Instagram serves as one example.

Instagram is a digital social media website for sharing photos and videos. According to Sihombing and Aninda (2022), Instagram is a demanding social media as it has various interesting features. All users can access every photograph and video shared on Instagram. Instagram posts are generally accompanied by a text or photo explanation and a hashtag. The public uses Instagram as a prevalent social media platform (Renata, 2021). Given its widespread use, Instagram can serve as a platform for students and educators in learning and instruction. Consequently, the author aims to investigate the efficacy of Instagram as an online teaching instrument for assessing learners' writing competencies.

Writing is a crucial element of English as a Foreign Language training in the Indonesian context. The acquisition of knowledge commences in elementary school and persists until university. Secondary education students must be able to communicate proficiently in English, both in written and verbal formats. It is the fundamental and essential competence in English education in universities. College writing tasks are assigned to advance educational goals (Sundari & Febriyanti, 2017).

Several studies have examined the influence of digital platforms, particularly Instagram, on students' writing abilities. Gunantar and Transinata (2019) examined the potential of Instagram captions to improve student writing and determination. The study involved 31 eighth-grade students at SMP N 3 Mranggen Demak and employed a two-cycle model, incorporating pre-and post-tests to assess enhancements in student writing. The findings indicated a substantial enhancement in pupil motivation and writing ratings, accompanied by a marked rise in the proportion of students attaining elevated test scores after evaluations. Wahyudin and Sari (2018) investigated the use of Instagram to improve writing

skills in undergraduate learners within an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) framework. The study involving 80 students in General English indicated that Instagram could be used as an effective tool for enhancing language learning within a blended learning environment. Both studies demonstrate Instagram's capacity to motivate students and improve their writing skills, especially in creative or informal contexts.

Nevertheless, although these studies present ensuring findings, they need to investigate the use of Instagram stories specifically as a tool for assessing student writing. Furthermore, these studies need of considering the creative dimensions of digital platforms, which could provide more interactive methods for engaging students in the writing process. Current research predominantly examines the general use of Instagram for writing enhancement, neglecting its more dynamic and interactive features, such as Instagram stories, which may provide further opportunities for student engagement and feedback.

This study concentrates on Instagram stories to address a gap in the literature concerning the utilization of interactive online tools for creative writing assessments. This study aims to explore the potential of Instagram stories as a tool for enhancing student engagement, providing personalized feedback, and improving writing skills in educational contexts. This research is important as it investigates a new application of Instagram that has yet to be thoroughly examined in prior studies. We view that this study is relevant for Horizon University students as it integrates their study habits with the technologies, they utilize daily, enhancing the learning experience to be more entertaining, relevant, and aligned with the digital era. It motivates Horizon University students to perceive writing not merely as a task but as a creative medium of expression that can be shared within a broader community, enhancing their personal and educational development.

Brown and Lee (2015) argue that the organization of writing lessons has changed in response to the compositional traits of writing. The writing needed to follow the rules of English literary style, use suitable language, and demonstrate a logically structured structure. The significance of outstanding compositions for student imitation and the extent to which the final work met criteria related to content, organization, terminology, language use, and mechanical components like punctuation and spelling is considerable (Brown & Lee, 2015). Brown noted that writing encompasses various genres, including academic, professional, and personal.

In evaluating students' writing, the teacher administers assessments to determine how effectively students articulate and structure their ideas in written form. Brown (2004:244-245) identifies five components in the writing process: organization, content, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. However, the author

used the grammar and mechanic criteria as most of the students that became the samplings had grammar and mechanics issues.

| Range Score | Description |
|---|---|
| 20-18 (excellent to good) | Demonstrates native English grammar proficiency, including correct application of relative clauses, prepositions, modals, articles, verb forms, and tense arranging; avoids fragments and long sentences. |
| 17-15 (good to adequate) | Advanced proficiency in English grammar indicates that specific grammatical issues may not impede communication, even when recognized by the reader; no fragments or run-on sentences are present. |
| 14-12 (adequate to fair) | Ideas are conveyed to the reader; however, grammatical issues are evident and adversely impact communication, with instances of run-on sentences and fragments visible. |
| 11-6 (fair to poor) | Significant grammatical issues hinder the effective communication of the writer's ideas. A review of specific grammatical areas is necessary, as the sentences are challenging to read. |
| 5-1 (poor to very poor) | Significant grammatical issues hinder the clarity of the message, rendering it difficult for the reader to comprehend the writer's intent; the sentence structure needs to be more coherent. |

*Table 1: Grammar range score*
Source: Brown (2004)

| Range Score | Description |
|---|---|
| 20-18 (excellent to good) | The writing complies with English conventions, including appropriate left and right margins, correct capitalization, proper paragraph indentation, accurate punctuation, and spelling, resulting in a neat presentation. |
| 17-15 (good to adequate) | There are some issues with writing agreements, punctuation marks, and occasional spelling inaccuracies. The left margin is correct, and the paper is neat and legible. |
| 14-12 (satisfactory to moderate) | Employs general writing conventions but contains errors; spelling issues distract the reader; punctuation mistakes interfere with the clarity of ideas. |
| 11-6 (fair to poor) | Significant issues exist with the paper's format; portions of the essay are illegible; there are errors in sentence punctuation and final punctuation; this is unacceptable |

| | |
|---|---|
| | to educated readers. |
| 5-1 (poor to very poor) | There is a complete disregard for English writing conventions; the paper is illegible, with apparent missing capital letters, no margins, and severe spelling issues. |

*Table 2: Mechanic range score*
Source: Brown (2004)

**Method**

This research utilizes a qualitative methodology to investigate Instagram as a creative instrument for assessing student writing. To assist the analysis, the study examined pertinent literature, including H. Douglas Brown and Heekyong Lee's Teaching by Principles theory. The participants were students majoring in Management and Informatics at Horizon University Indonesia, and 40 Instagram stories were collected from students in the Global Workspace English Program. Despite the population being 40 students, a sample of 4 students was chosen for the study due to their writings exhibiting prevalent grammatical and mechanical deficiencies across the population. The framework developed by Brown and Lee was utilized in the initial stages to assess the fundamental elements of writing. There were several stages the authors did. First, we selected four student samplings from a population of 40. Second, we analyzed writing components, particularly grammar and mechanical issues applying Brown and Lee's concept. Lastly, we gave feedback on each student's writing.

**Result**

The authors view that Instagram can be an exciting educational resource as it can create an engaging and appealing atmosphere that motivates students to engage in the various tasks the instructor has organized for the class. Because students have become familiar with Instagram, they experience an engaging and comfortable learning environment. Further, Instagram's capabilities are straightforward, so children are already familiar with them. The students are particularly enthusiastic about how to write on Instagram, as they perceive it to be more engaging and straightforward.

Furthermore, Instagram has the potential to inspire students' writing skills. Some students could be motivated to approach their coursework more meticulously. The detail can be precisely depicted by incorporating photographs into their post. According to Candra, Pratama, and Hartono (2020), the ease with which it is possible to write a description of an image on Instagram may incentivize students to demonstrate greater creativity in their writing and thinking. After viewing the image, it was easier for them to convert their ideas into text. Rinda, Novawan, and Miqawati (2018) posit that students are inspired to be more

innovative by the thoughts and opinions of others who have previously posted them on Instagram. Numerous sources, including Instagram-hosted videos and images, were accessible to users. As a result of the confidential notes or comments their peers provided, they prioritized grammar.

This study's findings, derived from the writings of four students chosen from a group of 40, indicate that Instagram Stories serve as an effective medium for students to participate in creative and straightforward writing. The students have shown proficiency in articulating their views clearly and creatively and using Instagram's interactive elements, including photographs and concise written form, to communicate their messages. Nonetheless, the recurrent issue observed in all samples was the existence of grammatical and mechanical errors in their work. These encompass difficulties with sentence form, punctuation, and grammar, which are typical for students during writing.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the study demonstrates that Instagram Stories can be an effective digital instrument for evaluating student writing. The platform's friendly and interactive characteristics promote student engagement in writing assignments that are more stimulating and less daunting than conventional written evaluations. The innovative integration of multimedia components in Instagram Stories enables students to explore their writing, providing a unique method for writing evaluations. In closer observation, Instagram Stories enhanced creativity in student writing, the identified grammatical and mechanical errors indicate a necessity for additional practice and instruction in these domains. Nevertheless, the study underscores the potential of Instagram Stories as an effective instrument for improving writing abilities and evaluating student performance in a dynamic digital environment.

**Discussion**

There were 40 students' Instagram projects that had been used in this study. However, for the analysis, the author used 4 samples of Instagram stories to be evaluated as their writings exhibiting prevalent grammatical and mechanical deficiencies across the population. There were two students from Management, and two students from Informatics. They were in the 1st semester in GWEP Global Workplace English Program, Horizon University Indonesia.
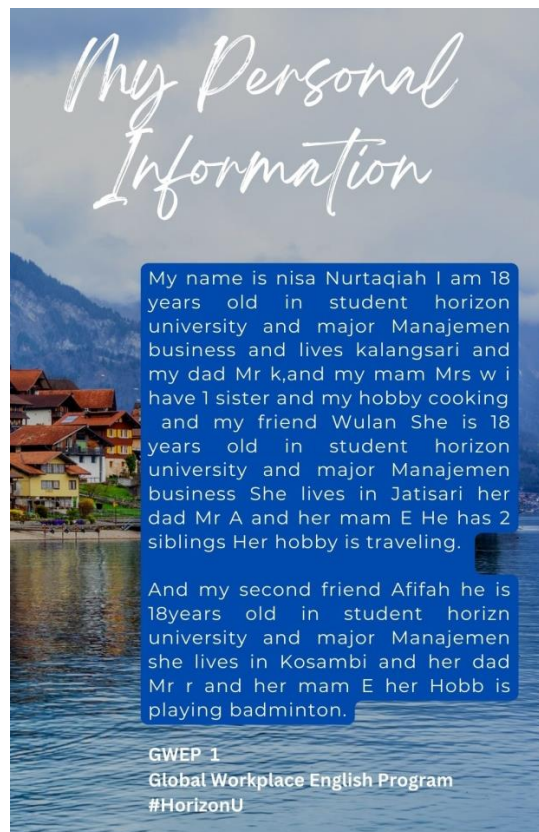
*Figure 1. 1ˢᵗ mechanical issue*

In figure 1, the 1ˢᵗ student states, "My name is nisa Nurtaqiah I am 18 years old in student horizon university and major Manajemen business and lives kalangsari and my dad Mr k,and my mam Mrs w i have 1 sister and my hobby cooking and my friend Wulan She is 18 years old in student horizon university and major Manajemen business She lives in Jatisari her dad Mr A and her mam E He has 2 siblings Her hobby is traveling. And my second friend Afifah he is 18years old in student horizn university and major Manajemen she lives in Kosambi and her dad Mr r and her mam E her Hobb is playing badminton".

From the authors' point of view, the component of writing in Figure 1 has some corrections especially periods, commas, semi colons, quotations, and marks. First, one common issue in writing is the need for commas to separate concepts or elements in sentences. In "My name is Nisa Nurtaqiah, I am 18 years old...", a comma should follow "Nisa".To add further information after "Wulan" and "Afifah", use commas: "my friend Wulan, she is 18 years old..." and "And my second friend Afifah, he is 18 years    old..." The second issue is the period. This story lacks a period after completing the content. A period should follow: "I am 18 years old" and "I specialize in business management." Clarity is reduced by the extended, disconnected paragraph without periods. The following issue is capitalization: Always capitalize

the initial word in sentences, such as "I am 18 years old" and "My dad Mr. K." Next, place and person names should be capitalized such as "Horizon University" and "Business Management". "Mr." and "Mrs." should be followed by capital letters like "Mr. L" and "Mrs. S." Next, the relevance. This Instagram story contains personal information, like age, name, hobbies, and domicile, blurring topic boundaries. A more methodical arrangement helps readers understand the information's structure. To minimize confusion, Nisa's friends should be mentioned in distinct sentences or paragraphs. The last is coherence: The writing lacks coherence due to disconnected concepts and unclear sentence connections. Nisa's name is spoken, and then her companions are described without a smooth transition. In my point of view, the student must divide the material into phrases or paragraphs that systematically handle one issue to make it simpler to understand.

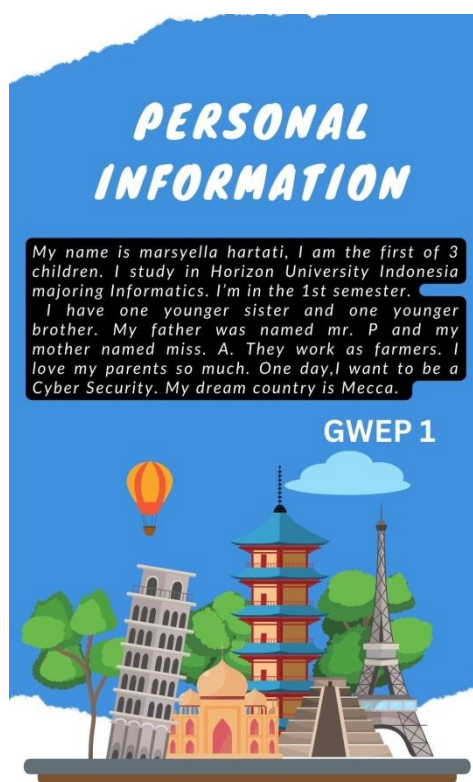The second analysis was taken from the 2nd student (Figure 2).



*Figure 2. 2nd mechanical issue*

In figure 2, the 2nd student states, "My name is My name is marsyella hartati, I am the first of 3 children. I study in Horizon University Indonesia majoring Informatics. I'm in the 1st semester. I have one younger sister and one younger brother. My father was named mr. P and my mother named miss. A. They work as farmers. I love my parents so much. One day,I want to be a Cyber Security. My dream country is Mecca".

In closer analysis, we view that certain writing elements require enhancement, including capitalisation, punctuation, relevancy, and coherence. In this context, the name "Marsyella Hartati" needs to be capitalized. "Horizon University Indonesia" is accurate as it denotes an educational institution. Then, "Informatics" and "Cyber Security" should be capitalized initially as they denote specific academic disciplines. Then, "Mr. P" and "Miss A" must capitalize "Mr." and "Miss" as these are titles that should be rendered in uppercase characters. Next, "Mecca" must commence with a capital letter as it denotes a proper noun. Then, a comma is inserted after "One day" and before the word "I" in the line "One day, I want to be a Cyber Security." The next component writing that mus be revised is the punctuation. Commas delineate aspects in intricate phrases and enhance reading fluency, as exemplified by "My father's name is Mr. P, while my mother's name is Miss A." The last component is coherency and relevancy. In my point of view, the elucidation of "Mecca" is provided with enhanced context to facilitate readers' comprehension of its significance as a dream for the author.

The third analysis is taken from the 3rd student (Figure 3).



*Figure 3. 3rd    grammar and mechanical issues*

In Figure 3, the 3rd student states, "My name is Aisyah Adawiyyah, you can call me Aisyah, My age is eighteen years old, I live in Karawang with my parents and siblings, and my hometown is lamaran at manunggal seven street, I have siblings is

one brother and two sister." In this analysis, I found the student had a lot of issues in punctuation. She put commas instead of full stop. Commas and periods are crucial in writing as they organize sentences, enhancing clarity and comprehension. Commas separate the various components of a sentence, including clauses, phrases, or elements in a list. This helps the sentence to organize, enabling the reader to comprehend the progression of ideas. Commas help clarity by separating the conclusion of one idea and the starting point of another.

In their absence, phrases may need to be clarified. A full stop signifies the conclusion of a sentence. It indicates to the reader that one thought has concluded and signifies the commencement of a new sentence. It segments text into distinct, comprehensible portions. Without full stops, sentences would perpetually extend, complicating the differentiation between the conclusion of one concept and the starting point of another. Aside from it, she missed the preposition. She should write, "I live at Lamaran, on Manunggal Street number 7."

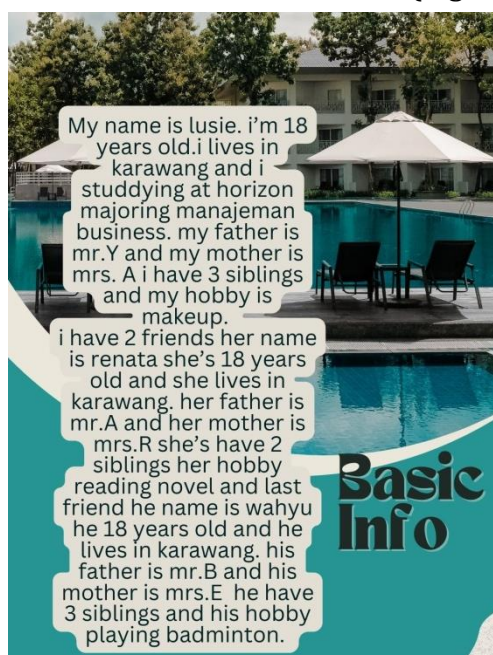The last observation is taken from the 4th student (Figure 4).



*Figure 4. 4th grammar and mechanical issues*

In Figure 4, the 4th student states, "My name is lusie. i'm 18 years old.i lives in karawang and i studdying at horizon majoring manajeman business. my father is mr.Y and my mother is mrs. A i have 3 siblings and my hobby is makeup. i have 2 friends her name is renata she's 18 years old and she lives in karawang. her father is mr.A and her mother is mrs.R she's have 2 siblings her hobby reading novel and last friend he name is wahyu he 18 years old and he lives in karawang. his father is mr.B and his mother is mrs.E he have 3 siblings and his hobby playing badminton".

In this analysis, we view that the student needs to have major revision in punctuation. The correction is, "My name is Lusie. I'm 18 years old. I live in Karawang and I study at Horizon University, majoring in Business Management. My father is Mr. Y and my mother is Mrs. A. I have 3 siblings, and my hobby is makeup. I have two friends. The first one is Renata. She's 18 years old and she lives in Karawang. Her father is Mr. A and her mother are Mrs. R. She has two siblings and her hobby is reading novels. My last friend is Wahyu. He's 18 years old and he lives in Karawang. His father is Mr. B and his mother is Mrs. E. He has three siblings, and his hobby is playing badminton." The student missed punctuation. Every sentence commences with a capital letter and concludes with a period to ensure a distinct separation between sentences. Subsequently, the student should use appropriate word usage: "Live" in place of "lives," "study" instead of "studying".

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this study shows that Instagram could be a valuable tool for helping students, especially English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, improve their writing skills. The students in Horizon University Indonesia's Management and Informatics classes were very eager to enhance their language skills, even though they made some mistakes with grammar. Because Instagram is a digital tool, it offers an interesting way to help people improve their writing in a fun and interactive way. Teachers can use the strength of this platform to help students improve their writing and get past language learning issues by combining different teaching methods.

## Acknowledgement

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