

**THE CHALLENGES OF ONLINE LEARNING ON  
THE WRITTEN ASSESSMENTS OF ESL  
STUDENTS OF POLYTECHNIC MERSING,  
JOHOR (PMJ)**

**by**

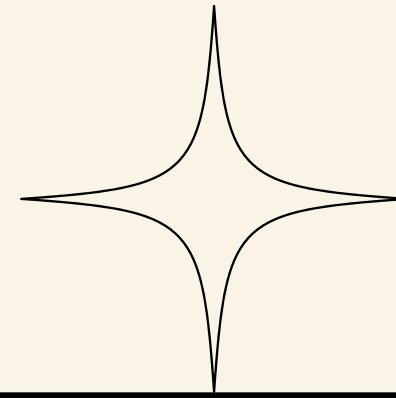
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# OVERVIEW

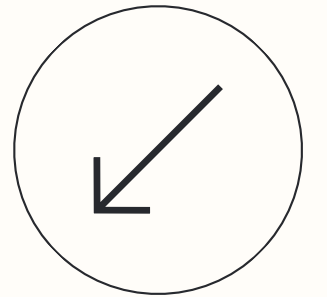
- **Research Problem**
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# Problem

- Students demonstrate a lack of competency in several aspects of written assessments such as organization of the writing, discourse, grammar & mechanics.
- Aspect of mechanics (spelling, punctuation & capitalization) are the fundamental items that every student should master.
- As Polytechnic Mersing offers Communicative English for Technical Students, the educators discovered that due to the shift from face-to-face to online learning, the ESL students frequently use improper mechanics in their assessments.
- This is particularly evident when students are required to complete assessments during class hour (after 1 or 2 hours students are required to submit on the respective platforms)
- In their haste to finish the assessments, the ESL students failed to see that they had used incorrect abbreviations, punctuation & capitalization in their official writing.

# PURPOSE / OBJECTIVE



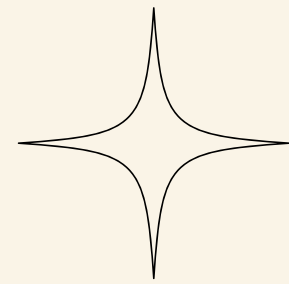
**to investigate the challenges associated with writing mechanics such as spelling, punctuation and capitalization.**



# RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- **Are there any noticeable changes in basic writing mechanics such as spelling, punctuation, and capitalization?**
- **What are the impacts of online learning on writing mechanics?**





## LITERARY REVIEW

### Online Learning

- Dhawan (2020): learning takes place in synchronous / asynchronous environment that are facilitated by the internet.
- Bakia, Shear, Toyama & Lasseter (2012): Internet provides teachers & students with learning materials access.
- Jeffrey, Milne, Shuddabby & Higgins (2014): online learning makes use of learning materials available on the Internet such as Youtube videos, Powerpoint, presentations, e-books & audio.
- Dwiyantini & Suwantini (2021): online learning makes use of the internet as a learning platforms. -new norm in Indonesia

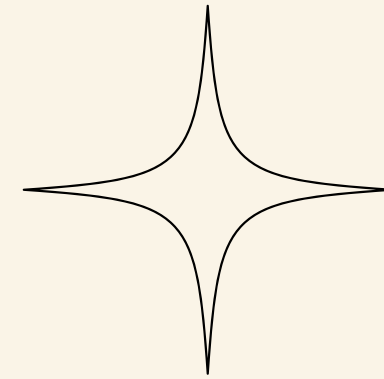
### Written Assessments

- Durga & Rao (2018) : Of the four skills, writing is the most complex skill.
- Dewi (2020): Writing is essential to be taught since writing allows students to think creatively and improve their vocabularies.
- Yusuf (2019): the application of assessment in the form of feedbacks, supported the students in developing their skills.
- Brown (2001): 6 categories that can be used in assessing writing, among others, (i)content, (ii) organization, (iii)discourse, (v)syntax, (vi)vocabulary, (vii)mechanics

## Typography, Orthography & Abbreviations

Nisphi & Armanto (2020): The Existence of Language Deviation in Online Language During the COVID-19 Pandemic

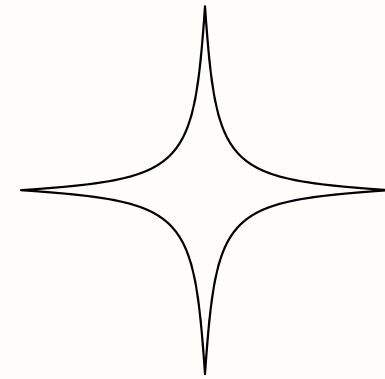
- Typography refers to the use of non-alphabetic keyboard symbols such as numbers; repeated punctuation; and special symbols such as '&', '@' and others. Typography also includes non-standard capitalization and replacement of numbers or letters for words like '1st' 'B4' and so on.
- Non-standard orthography includes abbreviations; phonetics motivated letter substitution (for example, d for t, z for s); spelling that mimics dialectical pronunciation; and spelling containing sounds like "helooooooooo" or "heeeiii".
- The form of abbreviation found in the online language on the Instagram site varies widely, but generally, this abbreviation adapts from phrases or clauses that come in English such as "COD" means "Cash On Delivery", "ASAP" means "As Soon As Possible", "BTW" means "By The Way", "FYI" better known as "For Your Information" and "GWS" which stands for "Get Well Soon".



## LITERARY REVIEW

### Influence of Netspeak/SMS language in Written Assessments

- Zahid Yousaf & et. al, (2013): the results show that a 2/3 majority of students feel difficulty in writing English and they often make spelling mistakes due to the SMS using habit that is also directly proportional to the excessive use of the SMS.
- Allison & et. al, (Dec 2011): the study showed that there is a significant relationship between language characteristics found in SMSes & emails & it leads to the conclusion that SMS language does affect the written language.



# CONCEPT

H.Douglas Brown ,(2001)

e-book title : Teaching by Principles : An interactive approach to language pedagogy

- **six categories for assessing writing :**

(i) content

(ii) organisation

(iii) discourse

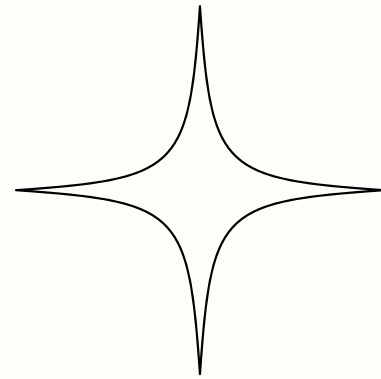
(iv) syntax

(v) grammar

(vi) mechanics

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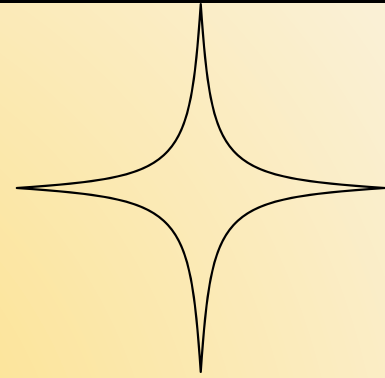


# FRAMEWORK

**Students' sample written assessment:**

**Crispin Thurlow's (2003) non-standard typographic or orthographic forms**

- **G-Clippings (without the final -g letter), such as "goin" (going)**
  - **Abbreviations (letters deleted at the end, omitting the -g letter), such as "aft" (after)**
  - **Contractions (removal of middle letters), such as "nxt" (next)**
  - **Acronyms and initialisms (made out of the first letters of several words), such as "LOL" (laugh out loud)**
  - **Number of homophones, such as "B4" (before)**
  - **Letter homophones, such as "U" (you)**
  - **Non-conventional spellings, such as "nite" (night)**
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# METHODOLOGY

## **Sample / Participants**

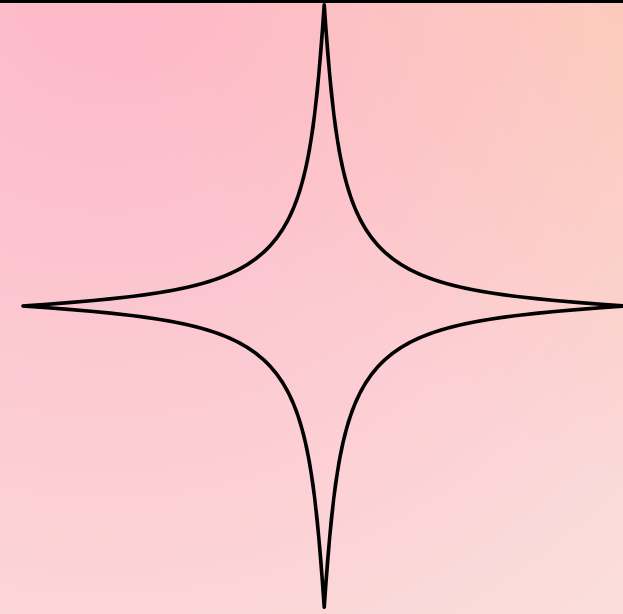
- **Nonprobability sampling : Convenience Sampling**
- **Semester 2**
- **Business Management Students (40 - one whole class)**

## **Instruments**

- **Students' written assessments**

## **Procedure**

- **Watch a video : 'Telephone Skills for Better Service' (sample process/procedure)**
- **Write 10 step process/procedure on 'Steps in Answering a Professional Phone Call'.**
- **Determine 3 precautions when answering a phone call during the process/procedure**
- **1 hour to complete**
- **Task description is uploaded in Microsoft Teams - respond digitally**
- **1 week to analyse the samples**



# DATA ANALYSIS



## Descriptive Statistics



**Thurlow's  
Typographic form  
to analyse the ESL  
students' samples**

# **LIMITATIONS**

**40 ESL students only - cannot be  
generalized for all the ESL learners of all  
polytechnics in Malaysia**

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# RECOMMENDATIONS



**This study could be extended to find the challenges in written assessments for Semester 5 ESL students : Resume & Cover Letter (6 categories of assessing writing)**



**THANK YOU**