

## Instagram Post: Modifying the Use of Instagram to Increase Students' Ability in Writing Cutline Caption

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**Abstract.** *With the rapid advancements in technology, educators have increasingly explored the utilization of social media platforms as educational tools. Among these platforms, Instagram has emerged as a prominent choice due to its widespread popularity. This transformation has seen Instagram being repurposed from a mere entertainment tool to an educational medium, particularly in the domain of language instruction. English teachers, in particular, have embraced this platform to facilitate the teaching of essential language skills such as speaking and writing. This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of using Instagram in enhancing students' proficiency in writing cutline captions. The research subjects consisted of 32 twelfth-grade students from SMAN 1 Jatiagung, South Lampung, Lampung Province. Data collection was carried out through a pretest and posttest writing assessment, and the obtained data were subjected to descriptive quantitative analysis. The findings revealed a notable improvement in students' ability to write cutline captions following the integration of Instagram into the instructional process. These results highlight the potential of Instagram as a valuable tool for fostering students' writing skills, specifically in the context of crafting engaging and concise captions. The implications of this study contribute to the expanding body of literature on technology-mediated language learning and underscore the importance of incorporating social media platforms into educational settings for effective language instruction.*

**Keywords:** *cutline caption; instagram; writing.*

### A. INTRODUCTION

Instagram is undoubtedly one of the most popular social networking sites (SNS) in the world today, boasting a staggering 1.440 billion active users as of 2022, according to Instagram Pres. This widely-used platform was created in October

2010 by Kevin Systrom, a computer programmer and internet businessman, who envisioned a platform that allowed users to share their photos and videos with the world. One of the most appealing aspects of Instagram is the wide range of features it offers, including a filter to edit images perfectly. With this feature, users can adjust the colors, lighting, and other aspects of their images to create stunning visuals that will captivate their audience.

As an SNS, Instagram allows users to post their individual photo and video content, along with descriptions, on their profile. This feature has proven to be extremely popular, with around 70 million photos and videos being uploaded by users on a daily basis, as reported by Instagram Pres. It is noteworthy that most of Instagram's users use the English language to describe their uploaded photo or video, which indicates that Instagram could provide an ideal environment for foreign language learners, particularly in relation to writing.

According to a recent research study conducted by Avivi and Megawati in 2020, Instagram's features offer advantages for both English teachers and students, and it can be promoted as an attractive educational technology for writing skills. In addition, Anggia (2019) has pointed out that several features on Instagram can be used to practice writing. As such, Instagram seems to be highly beneficial in providing an ideal environment for students learning English as a foreign language (EFL), as it has numerous impressive and amazing features to support their learning objectives, particularly in increasing their proficiency in English. It came to the point where Instagram's growing popularity as a social networking site cannot be ignored, especially considering the huge number of active users it has. The platform's various features, including image editing filters, video sharing capabilities, and the ability to upload descriptions of content, make it an attractive environment for foreign language learners to practice and improve their writing skills. Given the advantages that Instagram offers, English teachers and students

can utilize this platform as an effective educational tool to enhance their writing proficiency.

In relation with writing skill, instagram platform deals with writing caption identically. People will always write their caption when they upload their photo or video in instagram. According to Nunan (2003:88), writing is the mental work of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express them, and organizing them into statements and paragraphs that will be clear to a reader. Based on that statement, it can be concluded that in writing process we need to think and convey the ideas by creating some sentences arranged systematically in certain ways. In EFL learning process at school, writing is considered to be the most difficult English skill for students. Most of them gain some difficulties mainly in expressing their ideas in a written form. Besides that, writing is also considered as a complex process containing many things in order to create a good result. That is why the students face some problems in writing, for example in organizing ideas, having lack of vocabulary and having less accuracy in grammar. Previous research conducted by Insani (2020) shows that instagram could be used as learning media to increase students' descriptive text writing ability. Meanwhile, as stated in Curriculum 2013 on Basic Competence 3.3 and 4.3, the XII grade of senior high school students are expected to be able to write caption and develop their ideas based on existing image and describe it through information.

Instagram itself is a mobile-based application that enables its users to take photos or pictures, apply the different manipulation tools to transform the appearance or pictures, and share them instantly with friends on different social networking sites (Hochman & Schwartz, 2012). From that statement, we can also say that instagram is known as the 'shoot and share' platform where a lot of social life is represented, explored, and shared through social networks. Meanwhile, instagram technology also allows its users to share a photo and launch a video with the caption on it.

Previous research done by Maulina, Muslem, and Yuliana (2018) shows the positive effect of the use of instagram in writing caption generally based on five elements namely clarity, conciseness, relevance, context, and attractiveness. Triwinarsih (2019) also stated that the students are able to organize their writing by writing caption on their instagram post to help them developing their writing ability. From that statement, we can also say that instagram is known as the ‘shoot and share’ platform where a lot of social life is represented, explored, and shared through social networks. Meanwhile, instagram technology also allows its users to share a photo and launch a video with the caption on it. The application of caption can be found in our daily life activity, for example:

a. In journalist world

We can see the caption written in a mass media both printed and unprinted media. It is written below the photo or video about an event to give information about it.

b. In data processing based on Ms. Word

The caption used to process the data in Ms. Word is usually in the form of command or direction.

c. In social media, for example in instagram

Instagram users use caption to explain or give information related with the photo or video they uploaded in their instagram account. By writing the caption, other users will get information about what exactly is in the photo or video that they post.

According to Grayam (2010), caption is a brief description to accompany an illustration of an uploaded photo or video and become the part of the important details of the post. It is also known as few lines or sentences that give information about the uploaded photo or video. Previous study conducted by Arif and Ani (2020) showed that caption is a kind of creative writing that is used to deliver information from the photo or video uploaded. Caption has some functions, for

example to increase the credibility of an image or video, to attract people, and to complete the information given to the published image or video. Maharani (2017) found on her study that instagram caption can be used to learn how to write recount text. Actually, there are some types of caption, such as identification caption, group identification caption, summary caption, quote caption, cutline caption, and expanded caption. From all of those types of caption, cutline is the most used type of caption in social media. This kind of caption supplies the information about who is the subject and what is done by the subject in the picture. In the use of instagram, some previous research focused in using instagram to increase students' ability in writing a general caption and common texts such as recount text and descriptive text. Thus, this study focuses on how modified use of instagram can be used to increase students' ability in writing cutline caption.

## **B. RESEARCH METHOD**

In this research, the researcher used one group pre-test and post-test design to administer the research. The subjects are 32 students of grade XII SMAN 1 Jatiagung, South Lampung. By having this design, one group was measured or observed not only after being given a treatment, but also before the treatment. A pre-test was used to measure the characteristics that were assessed before the treatment, while post-test was used to measure those characteristics after the treatment. Creswell (2003) states that an experimental design is used in which attitude are assessed both before and after an experimental treatment. The data were collected on an instrument that measure attitude and the information collected was analyzed using statistical procedures and hypothesis testing. In analyzing the data, the researcher used quantitative data analysis. It means that the data would be analyzed by using formula to find the significance difference of the students' ability in writing caption before and after the use of instagram as a learning media. In

Calculating the mean score of the student's writing test, the formula used is as follow:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Note :

$\bar{x}$  : Mean Score (symbol for the population mean)

$\sum x$  : The sum of all score

N : Total number of students

While in calculating the significance difference between the score of pre-test and post-test, the formula used is as follow:

$$t = \frac{D}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum D^2 - \frac{(\sum D)^2}{N}}{N(N-1)}}$$

Where:

T = test of significance

D = the mean score of difference (X1-X2)

$\sum D$  = the sum of the total score

$\sum D^2$  = the square of the sum score of difference

N = the total sample.

## C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### *Findings*

In order to answer research question, the data were collected by using pretest and posttest of essay writing. Meanwhile, the researcher used inter-rater reliability to determine the reliability of the test.

*Students' Writing Ability before Treatment*

Before treatment, the researcher conducted the pretest in order to find out the previous ability of the students in writing outline caption without using Instagram. The scores of the five aspects of writing tested in the pretest are presented in Table 1:

Table. 1 Average of Students' Pretest Scores

	Components of Writing										Total
	Organization		Content		Grammar		Vocabulary		Mechanic		
	R1	R2	R1	R2	R1	R2	R1	R2	R1	R2	
Pretest	11.15	10	12.03	10.78	14.68	13.03	13.65	12.84	7.12	6.03	
Average	10.57		11.4		13.85		13.24		6.57		55.63

From Table. 1 we can see the scores of five components of writing tested in the pretest with the average score of every each aspect. The scores are 10.57 for organization, 11.4 for content, 13.85 for grammar, 13.24 for vocabulary, and 6.57 for mechanic. Next, the mean of the pretest is 55.63. The distribution of the students' scores can be seen in Table. 2:

Table. 2 Distribution of the Students' Pretest Score

Score	Frequency	Percent
81-100	0	0%
61-80	7	21.80%
41-60	24	75.00%
21-40	1	3.10%
0-20	0	0%

Table. 2 indicated the distribution of the students' scores in the pretest. It can be seen that there are only 7 students (21.80%) from 32 students whose scores higher than 60. Next, there are 24 students (75.00%) whose score is in interval 41-60. At last, there is no student whose score is in interval 0-20 and 81-100.

*Students' Writing Ability after Treatment*

The posttest was conducted in order to see whether the students' ability in writing outline caption is significantly increased or not. The result can be seen in Table. 3:

Table. 3 Average of Students' Posttest Scores

	Components of Writing										Total
	Organization		Content		Grammar		Vocabulary		Mechanic		
	R1	R2	R1	R2	R1	R2	R1	R2	R1	R2	
Posttest	15.09	14.87	16.15	15.65	21.34	20.31	17.03	17.31	7.53	7.18	
Average	14.98		15.9		20.82		17.17		7.35		76.22

From Table. 3, we can see the score of five aspects of writing and the average. The average score for organization is 14.98, content is 15.9, grammar is 20.82, vocabulary is 17.17, and mechanic is 7.35. Next, the total of the average score is 76.22. The distribution of the students' scores can be seen in Table. 4:

Table. 4 Distribution of the Students' Posttest Score

Score	Frequency	Percent
81-100	8	25%
61-80	24	75.00%
41-60	0	0.00%
21-40	0	0.00%
0-20	0	0%

Table. 4 shows us the distribution of the students' scores from the posttest result. It can be seen that there are 8 students (25%) from 32 students whose score is higher than 80. The scores spread in the interval 81-100. Meanwhile, there are 24 students (75%) from 32 students whose score is in interval 61-80. At last, there is no student whose score is in interval 0-20, 21-40, and 41-60.

*Increase of Students' Ability in Writing Cutline Caption by Using Instagram*

The result of the pretest and posttest implied that the use of instagram has increased students' ability in writing cutline caption. This can be observed from the increase of the total score from the pretest to posttest as it is presented in Table. 5:

Table. 5 Increase from Students' Pretest to Posttest Score

	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	Increase
Mean	55.63	76.22	20.59

Having seen Table. 5, we can see that the increase mean from the pretest to posttest is 20.59. Meanwhile, the increase of five writing aspects is presented in Table. 6:

Table. 6 Increase of Five Writing Aspects from Students' Pretest to Posttest Score

Writing Aspect	Pretest	Posttest	Increase
Organization	10.57	14.98	4.41
Content	11.4	15.9	4.5
Grammar	13.85	20.82	6.97
Vocabulary	13.24	17.17	3.93
Mechanic	6.57	7.35	0.78

From Table. 6, it can be seen that every each writing aspect score has increased from the pretest to posttest. The highest increase is in grammar aspect which increased from 13.85 to 20.82 and the lowest increase is in mechanic aspect which increased from 6.57 to 7.35.

There is one hypothesis in this research; it is the use of instagram can increase students' ability in writing cutline caption. In order to prove whether the hypothesis is accepted or rejected the researcher used paired sample test. The result can be seen in Table. 7:

Table. 7 Descriptive Statistical Values Concerning Pretest and Posttest Scores of Students' Writing Ability

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	PRETEST SCORE	55.313	32	8.8032	1.5562
	POSTTEST SCORE	76.531	32	4.7856	.8460

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	PRETEST SCORE - POSTTEST SCORE	-21.2187	5.8017	1.0256	-23.3105	-19.1270	-20.689	31	.000

Based on Table. 7, the researcher compared t-value with t-table. In this case, t-value was 20.689 while t-table was 2.039. If t-value > t-table, the result of this present study was significant. As it was stated in chapter 2, Ho was accepted if t-value was lower than t-table and H1 was accepted if t-value was higher that t-table. Furthermore, probability level (p) which was under the column two tailed significance was p= .000. Based on the result, it can be said that the use of instagram could significantly increase students' ability in writing outline caption.

### ***Discussion***

Having all of those steps of writing, the result of the posttest indicated that the use of instagram can increase students' ability in writing outline caption. It can be seen from the increase of the average score for every aspects of writing. This finding is in line with the previous research done by Diah, Nidaan, and Rely (2016) which shows that some aspects of writing are combined in the caption written in instagram in order to ensure the delivery of the message.

The highest increase among those five aspects was in grammar which increased 6.97 points from 13.85 for the pretest result to 20.82 for the posttest result. It happened because of some reasons. The first reason was because outline caption

uses two simple tenses namely simple present tense and simple past tense as the language features. Those two tenses were quite familiar for most of grade twelve students so they did not find any difficulties in creating the sentences using those tenses. This was in line with the previous research done by Dwi, Didin, Alex, and Maya (2019) which stated that caption usually uses short sentences and simple grammar. Another reason why grammar aspect had the highest increase was because there is a 'see translation' item below the caption in the instagram. This item was very useful for the students since they could possibly check whether their grammar was correct or not by clicking this item. According to Elisabeth (2016), translation is a complex skill which entails different pragmatic considerations of a text and therefore cannot be reduced to a mere change of linguistic form to transfer meaning. The finding, thus, is in line with the previous research done by Dagiliene (2012) which points out that translation may enhance learners' verbal skill, increase L2 vocabulary, improve the language style, and develop language awareness.

Next, the second highest increase was in content which increased 4.5 points from 11.4 as the average result of content in pretest to 15.9 as the average result of content in posttest. This increase was caused by some reasons. First, using instagram made the students possibly chose the most suitable photo to be uploaded so it would be easier for them to decide the content of their caption. Second, the students would find the information to be developed into complete sentences more easily because they had already known the background of the photo that was going to be uploaded. Thus, the content of their caption would be relevant with the photo. As stated by Strangman and Hall (2004), teachers may improve students' writing skill by activating their background knowledge. It is also in line with Gupta (2006) which states that students' prior knowledge in writing has a strong effect on the way they realize their writing.

The next highest increase among five aspects of writing was in organization aspect which increased 4.41 points from 10.57 as the average result of organization aspect in pretest to 14.98 as the average result of organization aspect in posttest. It happened because cutline caption applied some simple main information about ‘who’ and ‘what is done’ by the object in the photo. Thus, the students did not find many difficulties to create a cohesive and coherence sentence which related one and another. As stated by Grayam (2010), cutline caption should be written in cohesive and coherence way since it serves for some functions such as identification, description, explanation, and elaboration.

Next, the two lowest increases were vocabulary which increased 3.93 points from 13.24 for the average vocabulary score in pretest to 17.17 for the average vocabulary score in posttest and mechanic which increased 0.78 points from 6.57 for the average mechanic score in pretest to 7.35 as the average mechanic score in posttest. The low increase of vocabulary is related with the limitation of students’ knowledge in the use of formal words in expressing their ideas. As stated by Brun, Nicole, and Cheryl (2015), effective writing entails not only knowing a lot of words, but also knowing them well. Thus, the writer should know the concepts, reference, and association of the word itself. The finding thus is in line with what was stated in the previous research done by Djihane (2022) which stated that the process of acquiring vocabulary is a difficult activity that needs extra efforts to establish and expand appropriate lexical knowledge.

Meanwhile, the low increase of mechanic relates with the students’ difficulties in using correct punctuation and capitalization. According to Brown (2001), mechanic deals with the combination of correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Thus, if the writers do not use it appropriately, they will not have satisfied product of writing. Previous research done by Algrenita and Listyani (2020) stated that linguistic aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, capitalization and

spelling are included as difficulties faced by students in doing writing performance. It is in line with the finding of this study which showed that students face some difficulties in using correct punctuation and capitalization in writing caption through instagram. It is because they also do it in paper writing where they are not used to use correct punctuation and capitalization.

#### **D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

##### ***Conclusion***

Based on the analyzed and discussed data, it can be concluded that the use of Instagram has several significant implications. Firstly, Instagram offers a range of benefits for enhancing students' writing abilities, as it provides an enjoyable platform for learning through creative and practical writing activities. The results show a notable increase in students' mean posttest scores compared to their pretest scores, indicating improved performance. Secondly, integrating Instagram into the instructional process positively influences multiple aspects of writing, including organization, content, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Notably, the greatest improvements were observed in grammar, content, and organization. Finally, this research confirms that modifying the use of Instagram is particularly effective in enhancing students' skills in writing outline captions, making it a suitable tool for addressing the research topic. These findings highlight the potential of Instagram as an educational resource, promoting student motivation, and fostering writing proficiency across various dimensions, including the specific area of writing outline captions.

##### ***Suggestion***

Based on the conclusions above, the researcher offers the following suggestions. English teachers are encouraged to utilize Instagram as a teaching tool for writing, as it was found that students showed great interest in this platform. The use of Instagram can be adapted not only for teaching outline captions but also for other

writing topics. In terms of improving writing skills, particular attention should be given to enhancing mechanics, which was identified as the aspect with the lowest scores. Furthermore, future research can explore the effects of Instagram on different language skills, such as speaking or reading. Additionally, conducting similar studies with different student levels, such as junior high school students, can expand our understanding of the instructional potential of Instagram in writing education.

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