

Exploring Indonesian EFL Students' Writing Engagement on the Tiktok Platform with the Support of Grammarly

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ABSTRACT

Writing engagement has become a central aspect of EFL writing instruction, particularly in technology-enhanced learning. Although previous studies have examined social media platforms and automated writing evaluation tools separately, little is known about how these technologies can be integrated to enhance both writing engagement and writing quality. TikTok was selected because its short instructional videos provide authentic language input and stimulate students' ideas, whereas Grammarly offers automated feedback that supports revision and improves writing accuracy. This study investigated an integrated TikTok-Grammarly workflow in relation to writing engagement and paragraph-level writing quality among Indonesian EFL university students. Students accessed instructional TikTok videos to generate ideas and receive language input, drafted their paragraphs, used Grammarly to obtain automated feedback, revised their work, and submitted the final version for classroom discussion and reflection. A descriptive qualitative case study was conducted with 40 undergraduate students enrolled in an English writing course, with seven participants selected for in-depth interviews. Data were collected through writing artifacts, revision notes, interviews, and classroom observations. The findings showed that the integrated workflow enhanced behavioral engagement through repeated revision, cognitive engagement through critical evaluation of feedback, and affective engagement by reducing writing anxiety. Students also demonstrated improvements in grammatical accuracy, lexical choice, and referential cohesion, although conjunctive cohesion showed limited progress. These findings indicate that TikTok and Grammarly played complementary roles in fostering writing engagement and improving paragraph-level writing quality in EFL contexts.

Keywords: *Writing Engagement, EFL Writing, Tiktok, Grammarly, Automated Feedback, Cohesion, Paragraph Writing*

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INTRODUCTION

Writing engagement is widely recognised as a key factor in EFL writing development because it shapes how actively learners participate in planning, drafting, revising, and improving their written work. It is commonly understood as a multidimensional construct consisting of behavioural, cognitive, and affective engagement (Albert, 2022). Behavioural engagement refers to learners' active participation and persistence throughout the writing process, including planning, drafting, revising, and responding to feedback. Cognitive engagement reflects the mental effort invested in generating ideas, organising information, monitoring progress, evaluating feedback, and regulating writing strategies to improve text quality. Affective engagement concerns learners' emotional responses to writing, such as interest, enjoyment, confidence, and anxiety, which influence their willingness to participate in writing tasks and sustain revision efforts. Rather than operating independently, these three dimensions interact throughout the writing process and collectively contribute to writing development by encouraging deeper learning, reflective revision, and greater learner autonomy. Recent studies have also demonstrated that higher levels of behavioural, cognitive, and affective engagement are positively associated with writing performance, revision quality,

and sustained participation in technology-enhanced learning environments (Fathi & Rahimi, 2024; Sato & Storch, 2022; Zhao, 2025).

Digital technologies have transformed how university students engage with writing beyond conventional classroom activities. In addition to completing academic assignments, students regularly participate in digital writing practices through social media by creating captions, commenting, sharing opinions, and interacting with online communities (Abdelhalim, 2025; Chen & Gao, 2024; Cladis, 2020). These practices encourage communication, self-expression, and social interaction while exposing learners to authentic language use (Lal, 2018). Platforms that facilitate content creation and immediate interaction also promote reflection and revision during the writing process (A. W. Li & Hebert, 2024). When integrated into language instruction, social media can support idea generation, planning, drafting, and audience awareness, thereby fostering writing engagement in EFL contexts (Fathi & Rahimi, 2024; Parks, 2021).

Among various social media platforms, TikTok has gained considerable attention because of its short-form, multimodal content that combines visual, auditory, and textual elements. Previous studies have suggested that creating captions and other short written texts on TikTok encourages learners to pay closer attention to language use, text organisation, and audience expectations while engaging in drafting, revising, and publishing cycles (Köster, 2018; Suherman, 2024). More recent studies further indicate that social media-assisted writing promotes learner engagement by providing authentic audiences, collaborative interaction, and multimodal learning experiences. Specifically, TikTok has been reported to stimulate idea generation, enhance creativity, increase motivation, and encourage active participation throughout the writing process, making it a promising platform for technology-enhanced EFL writing instruction (Elhada, 2024; Jerasa & Burriss, 2024).

Recent advances in artificial intelligence have accelerated the development of AI-powered writing support tools that provide real-time feedback and personalised assistance throughout the writing process. Unlike conventional grammar checkers, these tools support learners by identifying language-related problems, suggesting revisions, and encouraging self-regulated learning through iterative feedback. Studies have shown that AI-powered writing tools can improve learners' linguistic accuracy, revision quality, writing confidence, and autonomy when integrated with classroom instruction rather than used as stand-alone technologies (Zhai, 2025; Zhao, 2025). Among these tools, Grammarly is one of the most widely used because it provides immediate feedback on grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, and writing style during text production (Dewi, 2022). Previous studies have shown that interaction with Grammarly's automated feedback can improve language accuracy, writing performance, learner autonomy, and self-regulated learning, particularly when students engage in multiple revision cycles (Eden, 2025; Zhai, 2025). However, researchers also emphasise that automated feedback should be complemented by teacher guidance to help learners critically evaluate AI-generated suggestions and focus on higher-order aspects of writing, including coherence, organisation, and argument development (Nassar, 2025; Strobl, n.d.; Zhao, 2025).

The integration of social media-assisted writing and AI-powered writing support tools offers promising opportunities to strengthen both writing engagement and writing development. Social media platforms encourage learners to generate ideas, communicate with authentic audiences, and revise their writing through continuous interaction, thereby fostering behavioural engagement and increasing audience awareness (Cequeña, 2020). At the same time, Grammarly facilitates the revision process by providing immediate, individualised feedback that helps learners identify language-related problems and improve linguistic accuracy (Bui, 2024). When used together, TikTok and Grammarly perform complementary functions within a single pedagogical workflow that directly stimulates the multidimensional nature of writing engagement. TikTok serves as a source of authentic language input and idea generation that triggers affective engagement through enhanced motivation and behavioural engagement via initial text production, whereas Grammarly supports the revision stage by stimulating cognitive engagement as students evaluate automated linguistic feedback. This

integration enables students to engage in recursive writing processes involving idea generation, drafting, feedback evaluation, revision, and reflection, thereby supporting behavioural, cognitive, and affective engagement throughout writing. Recent studies have likewise suggested that combining social media-based learning with AI-powered writing support promotes learner autonomy, reflective learning, and sustained participation in technology-enhanced EFL writing environments (Jerasa & Burriss, 2024).

Despite the growing body of research on social media-assisted writing and AI-powered writing support tools, these technologies have largely been examined independently. Existing studies have primarily investigated TikTok in relation to learner motivation, communication, creativity, and multimodal learning, whereas Grammarly has mainly been explored for improving grammatical accuracy, revision practices, and writing (Doornaert, 2025; Ishak, 2023).

Consequently, limited empirical evidence is available regarding how these technologies can be integrated within a single pedagogical workflow to support students' behavioural, cognitive, and affective engagement while simultaneously promoting paragraph-level writing development. This gap is particularly evident in Indonesian higher education, where English writing remains a challenging academic skill due to the complex linguistic, rhetorical, and organisational demands placed on EFL learners—demands that are directly reflected in their ability to maintain textual cohesion. Although previous studies have reported the benefits of TikTok for enhancing learner motivation and participation and the effectiveness of Grammarly in improving language accuracy and revision, they have generally focused on these technologies separately or emphasised macro-level writing outcomes rather than students' dynamic engagement and micro-level textual quality throughout the writing process. Therefore, empirical evidence on the implementation of an integrated TikTok-Grammarly workflow remains limited, particularly regarding its influence on students' multidimensional writing engagement and paragraph-level writing quality in Indonesian EFL contexts. The novelty of this study lies in examining TikTok and Grammarly as complementary technologies within a single instructional workflow that integrates idea generation, drafting, automated feedback, revision, and reflection. Unlike previous studies that primarily evaluated holistic writing performance, this study conceptualises writing engagement as a multidimensional construct encompassing behavioural, cognitive, and affective dimensions while also examining how this integrated engagement drives changes in paragraph-level cohesion during writing development.

To address this gap, the present study investigates the implementation of an integrated TikTok-Grammarly workflow in an Indonesian EFL writing course. Drawing on Halliday and Hasan's (1976) cohesion framework, the study examines students' behavioural, cognitive, and affective engagement as well as changes in paragraph-level cohesion during writing and revision. By integrating social media-assisted writing with AI-powered writing support, this study is expected to contribute both theoretically and pedagogically to technology-enhanced EFL writing instruction, particularly by providing empirical evidence on how an integrated digital learning ecosystem can foster meaningful engagement and improve paragraph-level writing quality in higher education.

METHOD

This study used a descriptive qualitative case study design to investigate the implementation of an integrated TikTok-Grammarly workflow in supporting writing engagement and paragraph-level writing development among EFL university students. A qualitative case study was considered appropriate because it enables a careful study of participants' experiences and writing practices within a bounded educational context (Lim, 2025). Through this approach, the study examined how students engaged with writing tasks, responded to automated feedback, and revised their texts throughout the writing process.

Participants

The study was conducted at Universitas Muhammadiyah Mataram, Indonesia, and involved 40 undergraduate students enrolled in an English Writing course in the English Education Study Program. All participants completed the instructional activities and writing tasks implemented during the study. To gain deeper insights into students' writing experiences, seven focal participants were selected through purposive sampling. The selection was based on four criteria: (1) consistent attendance and active participation in all learning sessions, (2) completion of all TikTok–Grammarly writing activities, including both initial and revised drafts, (3) willingness to participate in artifact-based interviews and document their revision processes through revision notes, and (4) variation in writing performance and revision behaviours, as reflected in the extent to which participants accepted, modified, or rejected Grammarly's feedback. This variation was intentionally sought to capture diverse patterns of writing engagement and revision experiences. These criteria ensured that the interview data reflected different experiences with the use of TikTok and Grammarly in EFL writing. The selection criteria for the seven focal participants are presented in Table 1.

Tabel 1. Selection Criteria for Focal Participants

Criterion	Description
Participation	Attended all instructional sessions and actively participated in classroom activities.
Task Completion	Completed all TikTok–Grammarly writing tasks, including Version 1, Grammarly revision, Version 2, and revision notes.
Interview Willingness	Volunteered to participate in artifact-based interviews and discuss their writing experiences.
Variation in Revision Behaviour	Represented diverse revision patterns, including different levels of acceptance, modification, and rejection of Grammarly feedback.

Research Setting and Procedure

The study was implemented over one week and consisted of two instructional meetings, each lasting approximately 100 minutes. During each meeting, students completed one caption-writing task following the same TikTok–Grammarly workflow. Consequently, every participant engaged in the complete workflow twice during the study. Students completed two caption-writing tasks, each representing a different communicative purpose. For each task, participants first produced an initial draft (Version 1), submitted the text into Grammarly for automated feedback, revised the draft based on selected suggestions, and produced a revised version (Version 2). The final version was then uploaded onto TikTok using a private account setting. After each task, students completed a short revision note explaining the changes they made and the reasons they accepted, modified, or rejected Grammarly feedback. The sequence and duration of each activity are summarised in Table 2.

Tabel 2. TikTok–Grammarly Instructional Workflow

Stage	Activity	Duration
Meeting 1	Introduction to the writing task, TikTok exploration, Draft 1 (V1), Grammarly revision, Draft 2 (V2), TikTok upload, revision note	Approximately 100 minutes
Meeting 2	Second writing task following the same workflow, TikTok upload, revision note	Approximately 100 minutes
After Instruction	Artifact-based interviews with seven focal participants	20–30 minutes per participant

Data Sources

To improve the credibility of the findings, data were collected from four sources and analyzed through triangulation. The first source consisted of students' writing artifacts, including initial (V1) and revised (V2) drafts for both writing tasks. These artifacts were examined to identify changes in language use, text organization, and cohesive devices.

The second source comprised revision notes written after each task. These notes provided knowledge about students' revision decisions and their responses to Grammarly feedback. The third source was artifact-based interview transcripts collected from the seven focal participants, which offered detailed accounts of students' behavioral, cognitive, and affective engagement during the writing process. The final source consisted of classroom observation records documenting task completion, revision frequency, participation, and observable writing behaviors.

Data analysis

The analysis of students' written texts focused on changes in paragraph quality and cohesion across draft versions. Writing artifacts were analyzed cohesion framework, which includes reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. Comparisons between Version 1 and Version 2 were conducted to identify patterns of textual improvement following revision.

In addition, each caption was evaluated using an analytic rubric consisting of six components: message clarity, organisation, content depth, language use, revision quality, and audience awareness. Each component was assessed using a four-point scale ranging from 1 (Beginning) to 4 (Excellent), enabling the identification of patterns of development across drafts.

Table 3. Analytic Rubric for Caption Evaluation

Component	Description
Message Clarity	Clarity and comprehensibility of the main message.
Organization	Logical sequencing and flow of ideas.
Content Depth	Relevance and adequacy of supporting information.
Language Use	Accuracy of grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure.
Revision Quality	Extent to which revisions improved the text
Audience Awareness	Appropriateness of language and content for intended readers

Qualitative data obtained from revision notes, interviews, and classroom observations were analysed using thematic analysis following [Braun & Clarke \(2006\)](#). The analysis began with open coding to detect recurring ideas and experiences. Related codes were then grouped into wider themes representing students' writing engagement. Guided by [Pearson, \(2024\)](#) framework and [Sato and Zhang, \(2025\)](#) conceptualisation of writing engagement, the themes were categorised into behavioural, cognitive, and affective dimensions.

Trustworthiness

To strengthen the trustworthiness of the findings, methodological triangulation was employed by comparing evidence obtained from writing artefacts, revision notes, interviews, and classroom observations. In addition, coding decisions and thematic interpretations were reviewed by a colleague experienced in EFL writing research. Any differences in interpretation were discussed until agreement was reached.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to data collection, participants were informed about the purpose of the study and the voluntary nature of their participation. Consent was obtained from all participants before the study commenced. To protect confidentiality, pseudonyms were used during analysis and reporting, and all TikTok uploads were restricted to private mode. Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any stage without academic consequences.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses the findings obtained from students' writing artifacts, revision notes, classroom observations, and artifact-based interviews. The analysis focuses on two interrelated aspects of implementing the TikTok platform in an EFL writing course. First, it explores how students engaged with the writing process across behavioral,

cognitive, and affective dimensions. Second, it examines the extent to which students' paragraph writing developed during revision, particularly with respect to cohesion as conceptualized by (Halliday & Hasan, 1976).

The results show that uniting TikTok and Grammarly created a learning environment that encouraged students to participate actively throughout the writing process. Students were not only involved in drafting and revising their texts but also exhibited reflective decision-making when responding to automated feedback. In addition, many participants reported increased confidence and reduced anxiety while completing the writing tasks. These patterns imply that the combination of a social media-based writing platform and automated feedback supported multiple dimensions of engagement simultaneously.

Beyond engagement, evidence from the writing artefacts revealed clear improvements in students' written texts after revision. Comparisons between the initial drafts (V1) and revised drafts (V2) showed changes in language accuracy, lexical choice, and the use of cohesive devices. Although the extent of improvement varied among subjects, most revisions resulted in clearer, more cohesive paragraphs. It suggests that this TikTok-Grammarly workflow functioned not only as a tool to increase participation in writing activities but also as a mechanism to support text development.

To present a clearer understanding of these outcomes, the discussion is organised into two major sections. The first section focuses on students' writing engagement within the TikTok-Grammarly workflow, while the second section analyses the development of paragraph quality using cohesion analysis. Throughout the discussion, findings from different data sources are integrated and interpreted in relation to previous studies on digital writing, automated feedback, and EFL writing engagement.

Writing Engagement within the TikTok platform-Grammarly Workflow.

Analysis of classroom observations, revision notes, writing artifacts, and artifact-based interviews revealed that students demonstrated behavioral, cognitive, and affective engagement throughout the implementation of the TikTok-Grammarly workflow. Although these dimensions are presented separately for analytical clarity, they were closely interconnected during the writing process. Students actively participated in drafting and revising their texts, critically evaluated Grammarly feedback in their revision decisions, and expressed positive emotional orientations toward writing tasks. Collectively, these outcomes indicate that the workflow facilitated engagement not only at the level of task completion but also through reflection, self-regulation, and affective investment in writing.

Evidence of writing engagement was consistently observed across students' writing artifacts, revision notes, and interview data. Analysis of the writing artifacts showed that students actively revised their captions between Version 1 (V1) and Version 2 (V2). The revisions were not limited to correcting grammatical errors but also included improvements in vocabulary, sentence structure, and clarity after students interacted with Grammarly's feedback. Representative examples are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Representative Examples of Students' Revisions Before and After Grammarly Feedback

Participant	Version 1 (V1)	Grammarly Feedback	Version 2 (V2)	Revision Type
P1	there are many distraction everywhere	distractions	there are many distractions around us	Grammar (plural noun) and lexical improvement
P1	your brain feel more fresh	feels; fresher	your brain feels fresher	Subject-verb agreement and comparative adjective
P2	your mind also more clean	feels clearer	your mind feels clearer	Sentence restructuring and lexical improvement
P4	the result big	offers many benefits	it offers many benefits	Lexical improvement
P5	give huge effect	make a huge difference	make a huge difference	Natural collocation

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P7	thirsty brain not working good	a thirsty brain cannot focus well	a thirsty brain cannot focus well	Grammar and sentence restructuring
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Table 4 presents representative examples of students' revisions after receiving Grammarly feedback. The examples demonstrate that Grammarly primarily supported revisions related to grammatical accuracy, lexical choice, sentence restructuring, and natural collocations. Rather than simply correcting errors, students used the feedback to improve the clarity and readability of their captions. These representative revisions also indicate that students actively engaged with Grammarly's suggestions by refining their language choices to better suit the communicative purpose of their TikTok captions.

Revision notes further revealed that students made deliberate decisions when responding to Grammarly feedback. Rather than accepting every suggestion automatically, they evaluated whether the recommendations were appropriate for the communicative style expected on TikTok. This pattern was further confirmed through artifact-based interviews. For example, **P1** explained:

"Sometimes Grammarly suggested making my sentences more formal. However, since the platform was TikTok, I preferred to keep a more relaxed and friendly style because I thought it suited the audience better." (P1)

Similarly, **P3** stated:

"Grammarly occasionally recommended replacing informal words with more formal ones. I decided not to follow those suggestions because my caption was intentionally written in a casual tone to maintain a closer connection with the audience." (P3)

Students also described how Grammarly encouraged them to revise their writing repeatedly rather than submitting the first draft immediately. As **P1** reflected:

"The revision stage was the most valuable part for me because I could clearly see the differences between my first draft and the version after Grammarly's corrections. It helped me recognize the mistakes I frequently made, and that really improved my writing skills." (P1)

Together, the writing artifacts, revision notes, and interview data indicate that students did not merely complete the assigned tasks but actively engaged in reflective revision and critical decision-making throughout the TikTok-Grammarly workflow.

Table 5. Summary of Writing Engagement Observed Across Data Sources

Engagement Dimension	Key Indicators	Supporting Data Sources
Behavioral Engagement	Task completion, production of V1 and V2 drafts, iterative revision, and TikTok uploads	Classroom observations, writing artifacts, interviews
Cognitive Engagement	Evaluation of Grammarly suggestions, selective uptake of feedback, and audience awareness	Revision notes, interviews
Affective Engagement	Reduced anxiety, increased confidence, and a sense of ownership	Revision notes, interviews

As shown in Table 2, evidence of writing engagement emerged consistently across multiple data sources. Behavioral engagement was reflected in students' sustained participation throughout the writing cycle. Cognitive engagement was evident in their critical evaluation of Grammarly's feedback before deciding whether to accept, modify, or reject the suggested revisions. Affective engagement was reflected in increased confidence, reduced anxiety, and a stronger sense of ownership over their writing while composing and uploading captions in private mode. Collectively, these findings indicate that the TikTok-Grammarly workflow supported multidimensional engagement that extended beyond task completion to encompass reflective, strategic, and personally meaningful writing practices.

Behavioral Engagement: Sustained Participation Throughout the Writing Process

Behavioral engagement was evident in students' steady participation throughout the implementation of the TikTok-Grammarly workflow. Observation data showed that all 40

participants completed the assigned writing tasks, produced both initial (V1) and revised (V2) drafts, and uploaded their final captions onto TikTok in private mode. In addition to completing tasks, many students engaged in multiple rounds of revision, demonstrating sustained involvement throughout the writing process.

Rather than treating writing as a single-submission activity, students demonstrated continuous engagement across the drafting, revising, and publishing stages. Interview data further confirmed this pattern, as participants frequently described the TikTok-based writing activity as more meaningful because it provided a greater sense of communicative authenticity and task relevance than conventional classroom writing.

"There is a feeling of mini publication because the writing can be seen by others, even though it is private. That makes me feel responsible for making it as good as possible." (P1)

Similarly, P3 emphasized the relevance of the activity to everyday communication practices:

"TikTok makes the writing process feel closer to real life. It does not feel like writing only for the lecturer. It feels more useful and relevant." (P3)

Other participants highlighted how the possibility of publishing their work motivated them to revise their writing more carefully.

"Before uploading, I checked my caption several times because I wanted it to look good." (P6)

"I usually write and submit my work immediately, but during this activity I kept revising because I knew it would eventually be uploaded." (P7)

P2 also described how the workflow encouraged sustained participation throughout the writing process:

"Normally, I finish writing once and submit it immediately. In this activity, however, I kept reviewing my writing several times before uploading it because I wanted the final version to be better." (P2)

Likewise, P5 explained that the combination of Grammarly and TikTok encouraged greater persistence during revision:

"I did not stop after the first draft. After reading Grammarly's suggestions, I revised my caption several times until I felt the message was clearer and easier to understand." (P5)

A similar experience was reported by P4, who described becoming more careful throughout the writing process:

"I paid more attention to every sentence because I knew the caption would be uploaded. Even though it was only a private post, I still wanted my writing to be accurate and easy to read." (P4)

These responses indicate that students perceived the writing tasks as authentic communicative practices rather than routine academic exercises. The sense of publication – even though the captions were uploaded in private mode – appeared to foster responsibility and persistence during revision. Rather than completing the task with a single draft, many participants described revising their work repeatedly before publication, suggesting sustained involvement throughout the writing process. At the same time, private posting reduced concerns about public evaluation while maintaining a sense of audience, thereby supporting sustained behavioral engagement.

This finding is consistent with previous research suggesting that digitally mediated writing environments can enhance behavioral engagement by providing authentic audience simulation and a meaningful communicative purpose (Kessler, 2020). It also supports the argument that engagement is strengthened when learners perceive tasks as personally meaningful and socially relevant (Wong & Liem, 2022).

Overall, the convergence of observational, artefactual, and interview data indicates that the TikTok platform–Grammarly workflow promoted sustained behavioral engagement across all stages of writing. Students regularly demonstrated task persistence, iterative revision behavior, and active participation during the publication stage, all of which are key

indicators of engagement and are associated with enhanced opportunities for writing development (Boekaerts, 2016; Skinner, 2023).

One possible explanation for this sustained behavioral engagement is that TikTok provided a sense of audience and publication that extended beyond traditional classroom writing. Even though the captions were uploaded in private mode, students perceived their texts as communicative products rather than routine assignments. This perception may have increased their sense of responsibility toward the quality of their writing and encouraged repeated revision before publication. In this way, the platform appeared to transform writing from a purely academic task into a more meaningful communicative activity.

Cognitive Involvement: Reflective Evaluation of Automated Feedback

Cognitive involvement was most evident during the revision stage, where students actively engaged with Grammarly's feedback and decided whether suggested revisions were appropriate for their target audience and communicative purpose. Analysis of revision notes, writing artefacts, and interview transcripts showed that participants did not automatically accept Grammarly recommendations. Instead, they evaluated the suggestions critically and adjusted their revisions in light of TikTok's context as a social media platform. Table 4 presents representative examples of students' decisions when responding to Grammarly feedback. The examples illustrate that students did not simply accept automated suggestions but evaluated them in relation to the communicative purpose and audience of their TikTok captions.

Table 5. Examples of Students' Evaluation of Grammarly Feedback

Participant	Grammarly Suggestion	Student's Decision	Reason
P1	Replace an informal expression with a more formal alternative	Rejected	The original wording was considered more suitable for TikTok users.
P2	Revise grammar and sentence structure	Accepted	The revision improved clarity without changing the intended message.
P4	Replace a lexical choice with a more formal synonym	Rejected	The original expression sounded more natural for the target audience.
P5	Shorten a long sentence	Accepted	The revised sentence became easier to read and understand.

A review of the revision notes revealed that students frequently accepted feedback related to grammar, sentence clarity, and vocabulary accuracy. However, they were more selective about changes Grammarly suggested that altered the manner or style of their captions. This pattern indicates that students were not only correcting linguistic errors but also considering how language choices might influence audience engagement and message delivery.

Several participants explained that they intentionally rejected suggestions that made their writing sound excessively formal or academic.

"Some suggestions were good for grammar, but I ignored a few because they sounded excessively formal for TikTok users." (P1)

Likewise, P2 stated:

Grammarly sometimes changed the mood of my writing. I accepted the grammar corrections, but I kept the manner more relaxed because it suited the platform better."

A similar perspective was expressed by P4:

"I checked each suggestion first. If it made the caption less natural, I preferred my original phrase."

Similarly, P6 explained that accepting Grammarly's feedback depended on whether the suggestion matched the communicative purpose of the caption:

"I accepted suggestions that made my writing clearer, but I ignored some vocabulary changes because they sounded too formal for a TikTok caption." (P6)

P3 also emphasized that Grammarly served as a guide rather than a tool whose suggestions had to be followed without question:

"I didn't accept every suggestion automatically. I always read it first and decided whether it matched what I wanted to say." (P3)

These responses suggest that participants showed awareness of audience expectations and genre conventions. Rather than viewing Grammarly as an authority to be followed without question, students treated its feedback as a resource to evaluate and adapt. Such behavior reflects an important aspect of cognitive engagement, namely, the ability to monitor, assess, and regulate one's own learning processes (S. Li & Lajoie, 2022).

The interview data also indicated that students became more conscious of clarity and readability during revision. Several participants reported that Grammarly helped them identify unnecessary repetition and simplify complex sentences.

"Grammarly showed me where I repeated words too much. After revising, the message became clearer." (P2)

Similarly, P5 explained:

"I realized that some of my sentences were too long. The suggestions helped me make them shorter and easier to understand."

A similar reflection was expressed by P7:

"Grammarly helped me notice mistakes that I had never realized before. After revising them, I felt that my ideas were easier for readers to understand." (P7)

These findings suggest that Grammarly helped students focus on how effectively their ideas were communicated rather than solely on grammatical correctness. By reducing the effort required to identify surface-level language errors, the tool appeared to create opportunities for students to pay greater attention to meaning, audience, and message clarity.

Evidence of cognitive engagement was also visible in the revision notes. Many participants provided explanations for accepting, modifying, or rejecting Grammarly suggestions, indicating that revision decisions were made consciously rather than mechanically. For example, one student accepted corrections related to subject-verb agreement but rejected vocabulary substitutions because the original words were considered more appropriate for the intended audience. Such decisions demonstrate reflective thinking and self-regulation during the revision process.

The findings align with previous studies emphasizing that effective use of automated writing evaluation tools depends on learners' ability to engage critically with feedback rather than accepting suggestions unconditionally (Fan & Xu, 2020; Mao & Lee, 2023). Similarly, (Zhao, 2025). argue that automated feedback can promote deeper learning when students actively evaluate recommendations and connect them to their own writing goals. In the present study, students demonstrated this evaluative behavior by balancing Grammarly's linguistic recommendations with their awareness of audience, platform, and communication purpose.

Overall, the findings suggest that the TikTok-Grammarly workflow promoted cognitive engagement by encouraging students to reflect on their writing choices, evaluate automated feedback critically, and make informed revision decisions. The revision process, therefore, extended beyond simple error correction and became an opportunity for reflective learning and audience-centered writing development.

This pattern suggests that Grammarly functioned not merely as an error-detection tool but also as a catalyst for reflective thinking. Because students had to decide whether to accept, modify, or reject suggestions, they became more actively involved in evaluating language choices in relation to audience expectations and communicative goals. Such evaluative decision-making is an important characteristic of cognitive engagement and may contribute to greater learner autonomy in writing.

Affective Engagement: Reduced Anxiety and Increased Writing Confidence

In addition to behavioral and cognitive engagement, the findings revealed evidence of affective engagement throughout the implementation of the TikTok-Grammarly workflow. Data from interviews and revision notes indicated that students generally experienced

positive emotional responses during the writing process. The most frequently reported experiences included reduced anxiety, increased confidence, and a stronger sense of ownership over their writing.

Before participating in the activities, several students reported feeling uncertain about their ability to write in English. Common concerns included making grammatical errors, choosing inappropriate vocabulary, and producing texts that might be judged negatively by others. However, these concerns appeared to decrease after students received feedback from Grammarly and revised their drafts. One participant described the emotional change experienced during the revision process:

"At first, I was nervous because I was afraid there were mistakes in my writing. After Grammarly helped me identify the problems and I revised them, I felt relieved and more confident." (P1)

Similarly, P5 explained:

"Because the post was uploaded in private mode, I felt more relaxed. It felt like practice without pressure."

P7 also emphasised the role of private mode in reducing anxiety:

"I was not worried about what other people would think because nobody could see the post. That made me focus more on improving the writing."

A similar experience was reported by P2, who described feeling less anxious because the activity emphasized learning through revision rather than producing a perfect first draft:

"Knowing that I could revise my writing first made me feel much calmer. I didn't worry too much about making mistakes because I knew I could improve them before uploading." (P2)

These responses suggest that the private publishing environment played an important role in creating a safe space for writing practice. Although students still experienced a sense of publication, they were protected from the potential pressure associated with public evaluation. As a result, they were able to concentrate on revising and improving their texts rather than worrying about possible criticism.

P5 also noted that the opportunity to revise before publishing reduced the pressure often associated with English writing tasks:

"Usually I am afraid of making grammar mistakes, but after revising with Grammarly I felt much more confident about my writing." (P5)

Beyond reducing anxiety, the workflow also appeared to strengthen students' confidence as writers. Several participants reported feeling satisfied with the quality of their revised texts and expressed greater confidence in their ability to write in English.

"After revising with Grammarly, I felt that my writing was much better than the first version." (P3)

Likewise, P6 stated:

"The corrections helped me realise that I could actually improve my writing. It made me more confident to write again."

P3 explained that seeing the improvements between the first and revised drafts increased confidence in future writing tasks:

"When I compared my first draft with the revised version, I realized that my writing had improved. That made me feel more confident about writing in English." (P3)

Another important theme emerging from the interviews was a growing sense of ownership toward writing. Participants frequently described feelings of pride after completing the revision process and uploading their captions to TikTok.

"Even though it was private, uploading my writing felt like publishing something I created myself." (P1)

Similarly, P4 explained:

"After revising and posting it, I felt proud because the caption looked more professional and easier to read."

P6 expressed a similar sense of ownership after completing the writing cycle:

"Although the post was private, I still felt proud because it was my own writing and I had improved it through revision." (P6)

These findings suggest that the writing activities encouraged students to view themselves not merely as learners completing assignments but also as writers communicating ideas through a digital platform. This perception may have contributed to stronger emotional investment in the writing process and greater motivation to improve the quality of their work.

The findings are consistent with previous research suggesting that technology-supported writing environments can reduce writing anxiety and increase learner confidence by providing opportunities for revision and self-correction (Shadiev et al., 2024; R. Zhang & Zou, 2023). Furthermore, the sense of ownership reported by participants supports Abdelhalim, (2025) argument that digital publication environments can enhance students' motivation and commitment to writing by providing authentic communicative purposes.

Taken together, the findings indicate that the TikTok-Grammarly workflow fostered affective engagement by creating a supportive, low-pressure environment for writing. Through immediate feedback, opportunities for revision, and controlled audience visibility, students developed greater confidence in their writing abilities while also experiencing a stronger sense of ownership and satisfaction toward their written work.

A possible explanation for these positive emotional responses is that the workflow balanced support and autonomy. Grammarly reduced uncertainty by providing immediate corrective feedback, while TikTok offered a purposeful context for sharing ideas without exposing students to public scrutiny. This combination may have helped students perceive writing as a manageable and achievable activity, thereby reducing anxiety and strengthening their confidence as developing writers.

Development of Paragraph Quality Through Revision

While the previous sections focused on students' engagement throughout the writing process, engagement alone does not necessarily indicate improvement in writing quality. To examine whether participation in the TikTok-Grammarly workflow contributed to text development, the analysis now turns to students' written products. Specifically, Version 1 (V1) and Version 2 (V2) captions were compared to identify changes made during the revision process. The following analysis examines broader patterns of writing development by comparing the initial and revised drafts across all participants.

Drawing on Halliday and Hasan's (1976) cohesion framework, the analysis focuses on reference cohesion, lexical cohesion, and conjunctive cohesion, while also examining changes in grammatical accuracy that emerged during revision. By examining revisions across these categories, it is possible to evaluate how the combined use of TikTok and Grammarly influenced the overall quality and coherence of students' writing. Although Halliday and Hasan's (1976) framework also includes substitution and ellipsis, these features were rarely identified in the short caption texts produced by participants and therefore did not show meaningful patterns of development across drafts. Consequently, the discussion focuses on the cohesion categories most evident in the dataset.

Reference Cohesion: Improving Clarity Through More Accurate References

Analysis of the revised captions revealed noticeable improvements in reference cohesion. In the initial drafts (V1), several participants used demonstrative references and noun forms inconsistently, resulting in unclear relationships between ideas. Building on the revisions presented earlier, the cohesion analysis revealed that these changes contributed to more accurate referential relationships within the texts. Following revision, many demonstrative references became more precise and grammatically appropriate, helping readers follow the flow of information more easily.

Table 6. Examples of Reference Cohesion Revisions

Participant	Version 1 (V1)	Version 2 (V2)	Improvement
P1	This small techniques	These small techniques	Correct demonstrative reference
P2	This habits	These habits	Improved number agreement
P3	This tips	These tips	More accurate reference relationship

The examples in Table 6 demonstrate that students improved the accuracy of demonstrative references and noun agreement during revision. Grammarly frequently highlighted inconsistencies between demonstratives and noun forms, prompting students to reconsider how ideas were connected within their texts.

As P3 explained:

"I realized that some demonstratives did not match the nouns after Grammarly highlighted the mistakes. The corrected version sounded much clearer." (P3)

Similarly, P5 noted:

"Before revising, I did not notice that some references were incorrect. Grammarly helped me recognize the problem and make the sentences clearer." (P5)

These findings indicate that the revision process helped students establish clearer referential relationships across sentences. According to Halliday & Hasan (1976), reference cohesion enables readers to identify connections between textual elements and contributes substantially to overall coherence. The improvements observed in this study therefore suggest that Grammarly-supported revision increased students' awareness of how grammatical reference contributes to textual clarity.

Lexical Cohesion: Developing More Appropriate and Effective Word Choice

Lexical cohesion also improved across many of the revised captions. Compared with the initial drafts, the revised versions contained more precise vocabulary, fewer repetitive expressions, and more natural word combinations. These changes contributed to clearer communication and improved readability.

Table 7. Examples of Lexical Cohesion Revisions

Participant	Version 1 (V1)	Version 2 (V2)	Improvement
P2	give huge effect	make a huge difference	More natural collocation
P4	the result big	offers many benefits	Greater semantic precision
P6	very very useful	extremely useful	Reduced repetition

Interview data suggest that students became more conscious of word choice during revision. Several participants reported paying closer attention to vocabulary after reviewing Grammarly feedback.

"Grammarly suggested better words that sounded more natural in English." (P2)

"I learned that some phrases were understandable, but native speakers would not normally use them." (P6)

P3 also reflected on how Grammarly helped improve vocabulary choices without changing the intended meaning of the caption:

"Some of the words I used were understandable, but Grammarly suggested expressions that sounded more natural. I chose the suggestions because they made my caption easier to read without changing my original idea." (P3)

The findings indicate that lexical improvements were not limited to correcting mistakes but also involved refining the effectiveness of communication. Such revisions demonstrate an increased awareness of audience and readability, both of which are important aspects of

effective writing. Previous studies have similarly reported that automated feedback can support vocabulary development by helping learners identify more appropriate lexical choices and reduce redundancy (Dewi, 2022).

Grammatical Accuracy: Strengthening Sentence-Level Quality

Grammatical accuracy showed the most consistent improvement across participants.. The majority of revisions involved subject-verb agreement, article usage, plural forms, and sentence structure.

Table 8. Examples of Grammatical Revisions

Participant	Version 1 (V1)	Version 2 (V2)	Improvement
P1	brain feel	brain feels	Subject-verb agreement
P3	helpful for student	helpful for students	Correct plural form
P7	a good habits	good habits	Article and noun agreement

These revisions were strongly associated with Grammarly's automated feedback, which frequently identified language-level errors and provided immediate correction suggestions. Participants acknowledged that grammatical feedback was one of the most useful aspects of the workflow.

"The grammar corrections were the easiest to understand because Grammarly showed exactly what was wrong." (P7)

Similarly, P4 stated:

"Most of my revisions were grammar-related because Grammarly immediately pointed out the mistakes."

Similarly, P2 explained how Grammarly helped identify grammatical errors that had previously gone unnoticed:

"After seeing Grammarly's corrections, I realized that I often repeated the same grammar mistakes. It helped me understand what I should pay more attention to in future writing." (P1)

The findings suggest that Grammarly was particularly effective in supporting sentence-level accuracy. This result is consistent with previous research showing that automated writing evaluation tools are especially useful for identifying grammatical errors and supporting linguistic accuracy during revision (Zhai, 2025). Improved grammatical accuracy may also indirectly contribute to better cohesion, as readers can more easily process relationships between ideas when sentence structures are correct and consistent.

Conjunctive Cohesion: Limited Development in Logical Connections

In contrast to the improvements observed in reference, lexical, and grammatical cohesion, changes in conjunctive cohesion were relatively limited. Most participants made a few revisions involving conjunctions or other devices used to establish logical relationships between ideas.

Although some students added linking expressions such as therefore, because, and for example, these changes were less frequent than grammatical and lexical revisions. As a result, the overall organisation of ideas across sentences remained largely similar between V1 and V2.

One possible explanation is that Grammarly primarily focuses on sentence-level language issues rather than discourse-level organisation. While students received extensive feedback on grammar, vocabulary, and clarity, they received comparatively little guidance on connecting ideas across longer sections of text. Several participants indirectly reflected this limitation during interviews. Similarly, P4 commented:

"Grammarly showed me how to improve individual sentences, but it did not tell me whether the ideas in my paragraph were connected well." (P4)

P6 expressed a similar view:

"The corrections mostly focused on grammar and vocabulary. I still had to think about which sentence should come first and how to connect my ideas."
(P6)

These findings suggest that automated feedback alone may be insufficient for developing higher-order writing skills such as coherence, organisation, and argument development. While Grammarly effectively supported local revisions, broader aspects of discourse construction appeared to require additional instructional support. This finding reinforces the argument that teacher guidance remains essential when writing instruction aims to develop not only language accuracy but also overall text coherence (Zhao, 2025).

Discussion of Writing Development

Taken together, the cohesion analysis indicates that the TikTok–Grammarly workflow contributed positively to students' paragraph-level writing development. The most noticeable improvements occurred in reference cohesion, lexical choice, and grammatical accuracy, suggesting that students benefited from opportunities to revise their writing with immediate automated feedback. At the same time, the limited development of conjunctive cohesion highlights the continued importance of teacher mediation in supporting discourse-level writing skills.

These findings complement the engagement results presented earlier. Students who actively participated in drafting and revision, reflected critically on feedback, and developed greater confidence as writers also demonstrated measurable improvements in their written texts. This relationship suggests that writing engagement and writing development were mutually reinforcing throughout the implementation of the TikTok–Grammarly workflow. Consistent with sociocognitive perspectives on writing, engagement appears to function not only as an outcome of instructional design but also as a mechanism for writing improvement (Albert, 2022; Sato & Storch, 2022).

The qualitative evidence presented throughout the Findings section further strengthens this interpretation. Students' reflections showed that they did not merely follow Grammarly's suggestions mechanically; instead, they actively evaluated the feedback in relation to their communicative goals and the conventions of TikTok as a social media platform. Likewise, the observed revisions across the writing artefacts demonstrated that improvements in grammatical accuracy, lexical choice, and reference cohesion resulted from deliberate revision decisions rather than automatic acceptance of automated feedback.

The findings further suggest that TikTok and Grammarly served complementary functions within the instructional workflow. While TikTok provided an authentic communicative context that encouraged audience awareness, responsibility, and sustained participation, Grammarly supported revision through immediate language-focused feedback. Together, these technologies created a writing ecosystem that facilitated both engagement and text improvement. This complementary relationship helps explain why students not only participated actively in the writing process but also demonstrated observable development in paragraph-level writing quality.

Pedagogical Implications for EFL Writing Instruction

The findings of this study offer several implications for EFL writing instruction, particularly in contexts where students are already familiar with social media and digital technologies. First, the findings suggest that integrating social media-based writing tasks into classroom instruction can promote active participation throughout the writing process. Rather than viewing writing as an isolated academic activity, students in this study engaged with writing as a meaningful communicative practice connected to their everyday digital experiences. This indicates that platforms such as TikTok can be used not only for language exposure but also as environments for developing writing engagement.

Second, the findings highlight the potential of automated writing evaluation tools to support revision and self-regulated learning. Grammarly provided immediate feedback that helped students identify grammatical problems, improve lexical choices, and refine sentence

clarity. More importantly, students did not simply accept feedback passively. Instead, many participants evaluated suggestions critically and made revision decisions based on audience expectations and communicative goals. This suggests that automated feedback can support the development of reflective writing practices when learners are encouraged to engage actively with the feedback they receive.

Third, the limited improvement observed in conjunctive cohesion demonstrates that automated feedback should not be viewed as a replacement for teacher support. While Grammarly effectively assisted students with language-level revisions, it provided less support for discourse-level features such as coherence, organisation, and logical development of ideas. Consequently, teachers remain essential in helping students develop higher-order writing skills that require explicit instruction and guided practice.

Taken together, the findings suggest that the most effective approach may be a complementary model in which social media platforms provide authentic writing contexts, automated feedback tools support language-level revision, and teachers facilitate the development of broader writing competencies. Such an approach has the potential to create a more engaging and balanced writing environment that addresses both linguistic accuracy and communicative effectiveness.

CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated the implementation of an integrated TikTok-Grammarly workflow in an Indonesian university EFL writing course. Drawing on writing artefacts, revision notes, classroom observations, and interviews, the findings indicated that the workflow supported behavioural, cognitive, and affective engagement by encouraging active participation, critical evaluation of automated feedback, and increased writing confidence. Students' paragraphs also demonstrated improvements in reference cohesion, lexical choice, and grammatical accuracy, although developments in conjunctive cohesion were limited, highlighting the need for teacher guidance in improving discourse-level organisation. The study contributes theoretically by connecting multidimensional writing engagement with paragraph-level development and practically by offering an instructional model integrating social media and automated feedback. However, the findings are limited by the single-institution context, small number of interview participants, one-week intervention, and focus on paragraph-level cohesion. Future research should employ longer interventions, larger and more diverse samples, and examine additional writing dimensions, including coherence, argumentation, critical thinking, and genre development.

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