

STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES TOWARD THE USE OF INSTAGRAM IN WRITING CLASS

Candradewi Wahyu Anggraeni
Tidar University
Indonesia
candradewi@untidar.ac.id

Abstract

This study presents the students' perspectives of using Instagram in doing their writing assignments. Qualitative research method in the form of case study is conducted to obtain the data. Sixty students of writing class are employed as participants in this study. The result reveals that the students' perspectives cover two aspects that include benefits and barriers of using Instagram. One of the benefits shows that participants have positive perspectives of using Instagram in their writing assignments. Participants view that Instagram is a valuable social network platform that motivate them to write better. However, the participants face challenges in using Instagram for their writing assignments. The overall contribution of this article is to build on theoretical, practical, and pedagogical significances for students' perspectives toward using Instagram in writing class.

Keywords: research 2.0, Instagram, students' perspectives, writing

Introduction

Teaching writing in digital age is one of challenges in teaching learning process. Lecturers of writing need to follow the development of technology in order to support their teaching. In this era, 21st century, the students tend to access their social media platform regularly. They often chat with their friends, update their social networks, and upload their pictures so they will be called as up to date person. Regarding to the phenomenon of using social media, it is needed to make use of social media platform in teaching and learning process of writing class.

In teaching writing, several approaches are able to be applied in classroom. One of the approaches in which it has recently been implemented is a discourse and genre approach. Richard (2015) contends that a discourse and genre approach connects to the way on how to teach writing for particular purposes and contexts. It shows that students need to write their text that fit to the purpose and context of writing topics.

In 21st century teaching of writing, the role of technology in teaching and learning process is notable due to it offers lecturers to give another way of teaching

writing, so the students will be more enthusiastic in writing. Richard (2015) views "many new technological tools and online resources are available to support student writing."

Nowadays, there are many technological tools in the form of Web 2.0 technologies, for instance wiki, blog, podcast, instant messenger, online social communities, online video sharing, an online video and audio conferencing tools in which they give contribution to teaching and learning in 21st digital age (Koc and Koc, 2016). These Web 2.0 technologies will help the lecturers to provide different teaching method by applying the type of Web 2.0.

One of types Web 2.0 that the students are familiar with is an instagram as online social communities. Instagram is one of social network platforms in which the students usually use it to share their personal information, such as uploading their pictures or videos and writing instagram captions. Alhabash and Ma (2017) state:

Instagram is a photo-sharing mobile application that allows users to take pictures, apply filters to them, and share them on the platform itself. Instagram has over 400 million active monthly users who shared over 40 billion pictures.

Using instagram in teaching and learning process of writing class is an alternative way to apply 21st century skills. Ledward and Hirata in Fandino (2013) proposes 21st century skill consist of an integrated of content knowledge, particular skills, proficiency, and literacy of technologies which include skill in critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and team work.

Referring to the skill of 21st century of teaching and learning, this study captures a case of applying instagram in writing class in the form of submitting writing assignments. In this study, the researcher who is also the writing lecturer ask her students to post two writing assignments in instagram. The first instagram assignment is about writing a paragraph that consist at least eight sentences about certain topics. The second instagram assignment is about writing a reflective journal at least fifteen sentences toward the material of writing an outline.

Moreover, using instagram in writing class is not easy as it seems since several students have problems in using instagram for uploading their assignments. However, some students get benefits of instagram as a platform to submit their tasks.

Furthermore, the students have different perspectives about the use of instagram in teaching and learning process. The notion of perspective derives from the idea of viewpoints or perception about a case of applying instagram. Johnson in Alnujaidi (2017) proposes that perception is an external factor that focuses on person's point of view, understanding, belief, and reaction to an innovation.

Considering such as an issue, this study aims at describing the students' perspective toward the use of instagram in writing class. The study is guided by a research question; what are the students' perspectives toward the use of instagram in writing class?

Methodology

To investigate the students' perspectives, a case study was conducted to describe a phenomenon about students' perceptions of using instagram in writing class. Heigham and Crocker (2009) propose "case studies are empirical investigations of contemporary phenomena within real-life contexts in which they comprise a bounded system, including an individual or entity and setting in which they act."

This case study also used the term of research 2.0. In this 21st century of research era, research 2.0 is becoming a trend due to the use of technology and social media in teaching and learning process is needed to be studied. Ratri and Given (2010) viewed "The concept of 'Research 2.0' is a focus to demystify this domain in Web 2.0 environment." It meant that the researcher of Research 2.0 describe a phenomenon of using Web 2.0 platform.

Furthermore, the subject of the study was sixty students of two classes of Writing 3 course. Writing 3 was one of compulsory writing course in Department of English Language Education at Tidar University. However, there were only fifty six out of sixty students who involved in the process of collecting the data due to four students were absent in the classroom. Therefore, there were fifty six students who fulfilled a questionnaire.

Open-ended questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection. The questionnaire consisted of eight questions that covered the purpose of the study. Moreover, the data collection procedures of this study were as follows.

1. Making the questions for open-ended questionnaire.
2. Giving the questionnaire to the participants (students).
3. Asking the participants to fill in the questionnaire.
4. Collecting the questionnaire that had been answered.

After the data collection procedures had been completed, the data were analyzed

in order to answer the research question. For analyzing the data, the researcher had several data analysis techniques such as:

1. Reading all responses.
2. Sorting the data.
3. Organizing, coding, and analyzing the data in order to make the research themes.
4. Elaborating the analysis of the data to get the findings.

Findings and Discussion

Referring to the purpose of this study that was to describe the students’ perspectives toward the use of instagram in writing class, this part delivered the findings and discussion of this study. The findings were based on the questions answered by the students that were displayed as follows.

The Format of Students Assignments in Instagram

As it was stated in the previous part, two writing assignments were given to the students for being posted in instagram. The instructions of the assignment were displayed in the following Table 1.

Table 1. Instructions of Writing Assignments

Assignments	Instructions
1 st	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choose one of the writing topics. 2. Write a paragraph consists of 8 sentences (at least) about the chosen topic. 3. Post your paragraph in your instagram. 4. Give the photo to support your paragraph. 5. Tag your post to my instagram 6. Make the instagram hashtags #Writing3 #Class1 #Ilovetwriting #FKIP #PBI #UNTIDAR
2 nd	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Post your outline picture 2. Write your reflective journal about what you have learned in this meeting in 15 sentences (at least). 3. Tag it to my instagram account 4. Your peer need to give

	comment 5. Make the instagram hashtags #Writing3 #Class1/2 #ReflectiveJournal1 #ILOVEWRITING
--	---

The samples of the students’ first assignment were as follows.

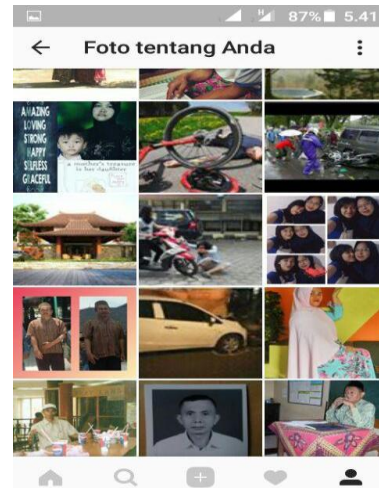


Figure 1. Compilation of Students’ First Assignments

Figure 1 showed the first assignment that had been tagged to their lecturer’s instagram account. The students were so creative by posting the assignment with the supporting pictures. Posting pictures in instagram were important since it reflected the content of writing assignment. Zappavigna (2016) proposed sharing pictures online in social networking platform such as instagram is an omnipresent practice. Moreover, the sample of student’s first assignment was presented below.



Figure 2. Student’s First Assignment

In Figure 2, it was one of the examples of student's assignment. She wrote the caption about her father. She described it well. She also got feedback from her friends. Furthermore, Figure 3 exposed the samples of students' second assignment.

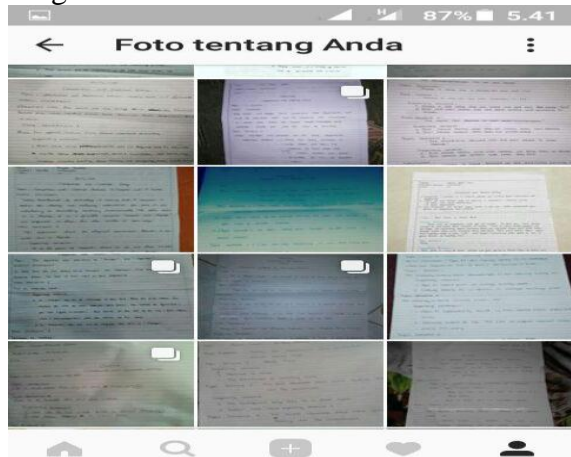


Figure 3. Compilation of Students' Second Assignment

The second assignment was about asking the students to post the image of their outline of comparison-contrast essay and they wrote the caption about it as their reflective journal. The sample of student's second assignment could be seen as follows.

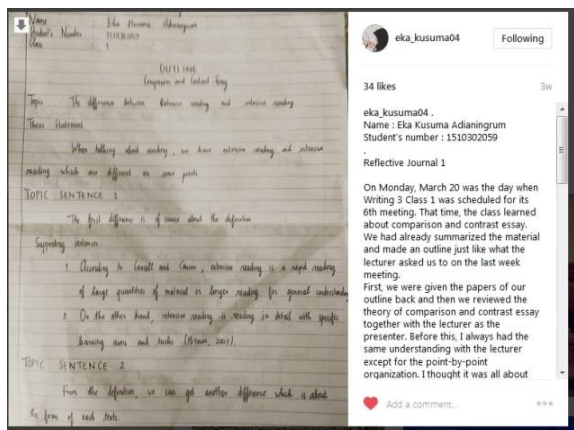


Figure 4. Student's Second Assignment

Figure 4 showed the student's reflective journal as her second assignment of writing. She shared about the aspects that she had already learned in the previous meeting of Writing 3 class. Besides, she was able to write the caption in cohesive and coherent writing. Her friends also gave feedback in her instagram.

Benefits of Using Instagram

Based on the open-ended questionnaire given, the students shared their positive viewpoints about general advantages of using instagram in their Writing class were as follows:

1. Students could improve their writing skill because they must write better.
2. Students were able to improve their confidence to publish their writing in public.
3. It was not time-consuming.
4. It was an easier way to do the assignment.
5. It could be done every time and everywhere.
6. Students got many comments or feedback from their friends or lecturer or followers in instagram.

These benefits were proved by the students' responses. The responses were as the following.

Data 1

It is a good way to improve my writing skill because if I upload my writing in instagram, all friends will see it, and I do not want to make mistakes. If I make mistakes, they will see it and I feel so shy. (Student 47)

Data 2

Uploading assignment in instagram can improve my confidence to write and to publish my writing in social media. My friends can give feedback easier. (Student 42)

Data 3

It saves my time because I can do my assignment everywhere. (Student 4)

Data 1, Data 2, and Data 3 were the samples of students' viewpoints toward the advantages of using instagram to upload their writing assignments. It meant that they had positive perspectives about the use of instagram for posting their assignment.

For the specific benefits of using instagram, four out of eight items in the questionnaire were administered to identify the additional students' attitudes toward the use of instagram. The

discussion of the results in Table 2 showed that the students had positive point of views about uploading the assignments.

Table 2. Specific Benefits of Using Instagram

No	Items	Total (56 participants)
1	Using instagram to submit the assignments helps me to improve my writing skill.	51 participants agree
2	Using instagram to submit the assignments motivates me to write better wrting.	54 participants agree
3	Posting writing assignment in Instagram is fun activity.	50 participants agree
4	Using instagram to submit the assignments can be a way for students-students and students-lecturer to communicate or to give feedback easily and effectively.	49 participants agree

The students also provided reasons why they agreed on those specific benefits of using instagram. The reasons were presented in the following data.

Data 4

It can improve my writing skill because when I read my friend's assignment is awesome, it forces me to improve my writing skill, so I can write it as good as my friends do. (Student 26)

Data 5

It motivates me to write a good writing. Uploading assignment in instagram means I publish my writing. I am so shy if my writing is bad or I make many grammatical errors since my followers or friends in instagram know that I am students of Department of English Language Education. (Student 12)

Data 6

Instagram is a social media for sharing photos and videos so it is fun to use current technology to do assignments. (Student 21)

Data 7

In this era, students and lecturers have already had an instagram account, so it ease them to communicate and give feedback via instagram. Instagram is the present social media and it is still hit. (Student 48)

Regarding to the data above, it could be inferred that the students took advantages of posting their writing assignment in instagram. Kikhuchi and Otsuka in Alnujaidi (2017) stated "Social Network

Sites facilitated dynamic communication inside and outside the classroom, created sense of community and belonging, provided authentic exposure to English, and stimulated motivation to learn English in an authentic fashion." Moreover, it was notable way to make use of instagram in teaching and learning process due to it was the era of 21st teaching of English that the use of social network sites and technology were growing rapidly.

Barriers of Using Instagram

In spite of the benefits, there were also found the barriers or problems faced by the students toward the use of instagram. The problems covered several aspects. They were:

1. The signal or internet access.
2. The use of time.
3. The quality of writing.
4. The violation of the privacy of instagram user.

Those problems derived from internal and external factors. The internal factors were about the quality of writing in which some students are not confident enough in writing and published it in the social media and about the violation of instagram users' privacy.

For the quality of writing, the students still had writing problems such as grammatical mistakes, typo, punctuation, subject and verb agreement, plural and singular nouns, and etc. For the violation instagram users' privacy, some of students disliked their instagram to be used as a media to upload their assignment since they thought it disturbed their privacy.

Besides, the external factors were the internet access and the time. The students could not post the assignment in instagram if they did not have a good internet connection. In addition, they also had problem in the use of their time in doing the assignments. Some of the students thought that uploading the writing assignments in instagram spent the time.

The barriers found in this study were in line with Vural in Alnujaidi (2017), he

contended that social media platform could waste the time, decrease socializing, violate privacy, and resulted addiction. The samples of participants' responses toward the barriers of using instagram could be seen below.

Data 8

Sometimes the signal does not support me to upload the assignment. (Student 54)

Data 9

It is hard to get good internet connection or Wi-Fi, so it takes time and I think typing in hand phone by using two thumbs take time too. (Student 38)

Data 10

I often make typo in my writing because I have to do it by using hand phone. (Student 1)

Data 11

Sometimes, my writing does not follow the writing rules such as the rules of singular/plural noun and punctuation. (Student 3)

Data 12

I don't like this type of assignment because most of my followers (friends in instagram) don't care about my assignment. The ones who pay attention are only my classmate. I also have problem in quota of my internet, if the deadline is closer, I don't have quota, there is no signal, I don't have much money, the Wi-Fi is error, so what should I do?

To solve those barriers, the students need to motivate themselves to write their best in doing the assignment. They had to practice their writing skill too. When the problems were about the internet connection, time, and violation their instagram's privacy; the students could find another way to get good signal, they must managed their time well, and they needed to know that there were many benefits to maximize the use of instagram in teaching and learning process.

Offline versus Online Assignment

Uploading writing assignments in instagram is one of the types of online assignments. Based on the students' responses in the questionnaire given toward the statement

"I prefer submit my writing assignment in the classroom (offline) to submit my writing

assignment in instagram (online)", it was found three groups of responses. The responses were 21 students agreed with the statement. They chose to submit the assignment offline. The students who disagreed with the statement were 25 students. It meant that they liked to submit the assignment online. Furthermore, 10 students chose to submit the assignments online and offline. Below were the samples of the students' perspectives.

Data 13

I choose to submit my assignment online because it is easier and my friends in instagram can give comments in the photos and my writing. (Student 27)

Data 14

Offline assignment is better because I can meet and consult my lecturer directly about my problems in writing. (Student 34)

Data 15

I like both, online and offline. I get clear feedback if I submit my assignment offline (classroom) and I think it is interesting to submit my assignment in instagram.

Data 13, 14, and 15 presented different perspectives about the notion of submitting assignments. It could be stated that the lecturer of writing needed to use those two ways of submitting the assignment. Therefore, the class would be more interesting and fun. Besides, the students had to try to do the offline and online assignments. Indeed, there would be many variations in giving the assignments so that the students would not be bored.

Conclusion

Throughout the writing assignments that should be submitted in instagram, there are benefits and barriers of using instagram in Writing class that are shown based on the students' perspectives. Regarding the benefits and barriers reflected in the use of instagram in Writing class, it is essential to use the proper portion of applying instagram in teaching and learning process. Furthermore, this study gives theoretical, practical, and pedagogical significances.

The theoretical significance is this study helps the readers to enhance their understanding about students' perspectives toward the use of Instagram in Writing class in the era of 21st teaching and learning. The practical significance is this study can be conducted by students, teachers, lecturers, or another researcher to investigate the students' perspectives toward the use of Instagram or another platform of Web 2.0.

The pedagogical significance is the lecturer and the students grasp the benefits and barriers of using Instagram in Writing class, so they can apply the use of Instagram in the teaching and learning process by considering the benefits and barriers. All in all, more critical investigation should be conducted in different context of study to enrich the data of students' perspectives toward the use of Instagram in teaching and learning process.

References

- Alhabash, S., and Ma, M. (2017). A Tale of Four Platforms: Motivations and Uses of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat Among College Students?. *SAGE Journals*, pp. 1-13.
- Alnujaidi, S. (2017). Social Network Sites Effectiveness from EFL Students' Viewpoints. *English Language Teaching*, 10 (1), pp. 39-49.
- Fandino, Y., J. (2013). 21st Century Skills and the English Foreign Language Classroom: A Call for More Awareness in Colombia. *Gist Education and Learning Research Journal*, (7), pp. 190-208.
- Heigham, J. and Crocker, R.A. (2009). *Qualitative Research in Applied Linguistics: A Practical Introduction*. England: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Koban Koc, D., and Koc, S. E. (2016). Students' perceptions of blog use in an undergraduate linguistics course. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 12(1), 9-19.
- Rathi, D. and Given, L.M. (2010). Research 2.0: A Framework for Qualitative and Quantitative Research in Web 2.0 Environments. *IEEE Journal*,
- Richard, J.C. (2015). *Key Issues in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Zappavigna, M. (2016). Social media photography: construing subjectivity in Instagram images. *SAGE Journals*, 15(3), 271-292.