Can automated writing evaluation enhance undergraduate writing? A cross-disciplinary, multi-course pilot of Grammarly

Background
Writing is a core academic competency, but many students struggle with writing, and incorporating it into coursework and assessment is difficult given ballooning enrollments and shrinking TA support. Cutting-edge tools for automated writing evaluation (AWE) may be able to help by empowering students to independently improve their grammar and usage, thus freeing instructors to focus more on higher-level issues.

Scope
- 1,450 students
- 26 faculty members
- 7 departments
- 17 courses
  - 8 writing-focused courses: ENGL 12, ENGL 101B, ENGL 101C, ENGL 150, ENGL 250, ENGL 309, ENGL 314
  - 9 writing-intensive courses: ADVERT 335, ENGL 325, FIN 320, FSHN 340, FSHN Internship, JLMC 347, LA 272, LA 404, METEO 499
- Other participating units
  - ISSO orientation program
  - Writing and Media Center
  - Meteorology program

Student Survey Results
General opinions about Grammarly

Instructor Survey Results
Grammarly’s value for dealing with students’ writing (1 of 2)

Outreach and Support
Video tutorials and “pro-tips”

Impact
- Grammarly licensing for ISU will continue and expand to include all ISU students and faculty (40,000 licenses)
- Committee on the Advancement of Student Technology for Learning Enhancement (CASTLE; previously Computational Advisory Committee) will fund additional two-year campus-wide pilot of Grammarly using $85,000 from student technology fees
- CASTLE has asked PI Ranalli to consult on new pilot and committed $10K for use in outreach initiatives and rollout support
- Department of English will fund a course release for PI Ranalli in Spring 2020 to support Grammarly rollout

Dissemination
- Conference paper to be delivered at the American Association for Applied Linguistics annual conference in Denver, CO in Spring 2020
- Manuscript in preparation, based on student-survey results, to be submitted to Active Learning in Higher Education
- Additional conference paper and manuscript to be based on instructor-survey results

Related Research

Potential for distraction during synchronous operation

Ranalli & Yamashita (under review)