EFL Students' Perception of the use "Grammarly Application" as Automated Writing Evaluation (AWE)

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this research is to find out the perceptions of EFL students about using the Grammarly application to check grammatical errors in their assignments. It also explores about the strengths and weaknesses of Grammarly Apps. This study uses Describtif qualitatif design to study students' perspectives in using Grammarly Apps. Twenty English education students in one of University in North Sumatra were purposefully chosen as the research participants. Data from this study were collected through questionnaires and interviews. The results indicated that Grammarly has several advantages and disadvantages for students, such as a clear and easy-to-understand feedback feature, it also saves students time when assessing grammar, and other useful features. Negative perspectives from students regarding the shortcomings of Grammarly are that they cannot detected the tenses use, require a strong internet signal to use grammarly apps and cannot download feedback in the form of files and have to pay to access premium Grammar features.

Keywords: *EFL students, grammarly, perception, writing process.*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is among the most crucial linguistic abilities. since writing is a reliable form of communication. One can communicate all thoughts, emotions, and opinions to others through writing by sending them a text. But mastering writing techniques is not simple. It was always seen to be a challenging skill to learn when compared to other skills. Therefore, in order to write well, students must not only comprehend social functions and master the general structure of a document, but also possess grammatical knowledge pertinent to the content. Because of this, writing is more difficult. And the consequences of student writing that does not adhere to English grammar standards demonstrate this intricacy.

The rapid development of technology in this day and age, requires that all of us must understand the use of technology. In the world of education, technological developments must be utilized by both teachers and students to support the teaching and learning process. Computers are claimed to have the potential to influence the classroom atmosphere. It is emerging as a leading technology in promoting educational development (Noni, 2009). Today's learners can employ a

variety of writing aids because of the rapid development of technology. One tool for increasing grammar accuracy is the grammar checker. Students can discover grammatical mistakes in the text with the help of the grammar checker. The program automatically detects and gives comments on writing faults made by students, such as improper use of verbs, articles, subjects, phrases, and punctuation.

Students can use a variety of online grammar checkers, including Grammarly, ProWritingAid, Ginger, and WhiteSmoke.Using the app to check for grammatical accuracy is really beneficial. According to Mozgovoy (2011), a grammar checker aids students in looking for grammatical problems in a document. The grammar checker, sometimes referred to as the AWE (Automatic Writing Evaluation) program, is a tool that may be used to identify and repair writing faults in punctuation, tenses, articles, and spelling. Ranalli (2018) contends that students have a favorable opinion of the AWE program. They assert that the AWE program offers insightful input. Grammarly is one of the AWE tools that Indonesian students frequently utilize.

A Ukrainian technology business with a US presence offers the Grammarly Application as online writing assistance. This software is available on a laptop or smartphone as a web application. Grammarly can analyze students writing for plagiarism as well as grammar, wordiness, punctuation, spelling, use, and style. Students can improve their writing by using Grammarly's word suggestions. Additionally, Grammarly not only detects but also fixes writing faults. Students can use a variety of online grammar checkers, as was previously described. According to Nova (2018), Grammarly provides helpful recommendations for improving the readability, clarity, and error-freeness of writing. Many people, especially university students, choose to use Grammarly because of these benefits. In fact, Grammarly has been selected by one Australian institution as its writing grammar checker (O'Neill & Russell, 2019). Cavaleri and Dianti's (2016) study, which found that students at Australian institutions have favorable opinions of Grammarly, lends credence to this.. They claim that Grammarly is very helpful, easy to use, helps them understand grammar rules, and improves academic writing.

This software, which has many advantages, certainly encourages EFL students to be more creative and innovative in writing articles in English. Most of the research on the perceptions of EFL students regarding the use of Grammarly and feedback on their writing, including research on the use of Grammarly by students was also conducted by Fitriana and Nurazni (2022), where their research aims to find out about the perspectives of students majoring in English. towards Grammarly software as a medium for assessing grammar in their writing. Their research shows that Grammarly has many benefits and uses for students, such as correcting grammatical errors in their writing. In addition, Grammarly is known to be easy to use and has quite complete features. It also doesn't take up a lot of internet quota. However, it was also found that Grammarly has some drawbacks, namely Grammarly corrections are not always correct, and sometimes programmatic corrections can change the meaning of sentences. Another drawback is the very limited free Grammarly features.

The purpose of this study was to determine students' perceptions of using Grammarly in writing articles and student assignments, as well as the advantages

and disadvantages of applying Grammarly. Students are told whether their grammar is correct, so Grammarly can help them correct their mistakes when writing. Grammarly, as an online grammar checker software, has both strengths and weaknesses. Grammar strengths and weaknesses as experienced by the students studied in this study

LITERATURE REVIEW
Perception

The word "perception" is derived from the Latin verb "percipio," which meaning "to receive." Perception is described as the process of being conscious of or interpreting sensory data in philosophy, psychology, and cognitive science. The process through which a person perceives another person or an item is called perception. No one is left out of the perceiving process because everyone can interact, relate to, or work together when everyone understands the information being sent by others. The term "core of communication" refers to perception since poor perception results in poor communication. Students who are fresh to college-level coursework will benefit best from perception. Additionally, Montague (2020) asserts that a student's view of something is a reflection of their feelings.

Grammarly

Grammarly is one of the most popular online grammar checkers. Developed in 2009 by Maz Lytvyn and Alex Shevchenko. The Grammarly software makes the claim to be the most precise English grammar checker on the market. proven to have been employed by numerous college and high school students to evaluate writing mistakes. One of the Australian institutions chose Grammarly as the program to offer grammar suggestions. The most effective and well-liked online grammar checker for students, in brief, is Grammarly.

Grammarly Aplication has a variety of tools covering important aspects including grammar, spelling, punctuation, and style. According to Ghufron (2019), Grammarly is more effective in minimizing errors in word use/diction, language use (grammar), and mechanical writing (spelling and punctuation). however, improving the content and structure of students' EFL writing, on the other hand, was of little use. In terms of vocabulary use, language use, and mechanics, Grammarly can clearly and immediately identify EFL writing difficulties and errors. Grammarly can also detect missing spaces after periods and missed words, including proper nouns, and provides many alternative options (feedback provision) for missed terms. Grammar feedback helps them figure out which one is correct. The students can then independently evaluate their writing based on the feedback. Grammarly not only improves their writing but also makes them more motivated and optimistic in using the online.

Grammarly can not only spot misspelled words and incorrect punctuation, but also recognize sentence fragments and provide verbal cues, claim Daniels and

Leslie (2009). Additionally, Grammarly includes a ton of excellent stuff that can help you become a better writer.

Writing skill

Writing is the process of conveying emotions, thoughts, goals, and plans in black and white, according to Ghlolaminejad et al in Hasan Basri (2020). According to Mulyati, writing is a method by which people think and communicate their thoughts through discourse. According to Brown in Dwi suci (2020), "Writing is a thought process; the writer produces the final product based on writing his thoughts after the author has gone through the thought process." In conclusion, developing writing abilities can be viewed of as the act of thinking and verbally expressing one's feelings, wishes, and ambitions.

Writers create a text, such as a letter, an email, or a movie review. Writing is communicating a message using language. As you read in screen 1, the context for the writing is what helps the students identify why, who, and what we will write. For example, an everyday context might be a birthday or a trip to the store. You may write an invitation to a birthday party or a shopping list in these contexts. The purpose for writing the invitation is to invite friends to your birthday party. The purpose for writing the shopping list is to help you remember what to buy at the store..

Finally, when your students write, they know what genre the text will be. The invitation and shopping list are the genres for the above contexts. Formulaic language is common in different genres. It is important for your students to be aware of this when they write. An invitation is generally short and often uses formulaic language such as *You are cordially invited . . . ; I hope to see you there . . .* A shopping list is usually only words and phrases, such as *two boxes of tea, a bag of rice, bananas. . . .*

Knowing the purpose, audience, and genre helps you choose appropriate language to communicate your message. Knowing them also helps you decide how to organize the information. Writers need able to use language accurately and appropriately for a given context, and they need to know how to organize the content so that the reader can understand the message.

According to Harmer (quoted in Khasanah, 2015, p. 8), the writing process involves four key stages. Specifically, preparation, drafts, proofreading, revision, and publication. Students revise their written work or rough drafts during editing to look for faults and grammatical flaws, in particular. Students usually struggle at this point because they are unaware of where their grammatical faults are located or how they are laid out. They are unable to repair their mistakes when they are unsure of where the grammar in their writing has gone. This issue will have an impact on their final grade. Because of this, their writing will not be at its best.

METHOD

Based on the issue description and the research purpose, this study is categorized as descriptive qualitative research. Case studies are discourse analysis,

interactional analysis, and classroom observations were just a few of the many distinct traditions and data collection methods used in the qualitative study. Interviews and questionnaires were used in survey research (Gruba, 2008). In order to calculate the percentage of data analysis, statistical data are also utilized.

Participant

In this study, the participants were university students, totaling twenty students. The sampling technique in this study was to use purposive sampling, which is a type of sampling technique that is widely used in qualitative research. In selecting the sample, it is selected based on certain considerations or criteria (Haryoko et al., 2020).

Data collection

In this study using a questionnaire. There were 7 statements as close ended questions and 3 statements as opened ended questions. The statement consists of 5 answers starting from Never =N, Rarely = R, Sometimes =S, Often =O, and Very Often/Always = VO

Data Analysis

An investigation of meaning based on the content and the pre-existing categories in the concept under study using a qualitative method is referred to as a qualitative content analysis technique. The simplest and most popular data analysis method utilized by qualitative researchers is interactive model data analysis. The primary information (participants' item scores and responses) was gathered by the first researcher. The scores were then combined by the researcher. Data from the interviews are used to corroborate and clarify the questionnaire's findings. While the primary inquiries for the semi-structured interview were produced based on the responses provided by the participants in the online survey. In order to assess the material from the interview, the audio was first recorded, then stored in Microsoft Word. After data collection, the researcher interpreted the results of the analysis. The data is also grouped and reviewed by the researchers depending on the category. The results of the questionnaire are supported by data from interviews. And finally, the researcher explained that the conclusions were obtained from the results of data analysis. This interactive model data analysis always refers to the concept offered by Miles & Huberman (1994) which consists of data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions and verification.

FINDINGS

In this Part the reearchr will explain about the students perception of Grammarly features, and the students Perceptions about applying Grammarly include the frequency of using Grammarly, and their opinions after using Grammarly.

a. Close-ended Questionnaire

The close-ended questions focused on the frequent use of Grammarly , the questionnaire provided options adapted from the Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (Never =N, Rarely = R, Sometimes =S, Often =O, and Very Often/Always = VO).

The data presented in this study were obtained from collage students majoring in English education. The students were instructed to choose the answers that are closest to their own. Table 1 shows the percentage of the frequent-used of Grammarly.

Table 1. The Percentage of Frequent-used of Grammarly

No	Questionnaire	Never	Rarely	Some times	Often	Very often	Have used GT	Frequent use
		N	R	S	O	VO	R + S + O + VO	O + VO
1	I use Grammarly to check grammatical error in the process of writing an article	0%	4%	8%	36%	52%	100%	88%
2	I use Grammarly to check check correct spelling word in my writing	4%	8%	12%	28%	48%	96%	76%
3	I use grammarly to check correct punctuation in writing	8%	12%	16%	28%	36%	92%	64%
4	I use Grammarly to check corrrect clarity of writing	16%	16%	16%	24%	28%	84%	52%
5	I use grammarly to provide the more appropriate word in the context of the phrase	16%	16%	20%	24%	24%	84%	48%
6	I use Grammarly to check punctuation errors in the writing process	36%	20%	20%	16%	8%	64%	24%
7	I use Grammarly check the formality style I want to carry in writing	40%	28%	12%	12%	8%	60%	20%

Based on the open-ended questionnaire results shown in Table 1, it can be concluded that most of the student's tendencies in using Grammarly as a medium for Automated Writing Evaluation (AWE) in the process of writing articles. A detailed explanation will be presented below: Participants who frequently use Grammarly had a high tendency on using Grammarly.   Total a hundred percent of all participants (20) have experienced using Grammarly to check grammatical errors in the process of writing an article with frequent use (often and very often) is 88%.

The percentage of Grammarly users in checking spelling words is 96%, 92% to check punctuation and check correct clarity of writing 84%, while for frequent use (often and very often) those criteria are 76%, 64%, and 52% respectively. The percentage of participants who have experience in using Grammarly to provide the more appropriate word in the context of the phrase is 84% and 64%, with frequent use at 48% and 24%, respectively.

b. Open-ended Questionnaire

Open-ended questionnaire is intended to elicit a complete, meaningful response from the subjects based on their own knowledge and feelings. It is the opposite of a closed-ended questionnaire, which encourages a brief or single-word response. In addition, open-ended questionnaires are more objective and less leading than closed-ended questions. In this open-ended questionnaire, students are allowed to express their thoughts on grammarly deeper and more detail. For this open-ended questionnaire, the questions focused on the students' perception about the advantages and disadvantages of using Grammarly as a media to checker grammatical error in writing. The open-ended questionnaire results are presented below:

Table 2. The Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Grammarly

Advantages	
Participant	Answer
1	Grammarly app useful for users
2	It is very simple to use
3	It makes easy for me to do my assignments especially for writing.
4	Grammarly could be accessed quickly so saves time in correcting my writing errors
5	Grammarly provides extensive functions and simple operating techniques.
6	Grammarly improves the enthusiasm of students to learn
7	gramarly can check thousands of words without being typed through file uploads
8	Grammarly can check even paragraphs and longer text.
9	Grammarly gives suggestions on wordy sentences to make

	them clear	
10	Grammarly helps me understand English grammar rules	
Disadventages		
1	Grammarly can't be used offline	
2	Grammarly cannot really detect what tenses	
3	cannot download feedback in the form of files and have to pay to access premium Grammar features.	
4	they cannot detected the tenses use	
5	require a strong internet signal to use grammarly apps	

Based on the results of the open-ended questionnaire, indicates that Grammarly is really helpful because it is easy and fast. Generally, it needs a long time to check grammatical errors. Grammar checkers, according to Cavaleri & Dianti (2016), can identify comments on grammatical problems. According to ONeill & Russell (2019), Grammarly users can benefit from a number of benefits. Grammarly offers both direct and indirect comments as a start. Feedback can be given quickly with notes that include corrections and justifications, but feedback can also be given slowly with problems that have been highlighted. It's also quite helpful to use Grammarly's EFL writing error detection tool. Grammarly, according to Cavaleri & Dianti (2016), is one of the most widely used online grammar checkers right now. The most reliable grammar checker for English is generally regarded as Grammarly.

The main role of Grammarly, based on the questionnaire is saving students time. They don't need to bring an open manual book to find out the grammatical word. The students just need to connect to the internet and Grammarly can be utilized. Besides, Grammarly gives suggestions on wordy sentences to make them clear. Something that is more special is that Grammarly can check thousands of words without being typed through file uploads. Grammarly provides extensive functions and simple operating techniques. The questionnaire results also indicate that Grammarly is really helpful by providing more than one word's meaning and classification of words. Therefore, the students can choose the most appropriate words to be adopted based on the classification of the words to be used in their assignment.

Besides the advantages, Grammarly also has some disadvantages. Students cannot download feedback in the form of files and have to pay to access premium Grammar features. The premium version of Grammarly offers over 150 grammar points, as well as feature as plagiarism detection, vocabulary enrichment suggestions, and contextual spelling. And Grammarly Premium also contains a short and comprehensive explanation of every grammatical error. And then the requirement for an internet connection is one of the drawbacks of the Grammarly application. Students must connect to the internet to utilize the machine translation because Grammarly cannot be used offline.

Interview

This study employed a semi-structured interview to obtain deeper information from participants. According to Cohen et al. (2007) semi-structured

interviews allow researchers greater flexibility in framing questions and allow participants to define their own experiences. On the other hand, Bryman (2008) in Schroedler (2017) explains that a benefit of semi-structured interviews is that participants tend to be more open about their worldviews.

This part provides the students' answer on interview section that developed based on their responses in questionnaires. The interview was conducted to get deeper information about the students' perception on using Grammarly, included the adventages and disadventages using this app. In this research, 5 students were involved in the interview section as the representative from all participants. The followings are the students' answer for interview.

Participant 1

I have used Grammarly for a quite long time. I think Grammarly is really helpful for me because I can find check my error sentence words faster and easier gives suggestions on passive voices sentence to make them more direct /concise. *Also, Grammarly is avalaible on my mobile phone that I can use anytime and anywhere. Internet connection, however is the key requirement in utilizing this aplication.*

Participant 2

I really love Grammarly. When producing articles, grammar mistakes can be fixed with Grammarly. Grammarly's corrections show me what needs to be changed. I may then independently assess my writing in light of the feedback. Therefore, Grammarly has not only improved my writing, but it has also inspired me and given me a good outlook on using the online learning system.

Participant 3

I use Grammarly a lot to do my work. I also pay Grammarly premium caused I really love this application. helped me to correct my punctuation, although it frequently got mixed up when deciding when to use commas and quotation marks, especially if the sentence was too long. Grammarly advised me to use a comma before the quotation marks in the identical situation. And then Grammarly helps me to check the use of verbs, especially in the sentence past tense. try the 'plagiarism' feature in the premium Grammarly application to be able to detect similarities in written English.

Participant 4

For discourse, I think The display of Grammarly is easy, and all features for adjustment are present. If we're using a laptop, the percentage of grammatical, punctuational, and sentence structural mistakes is displayed on the right side of the screen. A list of our writing errors is displayed next to it. Yes, there are some words that need to be changed and some punctuation that has to be fixed. Simply click on the proposed rationale to solve the problem. It's quite simple.

Participant 5

I don't always feel confident with my writing skills but wit grammarly helps me understand English grammar rules. In my article To add more variety to the sentences, Grammarly suggested another term. The word Grammarly suggests is similar to the one the user previously used, but it is used in a different context.
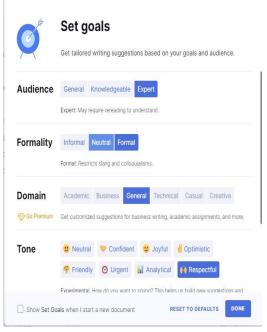
It was further demonstrated by P4's assertion that several recommendations were still unclear and might alter the intended meaning.

Based on the interview results, students shared positive perceptions of the overall benefits of using Grammaarly, such as helps with 4 features like punctuation, spelling word, laguage style and grammar makes it easy to understand grammatical rules and grammarly is flexible because Grammarly can be used anytime and anywhere with smartphone or laptop. Despite its benefits, students see that Grammarly also has some drawbacks. They revealed that Gammarly can't be utilized offline, provides inaccurate fedback both in meaning and grammar as well as inappropriate context of source language.

DISCUSSION

In this section, the researcher will discuss students' responses to the questionnaire that was distributed through the Google form, which aims to find out their perspectives and opinions after using the Grammarly application. When viewed from the point of view of its usefulness, researchers found two benefits in this study, namely theoretical benefits and practical benefits. The theoretical benefit of this study is to describe how grammatically useful it is to provide automatic feedback during the process of writing English texts. In addition, the benefit of the practice in this research is that students can try the 'plagiarism' feature in the premium Grammarly application to be able to detect similarities in written English.

For students to succeed in academic writing, it is also important to have good grammatical skills. The Grammarly application offers various recommendations for goals that students can choose from when it comes to editing and writing comments, as we can see below:

According to the questionnaire results, the majority of students had a favorable opinion of the Grammarly application. In this study, the researchers discovered that the research participants generally had a favorable opinion of

utilizing Grammarly. Positive Attitudes Students' positive perceptions of Grammarly are influenced by a number of factors. Most students have agreed to have their language structure evaluated using Grammarly. Similar to the earlier studies, grammar is a crucial component of language proficiency because Grammarly affects both sentence form and meaning perception. Hendriwanto, Sugeng, and Bambang (2013) assert that if a writer utilizes incorrect grammar, such as when using verbs, word order, kid sentences, passive phrases, and impersonal constructions, their writing will lack meaning. Grammar and spelling are the most crucial aspects of written communication, according to Primary (2021).

Not just a positive attitude Additionally, the researcher discovered that some participants had negative views on using Grammarly: Some students have negative views about using Grammarly because they believe it demands reliable internet access. Users cannot successfully upload the text they want to check for grammar in the Grammarly application when there is network interference on the internet, and the grammar-checking procedure will not function. Several individuals also noted that Grammarly's feedback wasn't always accurate and valid. The results of earlier research by Nova (2018), which showed that Grammarly's feedback wasn't always in line with the user's preferences, support this.It can make the user think about accepting or ignoring feedback. Users must also understand grammar well so they can identify whether the feedback provided by Grammarly is correct or not.

The conclusion from the discussion of this research shows that the use of grammarly as a media AWE, this is in accordance with what the respondents felt. They feel comfortable and happy with using Grammarly in their writing process. even though the co-19 pandemic is over. This is also supported by previous research studies related to the use of Grammarly which explains their findings that they also have a positive attitude towards the use of AWE. So that these findings answer the question regarding the perceptions of college students regarding Grammarly as AWE, which is positive.

CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation above it can be concluded that this study looks at how students feel about using Grammarly when they write. Students have a positive opinion of using Grammarly, with highly approving. Grammarly has both advantages and disadvantages. The ability to provide both direct and indirect feedback, which is simple to set up, is Grammarly's strong suit. A simple function in Grammarly can also find minor errors in pupils' writing. Grammarly's drawbacks include its restricted use, the need to pay if students wish to utilize all of its premium capabilities, and its occasionally illegible feedback, which necessitates that they have an excellent understanding of grammar.

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