GRAMMARLY AS STUDENTS' WRITING ASSISTANCE TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' ESSAY: EXPLORING STUDENTS' PERCEPTION

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ABSTRACT

Writing subject is complex since it does not only have to focus on the organization of the essay but also the mechanical factors such as grammar or sentence structures. The problem matters for both students and teachers. Students and teachers need to find help to minimize the problem in teaching and learning Essay Writing such as the use of writing tool like Grammarly. The goals of the studz are to find out the advantages of grammarly is in helping students to write their essay, the drawbacks they face in using Grammarly and students' response toward Grammarly. To elaborate the analysis, qualitative method is applied. It engages 15 students of Essay Writing subject purposely. Moreover, two instruments, i.e. interview and questionnaires were used to collect the data of this research. Then, the findings show that students have positive view toward Grammarly as their writing assistance in their essay writing. Moreover, Grammarly some advantages to help students in writing their essay. However, the drawbacks that students face when using Grammarly could not be neglected.

Keywords: grammarly; students' perception; writing assistance

INTRODUCTION

Writing is considered as a tough skill to master by many English students since it includes complex process. Writing is a challenging skill for college students since form of essay are required to be submitted as an assignment (Maru et al., 2018). Many students failed in producing high quality essay because of some reasons. Students in Indonesia who learn English as foreign language feel it the same. They thought that they were under pressured when teachers required them to write an essay (Suhayati, 2016). Regardless of its significance, academic writing has great difficulty, and it leads itself one of the most difficult assignment for learners (Campbell, 2019). While speaking skills requires accuracy, essay writing requires thorough ways in the sense of the grammatical formation, word choices and the punctuation use as well as the potential of analytical capability (Maru et al., 2018). Additionally, writing requires students to master the devices of grammar, conceptual thinking, and judgmental elements, and this makes it as a complex process (Byrne, 1988 & Heaton, 1990 as cited in Ibrahim &

Alfaki 2015). Moreover, Latifah & Hani (2017) stated that sentences are produced in a particular order and arranged together in a particular way in writing skill. Like any other skills, writing needs to be practiced and improved. Abu (2001) also stated that writing is not only difficult for non native speakers but also for native speakers because it requires the ability to fulfill writing components such as content, organization, purpose, audience, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, and mechanics. As supported by Al-Khairy (2013), the main problems include errors of the grammar, the incorrect choice of vocabulary, irregular verbs, and inappropiaete punctuation and spelling. In addition, Budjalemba & Listyani (2020) stated that this is because the purpose of writing as the production skills that should be communicative andeffective in amusing readers.

Another drawback faced by learners is time burden (Cheng, 2004) on his research on National Taiwan Normal University students. According to Gautum and Chakraverty (2002), writing is one of the most significant elements of language learning, which demands much time to think about the topic.When students need to write an essay, the often get difficulties in gathering ideas to write.Therefore, skills in gathering information and delivering it into written texts is really needed by students.

Besides, for learners to improve their skill in writing, they are projected to create a well structure of writing composition (Ceylan, 2019). It is difficult since the product of writing must fulfil some criteria. They are not only required to have well content and organization of a text but also grammar and mechanical aspect of writing such as spelling and punctuation. Trinh (2020) said that some of the students do not have capability in creating a well academic essay, otherwise; others have capability in completing the essay, but their products are not well structured. Students' writing performance can be seen through rubric score of writing.

Furthermore, in most rubric score of writing, mechanical aspect takes the least proportion of the whole score. However, it is very crucial since their misusage can lead to misunderstanding in conveying the message delivered by writers. When the grammar of a text is mostly misused, it is difficult for its readers to understand the whole message. When studzing English, it is important for the students to master English grammar since it is one of the important elements in English language (Sari et al., 2019). How sentences and utterances are constructed are ruled by grammar. Carter et al., (2006) said that "in a typical English sentence, it has two basic principles of

Grammar, the arrangement of items (syntax) and the structure of items (morphology)." Sari et al., (2019) added that lexis, that refers to the meaning, structure, and development of single words, is strongly related to grammar; grammar cannot be separated from other level languages. In this digital era, technology has also touched these kinds of problems.

Moreover, Haryati (2016) said that ssince they must concentrate on several important writing parts, such as capitalization, punctuation, grammatical sentences, and coherent content, people think that expressing their ideas in writing is difficult.

The writers found that mistakes on grammatical aspects are the most often found in students' essay writing. This makes teachers difficult to understand what the students want to deliver in their essay. This can be a big problem because they must have ability to deliver their ideas accurately to their readers eventhough they do not meet them directly, and it is not easz to do. Additionaly, Andriani & Wahyuni (2020) said that teaching grammar had been an important phase of foreign language teaching since being competent in grammar is important to communicate with others. Grammatical competence is not only needed in speaking but also in writing. Shang (2016) said that when students are required to create an English writing, they may be anxious because they are afraid of making mistake in language construction such as grammar and vocabulary. It can be ocstacles for them in producing a good writing composition. Although language structure does not take the biggest proportion in writing assessment, but its role is crucial. Therefore, they need assistance to face this obstacle.

Todays, learners are very familiar to the use of communication technology like computer and internet because they are born in digital era. Today's learners are known as digital natives or members of the Net Generation (Ghufron & Rosyida, 2018). They can access so many resources to support what they learn in the classroom. Students can have online quizzes, downloading material or discussing some matters in various discussion forum platforms. Therefore, technology should be appled as a process rather than as a single, isolated and separate activity in teaching and learning (Syahneez, Akhter & Yasmin, 2014). So it is hoped that it can increase the quality of teaching and learning result.

Based on the preliminary document analysis, the writers found that there are many mistakes in non-content and organization aspect of students' essay writing: grammar,

vocabulary, spelling and punctuation. In grammar aspect, student often misused tenses, pronoun, singular and plural noun, subject and verb agreement and passive sentence. In broader area, run on sentences and sentence fragments were often found in student's essay writing. These can lead to misunderstanding in conveying the messages delivered by the essay. Therefore, the tools that can help them in solving this problem so they can focus more on content and organization. Mammadova (2019) states online software which can check grammar and spelling plays a crucial role in English language teaching and learning. Nowadays, students can use some tools that cna help them in improving their writing. Bouchoux (2019, p. 545) mentioned "some easy and free tools can be used by people to develop their English composition". One of them is Grammarly.

Educators have a pivotal role in facilitating learning through the utilization of accessible approaches, strategies, and tools (Daulay et al., 2024). Therefore, the writer promote Grammarly, a digital writing assistance, to the students. It is a writing assistant that provides detail advices to assis people improve their writing — and it is beyond grammar. Grammarly can assist people in checking the grammatical rules, the spelling rule in English construction, also correct errors in writing such as punctuation and capitalization (Fitria, 2021). She continued that Grammarly traces grammar, spelling, punctuation, and other errors in their writing. Grammarly can be installed using Microsoft Office or a free browser extension. Grammarly assists educators, scientists, and teachers in explaining and comprehending the usage of computer software, including how it may be used to teach and learn English when mistakes are discovered (Mubarok Amin & Syafi'i Ahmad, 2020).

In addition, Grammarly is best well-known English grammar check tools and the most broadly benefited tool in the world (Fitria, 2021). Student errors in their writing can be detected by online Grammarly tool (Fadhilah et al., 2018). They continued that there are some feaures in Grammarly: Plagiarism, Contextual Spell Check, Grammar, Punctuation, Choice of Style and Words. Yulianti (2018) outlined that students who use the Grammarly program can see the assessment for writing score after Grammarly detects student papers and shows which aspects are correct and incorrect. Therefore, time of students and lecturers in improving writing can be saved bz this tool, in addition to preparing students to be independent learners (Cavaleri & Dianati, 2016).

Grammarly has various features that include crucial feautures including grammar, spelling, punctuation, and style (Fitria et al., 2022). They continued that when Grammarly is used, students can evaluate their writing based on the input independently. In addition to be able to help students write better, Grammarly increases their motivation and enthusiasm about using an online learning platform. Additionally, Karyuatry,Rizqan & Darayani (2018) stated that Grammarly is one of the potential tools which is easy to use to investigate grammar errors, potential stylistic mistakes, and other features of interest of its users' writing. They continued "Grammarly is the free-online proofreading website that can be used to scan documents for grammar mistakes". It is a good tool to help students in knowing their mistakes on grammar before they submit the writing product to teachers.

Therefore, it can be concluded that considering Grammarly as writing assistance for students beneficial for both students and teachers. Students can use their time more efficiently since they can focus on content and organization of the essay more. This may make them to be more confidence in following the writing process. Also, the teachers can focus more on the content and organization in assessing students' writing. As a result, based on the phenomena and objects of study that have been explained, the writer has willingness to observe the use of Grammarly to improve student's writing quality and focuses on exploring students' perception toward it.

METHOD

This study uses descriptive qualitative research. Creswell (2014) claimed that case study research is a qualitative method wherein the researcher inspects a case or cases over time with the purpose of gathering in-depth data (via observation, interviews, and documentation) and create a report which contains studied-case themes. To analyze an explicit field or a small number of people or areas, qualitative research is used in this study.

The populations of this research are students of English Department, Faculty of Letters, Universitas Pamulang. There are about fifteen students as the participants, and the writers use purposive sampling to obtain the participants. By having achieved the categories, the writers obtain 15 participants who will support the study. Although this study has involved 15 students to support the data the analysis will have depth

description about the benefits of Grammarly in improving students' writing quality.

In collecting data, questionnaires and interviews were used for this research. The writer conducted interviews in students' native language to avoid misunderstanding. The questionnaires are used to gather the data on students responses toward Grammarly as their writing assistance. The interviews aimed at finding students' deeper opinion about Grammarly and how they see Grammarly as their writing assistance. Semi-structured interviews are used so that students could reveal their perspectives and enable the writer to ask additional questions to describe the specific issue. The writers highly expect that these two instruments can support the objective findings in the study. In order to attain the objectives of the study, it comprises several procedures: the writer analyze the questionnaires distributed through G form and conduct the interviews. For interviews, there is a guidance of questions tha which were followed by the writer in order to limit the discussion. Then the result of interviews will be transcribed. During this process, the writers played the recording back and typed in every word that is spoken on the recording, and noted who spoke which words.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Advantages of Using Grammarly

In this part, the writer would elaborate data based on survey, interview and students' essay document. The interview was hold to answer the research questions. These are used to know students' perception on the advantages of Grammarly for their writing. Based on the result of the interview, all respondents give positive response on Grammarly. This only writing assistance is beneficial in helping them to check the correctness of some writing aspects of their essay. The interview results show that grammar is one of the aspects they can check by Grammarly. Moreover, this writing assistance can help them in correcting punctuation. Additionally, Grammarly let them know their mistakes on word position. The last, word choice is another aspect they can check. Based on the explanation before, it can be concluded that Grammarly has some advantages in helping students checking the mistakes in their essay writing in some aspects. It is in line with Fadhilah, Lizawati, & Saribu in 2018 who state that student's' errors in their writing can be detected by online Grammarly tool.

The Drawbacks of Using Grammarly

However, some drawbacks were found when students used Grammarly. After all students have share their perception of using this online writing assistance, the writer found that a few students got difficulty in understanding how Grammarly works for their essay. On the other hand, after they tried several times, they finally understood how to understand it. Besides, some other students found that there is a difference when they used paid version compared with the unpaid one. They could not check plagiarism through the unpaid version of Grammarly. Additionally, it was found that this tool consumes a lot of internet quota.

The Students' Perceptions of Grammarly as the Media to Help Them Correct the Grammar in Their Writing

Questionnaires were distributed by the researcher to get the answer of the research problems. The writer conducted questionnaires to see students' perceptions about using Grammarly to check their writing grammar. The questionnaires consist of 14 questions. In addition, an interview is hold by the writer to find out more information that support the result. The following table presents the result of questionnaires:

Table 1.
The result of the Questionnaire

No	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	Grammarly is not efficient when students use free applications	13%	20%	60%	0%	7%
2	Grammarly helps the students to check grammar	0%	0%	0%	46,7%	53,3%
3	Grammarly increases student motivation to learn	6,7%	0%	33,3%	46,7%	13,3%
4	By using Grammarly media, students can find out their grammar mistakes	0%	0%	0%	53,3%	46,7%
5	Grammarly provides complete features and easy-to-use procedures	0%	6,7%	20%	60%	13,3%
6	I feel helped by the Grammarly	0%	0%	6,7%	60%	33,3%
7	Grammarly is easy to use for correcting grammar	0%	0%	13,3%	66,7%	20%
8	Grammarly is convenient to use for correcting grammar	0%	0%	13,3%	66,7%	20%

How Helpful Grammarly Is In Checking Students' Grammar Mistakes In Writing

It is shown that the students' perception toward using Grammarly in checking their grammar mistake in essay writing. All respondents state that Grammarly is helpful for them to check grammar mistakes they make in writing an essay. It shows their positive response on Grammarly. This result is supported by the interview which found that students are fond of Grammarly because it can correct every single mistake that they make in writing a sentence when they do not notice. In addition to this result, 70% of them said that their motivation to learn is increased after they use Grammarly for checking their grammar mistakes. It is in line with the result of another question. All respondents agree that by using Grammarly media, they can find out their grammar errors. Besides, 93,3% of students feel helped by the Grammarly. Moreover, 86,7% believe that Grammarly really helps them to correct grammar.

How Easy Grammarly Is To Use By Students

Grammarly is not only helpful for students in checking their grammar mistakes, but it is also easy to use. Based on the result of the questionnaires, 73,3% of respondents see that Grammarly offers thorough features and easy-to-use procedures. To see their grammar mistakes through Grammarly, students only have to upload their documents or copy and paste their writing texts on the place provided by the tool. Shortly, the result of correction could be seen by them. In addition, 86,7% believe that Grammarly is easy to use for grammar correction. Grammarly shows and gives mark to the part of text they need to revise. It even gives them suggestions on how they could revise it. Moreover, the same number of respondents, 86,7% believe that Grammarly is convenient to use for grammar correction. Based on the result of the interview, most respondents state that they get additional knowledge on grammar Additionally, they have become more aware on the sentence structure every time they write a text. Besides, 66,7 % of respondents believe that Grammarly is very flexible in its use.

Students' Drawback in using Grammarly

Based on the result of the survey distributed, it can be seen that only 7% of students agreed that Grammarly is not efficient when students use free applications. There are more respondents who agree that even though they used free version,

Grammarly is efficient to use. Additionally, there are 21,7 % of respondents feel unsatisifed by using Grammarly when there are still many grammatical errors found. This is because it is their first time using Grammarly, so they have not been used to this tool. They thought they will get familiar with it after using the tool several times. Besides, 14,7% of respondents feel that Grammarly consumes more quota. However, most respondents do not agree with this statement. In addition, 13,3% of respondents are not certain with the grammar correction by using Grammarly and 13,3 % of respondents find it is difficult when using the Grammarly because an Indonesian language option is not provided.

Related to the findings discussed above, it is found that Grammarly is helpful for students in checking their writing especially on the part of grammar mistakes. It is linked to the result of questionnaires distributed to the students. Most of them agree that they get many advantages from using Grammarly. This tool does not only give positive contribution to check their mistakes in writing, but it also increases. their motivation to learn. However, Grammarly still has some drawbacks such as the language option, internet quota consumption, and limited feature when students use its free version.

The result of this study confirms Fitriana & Nurazni's (2022) finding concerning Students' perception in using Grammarly to check their grammar mistakes in their writing. They found that students get benefits from Grammarly. This online platform is beneficial for them to correct their writing. However, some drawbacks are still owned by Grammarly, such as miscorrection and limited features for the free version, yet students agree that Grammarly assists them a lot.

The study conducted by Fitria (2021) also supports this study. Based on the result of her study, it was found that Grammarly is best well-known English grammar check tools and the most broadly benefited tool in the world. According to her research, Grammarly is driven by an Artificial Intelligence (AI) system that offers precise yet fast corrections and suggestions. Nevertheless, she added, Grammarly's free version still has restrictions and in-service features, in contrast to the premium version, which is fully functional and offers numerous features.

CONCLUSION

From the results drawing on the result and discussion, it is clearly seen that Grammarly brings positive effect on students' writing products. After using Grammarly as writing assistance, the quality of Students' writing improved. This tool does not only give positive contribution to check their mistakes in writing, but it also increases their motivation to learn. However, Grammarly still has some drawbacks such as the language option, internet quota consumption, and limited feature when students use its free version.

The researcher advises other researchers to do research on the same subject but with other respondents, such as senior high school students, in order to improve future studies. Because there have already been too many researches on the use of Grammarly for writing skill, the field might benefit from other skills for instance by learning how it can improve reading skills. The researcher expects that by conducting additional studies involving a wider range of subjects and participants, the results will fill in the gaps left by this study.

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