

## **Social Media Writing Styles and Their Impact on Academic Writing: a Case Study at Akademi Komunitas Mapindo**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In the digital age, social media has profoundly influenced communication styles, raising concerns about its impact on formal writing skills. Understanding this influence is crucial, as informal writing habits may affect academic writing quality among non-native English learners. Although social media's role in shaping language use has been widely recognized, there remains a noticeable gap in the literature between theoretical understanding and practical evidence of how these informal styles translate into academic writing practices. To address this gap, the present study examines how social media writing styles influence paragraph composition skills among non-native English learners. The primary aim is to explore how informal language use on social media platforms affects grammar, sentence structure, and coherence in academic paragraphs. To achieve this, a qualitative approach was employed, involving 15 randomly selected students from Akademi Komunitas MAPINDO. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, analysis of social media content, and a review of academic writing samples. The instruments included structured interview questions and a coding scheme for analyzing both social media content and writing samples. The procedures involved identifying patterns and discrepancies between informal social media writing and formal academic writing. Findings indicate that students frequently transfer informal writing practices from social media into their academic work, including slang, abbreviations, and non-standard grammar. These practices often disrupt the clarity and coherence of their paragraphs. Nevertheless, students demonstrated awareness of the influence of social media on their writing. The study concludes that incorporating social media literacy into the curriculum and developing strategies to address informal writing practices can enhance students' paragraph composition skills. This approach will help bridge the gap between informal and formal writing styles, thereby improving academic writing quality among non-native English learners.

**Keywords:** Social Media Writing Styles, Paragraph Composition, Non-Native English Learners, Qualitative Research, Informal Writing Practices.

## 1. Introduction

In the contemporary digital landscape, social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Twitter have become ubiquitous tools for communication. These platforms have profoundly reshaped the way people interact, including their writing styles (Smith, 2022; Lee & Kwon, 2023). The casual and informal nature of communication on social media, characterized by the frequent use of abbreviations, slang, and emojis, presents a stark contrast to the formal writing expected in academic contexts (Johnson & Green, 2021). This shift raises important questions about the impact of social media writing styles on formal academic writing, particularly among non-native English learners.

Social media's influence on writing practices has garnered considerable attention in recent years. Researchers have noted that informal writing conventions from social media can adversely affect students' ability to produce clear and coherent academic texts (Davis & Morgan, 2020; Xu, 2023). The integration of informal writing practices into academic settings poses a significant challenge, as students may struggle to adapt their communication style to meet the standards of formal writing required in academic contexts (Brown & Adams, 2017).

In the Indonesian context, this issue is particularly relevant. Ardi (2018) and Halim (2021) highlight those Indonesian students, like their global peers, often carry informal social media writing habits into their academic work. These habits include the use of non-standard grammar and informal language, which can undermine the quality of academic writing (Putra, 2019; Widiastuti, 2020). Despite these insights, there remains a gap in the literature concerning how these informal styles specifically impact paragraph composition skills among vocational students.

A growing body of research has explored the effects of social media on various aspects of writing and language use. Studies by Green and McCaffrey (2021) and Roberts (2023) emphasize that the informal conventions of social media, such as the use of slang and abbreviations, often disrupt academic writing. These disruptions are manifested in grammar errors, coherence issues, and overall reduced clarity in students' written work. Besides, as a tourist destination, English also needs to be considered to support the success of communication with foreign tourists, English is an essential aspect of communication. English exists as a global language. Therefore, English is widely regarded as a global language (Anggayana, Nitiasih & Budasi, 2016). It is even known as an international language (Asriyani, Suryawati & Anggayana, 2019).

English is an example of a language regarded as a foreign language in Indonesia (Anggayana, 2023). It is done to minimize errors in grammar or English grammar aspects, such as the use of tenses in sentences (Lindawati, Asriyani & Anggayana, 2018). The skills and components of the language contained in them are still general and less relevant to the needs of student (Sudipa, Susanta, & Anggayana, 2020). Grammar is a set of rules contained in certain

languages (Lindawati, Asriyani & Anggayana, 2019). It is possible to develop their communicative competence in four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills (Asriyani, Suryawati & Anggayana, 2019). The primary energy source in terms of language sounds is the presence of air through the lungs (Anggayana, Suparwa, Dhanawaty, & Budasi, 2021). Languages studied can contribute to the Language Development and another researcher around the world (Anggayana, Suparwa, Dhanawaty, & Budasi, 2020).

Even though Indonesia consists of various dialects, it is not an obstacle (Anggayana, Budasi & Suarnajaya, 2014). Speaking English has become a conversation that is often done by foreign tourists (Anggayana, Budasi, & Kusuma, 2019). In these services, facilities, and service quality spearhead in terms of giving a good impression of service (Anggayana & Sari, 2018). Produces rules relating to the use and use of language on hospitality students. It uses theories and other disciplines related to the use of language is essential (Anggayana, 2022). In the cultural tourism industry is included (Redianis, Putra & Anggayana, 2019). Since Balinese people conduct many cultural and religious activities (Budasi, Satyawati, & Anggayana, 2021). The tourism sector can provide economic, social and cultural benefits for all stakeholders of tourism stakeholders (Osin, Pibriari & Anggayana, 2019). One of the developments in tourism is to open opportunities for the millennial generations to conduct tourism in tourism village synergizing different parties, namely, the community and the Government (Osin, Purwaningsih, & Anggayana, 2021).

Observing the growth and development of world tourism which continues to move dynamically and the tendency of tourists to travel in various different patterns is an opportunity as well as a challenge for all destinations (Suarthana, Osin, & Anggayana, 2020). It is not surprising that the tourism industry is an important economic sector, where most people work in the tourism industry (Budasi & Anggayana, 2019). The progress of a nation is largely determined by the quality of education of its population (Anggayani & Osin, 2018). The tourism sector continues to be encouraged because this sector is a mainstay in generating public income and foreign exchange for the country (Suryawati, & Osin, 2019). The development of tourism industry will affect the increasing income of the community around attractions and the creation of employment opportunities (Osin, Kusuma, & Suryawati, 2019).

Bali is the center of tourism in Indonesia and one of the world's leading tourist destinations (Yanti & Anggayana, 2023). Many language expressions can be used to greet and offer help to the customers. In using those expressions, choosing the proper expression that suits the situation and the degree of the formality is essential (Anggayana, 2022). The interests of tourism began to explore the potential of the region and as much as possible to package it into alternative tourism products (Suryawati, Dewi, Osin, & Anggayana, 2022). The existence of the tourism industry today has increased significantly both in quantity and quality, which is able to make an economic contribution to the country's foreign exchange (Osin, Pibriari & Anggayana,

2020). Everyday hospitality students on campus attend lectures and practice according to their respective majors. There are still many found that errors in writing. This is very important to study, considering that hospitality students will often communicate with foreign guests, using English (Anggayana & Wartana, 2022). Technology in this era is increasingly growing, advanced and modern. This requires the existence of quality human resources. Qualified humans are expected to be able to participate in the development of a country (Sengkey, Osin, & Anggayana, 2022). English also needs to be considered to support the success of communication with foreign tourists, English is an essential aspect of communication (Antara, Anggayana, Dwiyanti, & Sengkey, 2023).

Indonesia is better known internationally, as evidenced by the presence of tourist visits from various countries (Putra & Anggayana, 2023). The tourism sector is a dynamic and multicultural industry that heavily relies on effective communication to cater to diverse audiences (Anggayana, 2023). Strong English skills allow professionals to confidently interact with senior management, participate in important meetings, and articulate their ideas and concerns (Asriyani & Anggayana, 2023). The rapid development of information and communication technology in this digital era has brought significant changes in various aspects of life, including in the field of education (Anggayana, 2024). In today's era of globalization, it is important for hospitality students who come from Balinese culture to gain a deep understanding of English as an important cross-cultural language in the hospitality industry (Anggayana, Osin, Wiramatika, Sumardani & Chandra, 2024).

Education at the vocational level tends to receive English material that is identical to Academic Education in general, so that students who take Vocational Education receive material that is not in accordance with the Study Program when taking Higher Education (Anggayana, 2024).

Lee and Kwon (2023) further investigate how students' frequent engagement with social media influences their academic writing, finding that informal writing habits can lead to difficulties in adhering to formal writing norms. Their research underscores the need for educational strategies to address these challenges and help students transition effectively between informal and formal writing contexts.

In the Indonesian educational landscape, research by Ardi (2018) and Putra (2019) reflects similar concerns. Ardi's study points out that social media writing practices often permeate academic work, leading to the use of non-standard language that impacts writing quality. Halim (2021) also highlights the need for educational interventions to address these issues and improve academic writing skills.

The primary aim of this study is to explore how social media writing styles influence paragraph composition skills among non-native English learners at Akademi Komunitas MAPINDO. By focusing on this specific group of students, the research seeks to provide a

nuanced understanding of how informal writing practices from social media affect academic writing. This study will employ a qualitative approach, including in-depth interviews and analysis of social media content and academic writing samples from 15 randomly selected students.

The findings from this research are expected to provide valuable insights for Akademi Komunitas MAPINDO by identifying how social media writing styles influence students' academic writing performance. These insights will help educators design targeted interventions—such as writing workshops, curriculum enhancements, and social media literacy programs—to guide students in transitioning from informal to formal writing styles. By applying these strategies, the institution can strengthen students' academic writing competence and better prepare them for professional communication in the future.

## **2. Methods**

This study employs a qualitative case study design to systematically explore the impact of social media writing styles on paragraph composition skills among non-native English learners at Akademi Komunitas MAPINDO. The case study approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth understanding of students' writing behaviors within their real-life academic context. The research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how informal writing practices on social media platforms affect academic writing quality.

A total of 15 students were randomly selected from various academic programs at Akademi Komunitas MAPINDO. The random sampling method was applied to ensure that participants represented a variety of academic disciplines and writing habits, thereby minimizing researcher bias and providing more balanced insights into the influence of social media writing styles.

Data collection involved several key procedures. First, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the selected participants to gather insights into their social media writing habits and perceptions of their impact on academic writing. These interviews were recorded and transcribed for thematic analysis, focusing on understanding how informal language use, such as slang and abbreviations, affects formal writing. Next, participants provided samples of their social media posts from platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, and Twitter. These samples were analyzed using content analysis and a coding scheme to categorize and quantify the types of informal language used. This analysis aimed to reveal the extent of informal writing practices and their characteristics. Additionally, recent academic writing samples from the participants were collected and reviewed using a standardized rubric to assess grammar, sentence structure, and coherence.

To enhance the credibility and validity of the findings, the study applied data triangulation, combining evidence from interviews, social media posts, and academic writing

samples. This triangulated approach provided a more comprehensive and reliable understanding of how informal writing practices influence formal academic composition.

The study utilized several instruments, including an interview guide with structured questions to explore social media writing habits, a coding scheme for analyzing informal writing features in social media content, and a rubric for evaluating academic writing samples. These tools facilitated a thorough and systematic analysis of the data.

Ethical considerations included obtaining informed consent from all participants and ensuring the confidentiality of their personal data. Participants were informed about the study's purpose, their rights, and the option to withdraw at any time. Permission was also obtained to analyze social media content.

The study acknowledges limitations such as the small sample size, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. The focus on specific social media platforms may not capture all informal writing practices, and the qualitative nature of the study may introduce researcher interpretation biases.

### 3. Findings and Discussion

This study examined the impact of social media writing styles on the academic writing of non-native English learners at Akademi Komunitas MAPINDO. Through an analysis of social media content, academic writing samples, and student interviews, the research revealed how informal practices in digital communication influence formal academic writing.

The analysis of students' social media content, including WhatsApp messages, Instagram captions, and Twitter posts, showed a prevalent use of informal writing features such as slang, abbreviations, and emojis. For instance, commonly used abbreviations like “u” for “you,” “b4” for “before,” and expressions such as “lol” (laugh out loud) were frequently observed. Emojis were also used to convey emotions, often replacing traditional written expressions, which contributed to the casual and informal tone of communication. While these elements are typical in social media interactions, they contrast sharply with the formal conventions expected in academic writing.

**Table 1: Frequency of Informal Writing Features in Social Media Content**

Feature	WhatsApp	Instagram	Twitter
Slang	35%	30%	40%
Abbreviations	25%	20%	30%
Emojis	15%	40%	20%

Table 1 illustrates the prevalence of informal writing features across different social media platforms. Twitter showed the highest frequency of slang and abbreviations, possibly because its character limit encourages concise expression, prompting users to adopt shortened or informal language. Emojis were particularly common in Instagram posts, where visual and emotional expression plays a central role in user interaction.

The students' academic writing samples revealed that these informal practices from social media had a noticeable influence on their formal writing. Slang, abbreviations, and casual expressions frequently appeared in their academic paragraphs, disrupting the formal tone required for scholarly work. Informal spellings such as "gonna" instead of "going to" and "guyz" instead of "guys" were commonly observed in several writing samples, reflecting how students unconsciously transfer social media language into academic contexts. These informal elements negatively affected grammar accuracy, sentence structure, and paragraph coherence, reducing the overall quality of their writing.

Overall, these findings demonstrate that informal writing styles cultivated through social media are often carried over into academic writing. This confirms the study's objective to explore how social media writing styles influence paragraph composition skills among non-native English learners and underscores the need to develop instructional strategies that address these influences.

**Table 2: Impact of Informal Writing on Academic Paragraph Quality**

Writing Aspect	Quality	Observation
Grammar		Errors due to informal language (e.g., slang, abbreviations)
Sentence Structure		Disruption from informal tone and non-standard grammar
Coherence		Lack of cohesive transitions and formal consistency

Table 2 highlights how the informal writing practices affected the quality of the students' academic paragraphs. Issues with grammar, sentence structure, and coherence were prevalent due to the incorporation of informal writing styles. In many cases, students failed to maintain the level of formality required for academic work, leading to paragraphs that were difficult to follow and lacked the professional tone expected in academic environments.

The following is one of the student's original paragraphs on the topic "cell phones" as an example of how writing styles on social media influence academic writing:

*"Mobile phones r super useful bcoz they help us stay in touch with friends, get updates on social media, and play games. But if u use ur phone 2 much, it can b a distraction in class. 🤔 Like, u might miss out on important stuff the teacher says. 🍌"*

This paragraph, heavily influenced by social media writing habits, showcases several key ways in which informal language affects academic writing:

1. **Informal Language:** The use of casual expressions like "super useful" and conversational phrases such as "Like, u might miss out" detracts from the formal tone required in academic writing. In academic contexts, more precise language and structure are needed to convey ideas clearly and professionally.
2. **Abbreviations:** The frequent use of abbreviations ("r" for "are," "bcoz" for "because," "u" for "you," "ur" for "your," "2" for "to/too") disrupts the readability and professionalism of the text. Academic writing requires full, correctly spelled words to ensure clarity and formality.
3. **Emojis:** The inclusion of emojis (e.g., 🤔, 🍌) is typical in informal digital communication but inappropriate for academic writing. Emojis introduce an emotional and casual tone that undermines the seriousness of academic discourse. In formal writing, emotions and attitudes must be expressed through clear and precise language rather than symbols.

The use of slang, abbreviations, and emojis in the paragraph demonstrates the challenges students face in transitioning from informal social media writing to formal academic writing. These informal elements compromise the clarity, coherence, and professionalism of the paragraph. For example, the use of abbreviations and emojis not only reduces the formality of the writing but also makes it less coherent and harder to understand. Academic writing requires full sentences, proper punctuation, and clear transitions between ideas, all of which were disrupted by the influence of social media writing styles in this example.

The findings of this study indicate a clear need for interventions to help students differentiate between the casual, informal language they use on social media and the more structured, formal writing required in academic settings. This is particularly important for non-native English learners, who may struggle to maintain academic language conventions while also being heavily influenced by the informal practices prevalent on social media platforms.

#### 4. Conclusion

This study has investigated the impact of social media writing styles on the academic paragraph composition skills of non-native English learners at Akademi Komunitas MAPINDO. The findings reveal that informal writing practices prevalent on social media—such as slang, abbreviations, and emojis—significantly influence students' academic writing. The analysis of



students' social media content and their corresponding academic paragraphs showed a clear transfer of informal language elements into their formal writing. This practice undermines the clarity, coherence, and formality expected in academic contexts. These results align with Alshahrani (2021), who found that frequent use of informal digital communication tends to reduce adherence to academic writing conventions.

The study's findings underscore a critical challenge for educators: helping students transition from the casual, informal language of social media to the formal language of academic writing. There is a pressing need for targeted educational strategies to address these issues, such as incorporating social media literacy into the curriculum and emphasizing the differences between informal and formal writing styles. By bridging the gap between social media writing and academic expectations, educators can enhance students' writing skills and improve the overall quality of academic work. Addressing this issue is essential for academic development in the digital era.

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