



Students' Preceptions and Attitudes Towards the Use of Instagram in English Language Writing

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Abstract

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This study aims to investigate students' perceptions and attitudes toward the use of Instagram in English language writing. The research employed a descriptive quantitative design using a survey method. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed via Google Forms to 100 university students from different semesters. The instrument consisted of 10 statements measured using a five-point Likert scale to examine writing frequency, confidence, motivation, and vocabulary development. The findings indicate that most students have positive perceptions of Instagram as a learning tool, as it encourages more frequent writing, enhances confidence, and allows students to express ideas more freely. Instagram also contributes to vocabulary improvement and increases students' motivation through its interactive features, such as captions, comments, and direct messages. However, some students showed neutral responses regarding its effectiveness as a focused writing medium due to potential distractions from entertainment content. These findings suggest that Instagram can be used as a supportive tool in English writing instruction when integrated with appropriate guidance.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has significantly transformed the educational landscape, creating new opportunities for teaching and learning in every field. In the twenty-first century, digital technology and social media sites have become an integrated part of students' daily experiences, changing their communication, access to information, and knowledge engagement (Umoh, Sheik, & Isong,

2020). Social media, in particular, has evolved far beyond its initial role as a means of social interaction, becoming an important platform for educational engagement. Kumar and Nanda (2022) state that platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp have shown significant potential to facilitate both formal and informal learning, promoting collaboration, creativity, and meaningful communication among students. Individuals of Generation Z, born approximately between 1995 and 2014, make up the first generation to have grown up entirely within this digital environment. As noted by Tarihoran et al. (2022), these students are deeply familiar with integrating social media into their daily communication activities, which also include language use. The growing overlap of social media interaction and language learning therefore provides educators both an opportunity and a necessity to explore how these platforms can be used more intentionally in educational settings.

Although digital technology presents promising opportunities, teaching writing in the context of English as a foreign language (EFL) still faces ongoing and widely recognized challenges. Writing is still considered the most complex language skill of the four skills, because it requires learners to simultaneously manage content, structure, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics, which is an exhausting cognitive burden that often reduces students' confidence and motivation (Handayani, 2017). Traditional methods of teaching writing in the classroom, characterized by teacher-led instruction, rigid task designs, and rare opportunities for real communicative practice, have faced criticism for not effectively engaging modern learners (Umoh, Sheik, & Isong, 2020). In addition, the lack of a real and engaged audience in conventional writing tasks reduces students' sense of communicative intention, lowering their commitment to the writing process itself. In the context of EFL, in particular, learners usually experience difficulties in written English mainly through formal education, which provides limited opportunities to engage with or produce English writing in authentic and meaningful situations. The gap between classroom activities and real language application is a major barrier to the development of genuine writing skills and highlights the need to find creative teaching methods that can re-engage students and offer more contextually meaningful writing opportunities.

An increasing amount of research has started to investigate the possibilities of social media platforms, especially Instagram, as resources that could help tackle some of these enduring issues in writing education. Handayani (2017) carried out a descriptive study investigating the students' perceptions of using Instagram in a writing course at an English

Department in Indonesia. The results indicated that the platform elicited very positive reactions, with students expressing enhanced motivation, greater involvement, and a stronger sense of communicative intent when writing for a genuine online audience. In a broader perspective, Amanda, Pratama, and Pertiwi (2024) performed a systematic literature review of twenty studies exploring Instagram as a learning platform and consistently identified positive results across various educational settings, such as improved learning outcomes, heightened student engagement, and greater creative thinking. These results collectively indicate that Instagram's visual capabilities, interactive elements, and strong familiarity among younger learners make it an ideal platform for facilitating language learning activities, such as writing assignments that gain from visual cues, peer feedback, and real audience interaction

However, incorporating Instagram into writing instruction has its challenges, and a comprehensive grasp of its benefits and drawbacks is crucial for knowledgeable teaching choices. On one side, Instagram presents significant advantages: its availability on mobile devices, user-friendly design, and its established role in students' everyday routines result in minimal adoption obstacles, while the platform's functionalities, such as captions, hashtags, comments, and stories create varied and inherently motivating environments for written communication (Handayani, 2017). Kumar and Nanda (2022) additionally emphasize that social media platforms such as Instagram facilitate self-directed and peer learning, allowing students to interact with material at their own speed and obtain feedback from both teachers and peers in a relaxed, pressure-free setting. Conversely, considerable worries persist. The casual nature of social media interactions may encourage informal or inaccurate language choices that do not align with formal academic writing standards. Amanda, Pratama, and Pertiwi (2024) also highlight that not all students have equal access to smartphones or reliable internet, raising significant concerns regarding equity and inclusion. Additionally, the potential for distractions, access to questionable information, and difficulties in maintaining academic integrity in an open digital environment present real educational challenges that educators must address wisely (Rivera-Lozada et al., 2022). Collectively, these factors underscore the need for further empirical research on how students perceive and utilize Instagram as a writing tool, insights that are crucial for creating effective, equitable, and meaningful technology-based writing education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Social Media in Language Learning

Social media is becoming a more important tool for language learning because to developments in digital technology. According to Apoko and Waluyo (2025), social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp have developed into interactive platforms for language acquisition and academic engagement. The constructivist framework, which stresses social interaction and genuine activities, and connectivism, which emphasizes the importance of digital networks in knowledge construction, may both be used to describe the theoretical underpinnings. These two concepts work well together to explain why social media has a lot of potential as a useful medium.

Rahmawati et al. (2024) claim that Instagram is the most popular platform among students because of its user-friendliness and the availability of features like direct messages, photo captions, comment sections, and the Explore feature, all of which encourage active writing practice.

1.2 Students' Perceptions and Attitudes in Learning

Students' perceptions and attitudes toward the use of Instagram in writing instruction are generally positive. Shazali et al. (2019) found that most students reported that Instagram motivated them to learn to write, helped expand their vocabulary, and provided inspiration for ideas through their classmates' posts. Yusuf and Jazilah (2020) also confirmed that the interest aspect received the highest response from students, far surpassing the aspects of writing competence and the learning process, indicating that Instagram holds significant appeal as an enjoyable learning medium.

According to Margareth and Susilawati (2026), students had a favorable opinion of all of Instagram's primary functions, such as direct messaging, comments, and captions and photographs. Because their posts are available to the public, students are encouraged to use better grammar. It's interesting to note that Shazali et al. (2019) found that students who are often silent in person actually become more engaged and receptive on Instagram since the medium lessens the nervousness that frequently prevents direct connection. However, entertainment material diversions continue to be a problem that educators must prepare for.

1.3 Instagram and Writing Skill Development

Instagram is a useful tool for improving English writing skills, according to several studies. Harmer (2004) emphasizes that writing is a complex process involving planning, drafting, and editing, and that students must be given repeated and guided opportunities to engage in this process in order to develop their writing competencies. According to Shazali et al. (2019), who found that the use of Instagram in teaching descriptive writing increases

students' vocabulary diversity and grammatical accuracy. According to Yusuf and Jazilah (2020), students can receive feedback on grammar, vocabulary, and writing structure from classmates and teachers by posting argumentative essays on Instagram. This makes the learning process more collaborative and participatory. This aligns with Harmer's (2004) view that responding to students' writing, whether by teachers or peers, is crucial, as meaningful feedback helps students identify areas for improvement and develop their writing skills.

METHOD

1.4 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive research design using a survey method to investigate students' perceptions and attitudes toward the use of Instagram in English writing practice. Quantitative research was chosen because it allows the researcher to collect numerical data and analyze trends systematically through statistical procedures.

The descriptive approach was appropriate since the study did not attempt to manipulate variables or establish causal relationships. Instead, it aimed to describe and interpret the existing perceptions and attitudes of students based on their responses to structured questionnaire items.

The research focused on identifying:

- The level of students' agreement with each statement.
- The dominant perception trends.
- The overall attitude toward Instagram as a writing tool.

By using this design, the study provides measurable and objective insights into how students perceive Instagram in the context of English writing development.

1.5 Participants

The participants of this study were university students from different semesters. The total number of respondents was 100 students, as reflected in the Google Form responses.

The semester distribution was as follows:

- Semester 2: 9 students (8,91%)
- Semester 4: 16 students (15,84%)
- Semester 6: 76 students (75,25%)

The majority of respondents were from Semester 6. This indicates that most participants had already experienced several academic writing tasks in their university studies, making their responses relevant and informed.

The participants were selected using convenience sampling because they were accessible and willing to complete the online questionnaire.

1.6 Instrument

The instrument used in this study was a structured questionnaire distributed through Google Forms. It was designed to measure students' perceptions and attitudes toward the use of Instagram in English writing practice. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: demographic information and a set of perception statements related to the usefulness of Instagram, writing frequency, confidence in writing, motivation, and vocabulary improvement.

The responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale consisting of Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. This scale was selected to capture varying degrees of students' agreement and to provide more detailed quantitative data for percentage analysis.

The questionnaire items consisted of 10 statements, as follows:

1. I think Instagram can be a useful platform to help students practice writing in English.
2. Using Instagram encourages me to write in English more often.
3. I feel more confident writing in English when I post or comment on Instagram.
4. Instagram makes learning English writing more interesting and enjoyable.
5. I often pay attention to English captions or comments on Instagram.
6. Writing captions or comments on Instagram helps me improve my English vocabulary.
7. I am interested in using Instagram as a medium to practice English writing.
8. I feel motivated to write in English when interacting with others on Instagram.
9. I believe Instagram can help students express their ideas in English more freely.
10. I would like Instagram to be used as a learning tool for English writing activities.

1.7 Procedure

The questionnaire was distributed online to the participants. Students were asked to respond to each statement honestly based on their personal experiences using Instagram.

The data were automatically recorded and summarized by Google Forms in the form of percentages and pie charts.

1.8 Data Analysis

This study employed descriptive quantitative analysis to examine students' perceptions and attitudes toward the use of Instagram in English writing practice. The quantitative data were collected through a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The responses were then automatically summarized by the platform and presented in percentages.

The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify patterns of agreement and disagreement for each statement. The percentage results were used to determine the dominant responses and to interpret students' overall perceptions and attitudes toward Instagram as a learning medium. The findings were then described and interpreted systematically to provide a clear understanding of how students view the role of Instagram in supporting their writing development.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1.9 Result

Table 1. Students' Academic Semester

Academic Semester	Frequency	Percentage
2nd Semester	9	8,91%
4th Semester	16	15,84%
6th Semester	76	75,25%

Table 2. Questionnaire Results

Indicator of Perception	Average (Mean)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Percentage of Positive Response	Percentage of Negative Response
I think Instagram can be a useful platform to help students practice	3,921	0,72	76%	3%

writing in English.				
Using Instagram encourages me to write in English more often.	3,921	0,72	53%	4%
I feel more confident writing in English when I post or comment on Instagram.	3,921	0,72	66%	4%
Instagram makes learning English writing more interesting and enjoyable.	3,921	0,72	57%	17%
I often pay attention to English captions or comments on Instagram.	3,921	0,72	52%	12%
Writing captions or comments on Instagram helps me improve my English vocabulary.	3,921	0,72	63%	15%
I am interested in using Instagram as a medium to practice English writing.	3,921	0,72	50%	7%
I feel motivated to write in English when interacting with others on Instagram.	3,921	0,72	67%	6%
I believe Instagram can help students express their ideas in English more freely.	3,921	0,72	70%	3%
I would like Instagram	3,921	0,72	66%	8%

to be used as a learning tool for English writing activities.				
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In this study, Karl Pearson's Pearson Product-Moment correlation technique was used to verify the validity of all questionnaire questions prior to data processing, ensuring that each item was appropriate for assessing the target constructs.

The initial category looked at students' views on Instagram as a platform for English writing. The information showed a predominantly positive perspective among those surveyed. A significant majority (76%) reported that Instagram can serve as an effective platform for honing English writing (Item 1), while mostly 3% held a negative perspective. Likewise, 70% thought that Instagram aids students in articulating their thoughts in English more openly (Item 9), while only 3% disagreed. While a somewhat smaller percentage (57%) viewed Instagram as enhancing the interest and enjoyment of English writing (Item 4), the general pattern in perception-related items suggests that most students maintain an optimistic perspective on Instagram's role in fostering English writing skills.

Regarding motivation, the research findings indicate that Instagram has a significant positive impact on students' self-confidence and motivation to write in English. 66% of respondents reported feeling more confident when writing in English through posts or comments on Instagram (item 3), while only 4% reported the opposite. An equally encouraging trend emerged in Item 8, with 67% of students feeling inspired to write in English when interacting with others on the platform, compared to only 6% who reacted negatively. These findings suggest that the social interactions facilitated by Instagram can significantly enhance students' motivational engagement in writing English.

Regarding students' behavior and habits, the research results show a fairly positive trend, although the approval rate has decreased slightly compared to previous categories. Item 2 indicates that 53% of participants stated that using Instagram motivates them to write in English more often, while Item 5 recorded a 52% positive response rate regarding focusing on captions or comments in English, accompanied by a 12% negative response rate, which is among the highest of all items. Item 6 yielded better results, as 63% agreed that writing captions or comments on Instagram improved their English vocabulary, while 15% disagreed. The relatively high rates of neutral and negative responses in this category suggest that Instagram's impact on daily writing practices varies among students. Ultimately, regarding

interest, Item 7 showed the lowest positive response rate at 50% among all items, suggesting that personal interest in using Instagram independently for writing practice differs widely. Nevertheless, Item 10 indicated that 66% of participants showed interest in utilizing Instagram as a structured learning tool for English writing tasks, while only 8% disagreed, implying that students are largely receptive to the formal integration of Instagram in academic writing settings

Discussion

Findings regarding students' perceptions of Instagram as a medium for practicing writing in English indicate a generally positive outlook. A total of 76% of students agreed or strongly agreed that Instagram can serve as an effective platform for practicing writing in English (Item 1), and 70% agreed or strongly agreed that Instagram helps students express their ideas more freely in English (Item 9). These results are supported by the statement made by Nugraheni and Priyatmojo (2025) that Instagram's visual and interactive features, such as captions, stories, and hashtags, effectively stimulate creativity and encourage engagement through authentic feedback from fellow users and audiences. Similarly, these results align with the findings reported by Akhiar et al. (2017), whose study involving 101 students revealed a strong positive perception of using Instagram for writing in English, as the students recognized that the platform encouraged them to express their ideas more freely in writing than in a conventional classroom setting. At the same time, a small proportion (57%) viewed Instagram as a way to make writing in English more interesting and enjoyable (Item 4), while 17% held the view that did not support the highest negative score in the perception category. This indicates that not all students view Instagram as inherently enjoyable or motivating, a detail acknowledged by Anggraeni (2017), who highlights that students in writing classes hold diverse views on the use of Instagram, and that specific barriers, such as privacy concerns and low engagement from followers outside their classmates, can diminish the enjoyment derived from the experience.

In terms of motivation, the evidence shows that Instagram positively impacts students' self-esteem and motivation to write in English. 66% of those surveyed indicated that their confidence in writing in English increased through posts or comments on Instagram (Item 3), and 67% expressed feeling motivated to write in English while engaging with others on the platform (Item 8). These outcomes support the conclusions established by Pujiati et al. (2019) that Instagram effectively encourages students to learn English and enhances their English skills, largely due to the platform fostering an engaging learning atmosphere where students eagerly accept feedback and feel appreciated when their classmates react favorably to their writing.

The public-facing nature of Instagram posts generates what Hasanah and Ekawati (2024) describe as a motivational boost. Students become more careful and deliberate in their writing when they know it will be visible to an authentic audience beyond the classroom. These findings align with the observations of Nugraheni and Priyatmojo (2025) that Instagram features such as likes, comments, and shares provide natural reinforcement, which motivates students to continue improving their writing skills. The relatively low percentage of negative feedback in this category (4% for Item 3 and 6% for Item 8) further reinforces that motivation barriers specifically related to Instagram use are minimal, although it is acknowledged that sustained motivation still requires careful pedagogical support.

In examining students' writing patterns and habits connected to Instagram usage, the results present a somewhat more diverse scenario. While 53% of participants concurred that Instagram motivates them to write in English more frequently (Item 2), and 63% recognized that writing captions or comments on Instagram aids in enhancing their English vocabulary (Item 6), these levels of agreement were notably lower than those seen in the perception and motivation categories. Item 5, which analyzed if students are actively attentive to English captions or comments on Instagram, had the highest percentage of negative responses at 12%, while only 52% answered positively. These findings are supported by the statement by Akhiar et al. (2017) that students are often distracted by the social and entertainment elements on Instagram, leading them to engage in passive browsing rather than actively engaging with language. According to these researchers, many students spend more time editing photos and chasing likes than crafting meaningful captions, thereby reducing the platform's tangible impact on everyday language use. The results regarding vocabulary (63%, Item 6) were quite positive and align with the report by Agustin and Ayu (2021), which indicates that many students feel Instagram plays an important role in expanding their vocabulary, particularly through captions and English-language video content. The contrast between vocabulary improvement and overall writing frequency suggests that Instagram's strengths are most evident when students actively create language, such as when composing captions—rather than merely passively absorbing content.

The last category, interest, yielded the most intricate results in the study. Item 7, which inquired if students have a personal interest in using Instagram on their own for English writing practice, received the lowest positive response rate of all items, at merely 50%. This suggests that although students generally acknowledge Instagram's value, authentic personal interest in independently using it for writing is restricted and varies greatly among individuals. These findings support the assertion made by Bestari (2020), which revealed that learners in an EFL course demonstrated minimal engagement levels on Instagram beyond mandated activities, typically accessing the app only when prompted by the instructor. This indicates that the drive to utilize Instagram for writing is not solely based on personal

interest, but is dependent on external academic frameworks. Nonetheless, Item 10 provided a different and more positive perspective: 66% of participants indicated they were open to utilizing Instagram for formal, structured English writing tasks in an educational environment, while merely 8% opposed this idea. This distinction is important and is strongly backed by the results of Nurdiansyah and Abdulrahman (2020), whose quasi-experimental research revealed a notable difference in writing performance between students instructed with Instagram and those instructed without it, concluding that Instagram can serve as an effective educational tool when adequately monitored and incorporated into teaching. Overall, these results indicate that students are generally open to using Instagram as a tool for academic writing when incorporated into a solid pedagogical framework, even if they wouldn't choose to use it on their own, which emphasizes the need for educators to create purposeful, targeted writing assignments based on Instagram

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study reveals that students generally have positive perceptions and attitudes toward the use of Instagram in English language writing. The findings indicate that Instagram serves as an effective and engaging platform that encourages students to practice writing more frequently, express their ideas more freely, and improve their confidence in using English. The interactive features of Instagram, such as captions, comments, and direct messages, support meaningful communication and provide opportunities for collaborative learning.

Additionally, Instagram contributes to vocabulary development, as students are exposed to various forms of English in authentic contexts. The platform also increases students' motivation to write, as it combines visual content with written expression in a familiar and enjoyable environment.

However, despite these advantages, some challenges remain. A number of students expressed neutral or less positive responses, particularly regarding the effectiveness of Instagram as a focused writing tool. Distractions from entertainment content and concerns about language accuracy may limit its potential if not properly guided.

Therefore, it can be concluded that Instagram has strong potential as a supplementary tool in English writing instruction. To maximize its benefits, educators should integrate Instagram into learning activities with clear objectives and structured guidance, ensuring that students remain focused on academic goals while utilizing the platform effectively.

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