



The Perception of English Study Program Students of FKIP Universitas Riau toward Using Grammarly in Writing Essay

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Abstract

Grammarly is one of the famous Automated Writing Evaluation (AWE) tools used by many students. Many studies reveal that this tool can improve students' writing skills. This research aims to find out and describe the perception of English Study Program Students of FKIP Universitas Riau toward using Grammarly in writing essay. This research used quantitative methods. Questionnaires were used to collect data regarding students' perceptions of using Grammarly in Writing Essay. The research results showed that many students chose to use Grammarly because they felt it was important to get input from Grammarly, they lacked confidence in writing because Grammarly can correct mistakes in their writing. Students believed that the benefits of Grammarly can improve their writing skills, solve language problems, and encourage them to do proofreading independently. Students rated Grammarly's strengths, including correctness features to improve spelling, punctuation, and make writing interesting and varied. In addition, it helped students save time in writing corrections. On the other hand, only a few students felt that Grammarly required a stable internet connection to function properly and required additional corrections as some entries were deemed inaccurate. Students responded to these errors by constantly rechecking and ensuring their Grammar input fits the context of their writing, or they will ignore inaccurate input. Students kept using Grammarly because it helped them improve their writing despite some shortcomings.

Keywords: *Essay, Grammarly, Perception*

Introduction

The twenty-first century has seen the world become smaller, more accessible, shared, and more familiar to all people because English is used as a common language across various areas, cultures, customs, and unique features. In English, there are four important skills such as reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Of all these skills, writing is the most difficult. According to Patel & Jain (2008), writing is a crucial part of learning a language because writing is a great way to learn spelling, vocabulary, and sentence patterns. Haris (1969) highlights that there are five components of writing skill such as content, form, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics (punctuation and capitalization). Lack of experience, written ideas, and knowledge of grammar and vocabulary can all contribute to students' struggles while writing in English. The most common issues they encounter are with knowing what to write, how to write it, vocabulary gaps, and organizational issues (Sulasti, 2003).

One of the solutions that can be used in the digital era as it is today is to take advantage of existing technology. One innovation that can help students' learning exercises, especially language students, is a syntax checker app. Learners greatly benefit from the availability of grammar checker apps to identify grammatical and other language errors in their writing. Today, the rise of online sentence structure checkers is seen as an answer to this problem (Perdana et al., 2019). Students who have become digital indigenous people easily recognize various types of grammar checker applications, one of which is Grammarly.

Grammarly is an online grammar and spelling checker that can be used with a web browser, desktop, or by connecting directly to Microsoft Office Word. The tool also has features for spelling and grammar detection, plagiarism detection, and more. Grammarly makes it easy for students to correct spelling, grammar, and other punctuation errors such as commas, quotation marks, and others (Vitalis et al., 2021). Grammarly provides benefits to students. It points out students' mistakes and provides explanations and suggestions to them to correct their mistakes. Grammarly also provides benefits in the form of teachable moments, so that from knowing there are mistakes, it can improve vocabulary and sentence clarity (Grammarly.com, 2017). Grammarly shows performance scores, so students know their writing abilities.

Based on the researcher's direct observations, it was found that many English study program students at Universitas Riau, in particular, use Grammarly as a machine to correct English grammar errors from their smartphones as a fast way to do assignments because of the ease of accessing it and faster completion of assignments, thus saving a lot of time. Researcher as English students also still use Grammarly in learning English compared to other applications. Some students even use it to improve grammar, spelling and punctuation in English during the process of completing assignments given by the lecturer. Of course, it is a consideration whether this action is positive or negative among English language

learners. However, with the Grammarly, it can help students check grammatical errors in writing the text. With the previous explanation, the researcher wanted to identify the perceptions of English study program students of FKIP Universitas Riau toward using Grammarly in writing essay.

Method

The research design in this study used a quantitative approach. This method aims to determine the perception of English Study Program Students of FKIP Universitas toward using Grammarly in writing essay. The sample for this research was 34 students from English Study Program Students class of 2022 at FKIP Universitas Riau. To obtain quantitative data, researcher used questionnaire to collect information. The type of questionnaire used is a closed-ended questionnaire with a total of 20 statements. After testing validity and reliability, only 16 items were valid.

Questionnaire data is displayed in a range of 1 to 5, from strongly disagree to strongly agree based on Likert Scale theory. To find out the score for each statement in the questionnaire, this was done using Likert Scale and the average score was calculated, after that the researcher analyzed the questionnaire categories through score intervals. Then, the researcher explained and described each indicator from the results of data analysis.

Result and Discussion

Result

Table 1. Description Results of Motivation Indicator

Students' Perception on Grammarly							
Student's Perception on the motivate to use Grammarly							
No.	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean
1.	I always use Grammarly in my essay writing	0 (0%)	3 (5%)	10 (24%)	17 (55%)	4 (16%)	72,94%
2.	Grammarly's feedback improve my writing skills	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	8 (18%)	20 (60%)	6 (22%)	78,82%
3.	Grammarly's feedback overcomes my problem in linguistic obstacles when writing essay	1 (1%)	1 (2%)	9 (17%)	17 (56%)	6 (24%)	75,29%
4.	Grammarly encourages me to do independent	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	13 (31%)	13 (41%)	7 (27%)	74,71%

	proofreading						
Total Average		0,5%	1,75%	22,5%	53%	22,25%	75,44%

From table 1, it can be seen item number 2 with the statement *"Grammarly's feedback improve my writing skills"* has the highest mean score (78,82%), this indicates that the perception of English study program students in using Grammarly can improve their writing skills. After that, item number 3 took the second place with the statement *"Grammarly's feedback overcomes my problem in linguistic obstacles when writing essay"* and a mean score of 75,29%, from this statement it can be indicated that the perception of English study program students in using Grammarly can overcomes their problem in linguistic obstacles when writing essay.

Followed by item number 4 with statement *"Grammarly encourages me to do independent proofreading"* has a mean score of 74,71%, from this statement, it can be indicated that the perception of English study program students in using Grammarly can encouraged them to do independent proofreading. And for the lowest a total mean score of 72,94% can be seen on item number 1 with statement *"I always use Grammarly in my essay writing"* this indicates that the English study program students are using Grammarly in writing essay. With a total mean score of 75,44%, this value is included in the 'Positive' category.

Table 2. Description Results of Strength Indicator

Students' Perception on Grammarly							
Students' Perceptions of the Strength of Using Grammarly							
No.	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean
5.	Grammarly helps me feel more confident with my essay writing	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	9 (20%)	14 (41%)	10 (38%)	79,41%
6.	Grammarly helps me understand English grammar rules	0 (0%)	2 (3%)	5 (11%)	17 (50%)	10 (36%)	80,59%
7.	Grammarly helps me correct grammar in my essay writing	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (11%)	16 (44%)	13 (45%)	84,71%
8.	Grammarly helps me correct spelling in my essay writing	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	6 (13%)	13 (38%)	13 (47%)	81,18%
9.	Grammarly helps me correct punctuation in my essay writing	0 (0%)	2 (3%)	7 (16%)	14 (41%)	11 (40%)	80,00%

10.	Grammarly gives a clear explanation of the error in my essay writing	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	4 (9%)	23 (68%)	6 (22%)	80,00%
11.	Grammarly saves my time in correcting my essay writing errors	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	3 (6%)	18 (52%)	11 (40%)	81,76%
12.	Grammarly gives an alternative word choice to make writing more various	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	5 (11%)	18 (53%)	9 (33%)	79,41%
13.	Grammarly helps me to correct the clarity of my essay writing	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	8 (18%)	15 (46%)	9 (34%)	77,65%
Total Average		0,4 4%	1,3 3%	12, 77%	48, 11%	37, 22%	80,5 2%

From table 2, it can be seen item number 7 with the statement *"Grammarly helps me correct grammar in my essay writing"* has the highest mean score (84,71%), this indicates that the perception of English study program students in using Grammarly helps them correct grammar in essay writing. After that, item number 11 with statement *"Grammarly saves my time in correcting my essay writing errors"* with a mean score of 81,76%. Next, followed by item number 8, with statement *"Grammarly helps me correct punctuation in my essay writing"* with a mean score of 81,18%. Followed item number 6, with statement *"Grammarly helps me understand English grammar rules"* with a mean score of 80,59%.

After that, item number 9 and 10 with statements *"Grammarly helps me correct punctuation in my essay writing"* and *"Grammarly gives a clear explanation of the error in my essay writing"* with a mean score of 80,00%. Afterward, for item number 5 and 12, with statements *"Grammarly helps me feel more confident with my essay writing"* and *"Grammarly gives an alternative word choice to make writing more various"* with a mean score of 79,41%. And for the lowest a total mean score of 77,65% can be seen in item number 13 with statement *"Grammarly helps me to correct the clarity of my essay writing"*, this indicates that the perception of English study program students in using Grammarly helps them to correct the clarity of their essay writing. From the calculation above, with a total mean score of 80,52%, this value is included in the 'Very Positive' category.

Table 3. Description Results of Weakness Indicator

Students' Perception on Grammarly							
Students' Perceptions of the Weakness Of Using Grammarly							
No.	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean
14.	Grammarly needs a stable internet connection to be used comfortably	0 (0%)	2 (3%)	18 (18%)	15 (45%)	9 (34%)	78,24 %
15.	I found some difficulties when using Grammarly	0 (0%)	8 (16%)	19 (55%)	5 (19%)	2 (10%)	60,59 %
16.	Grammarly does not help me in improving my essay writing quality	8 (10%)	10 (24%)	11 (40%)	4 (20%)	1 (6%)	48,24 %
Total Average		2,66 %	14,33 %	37,66 %	28%	16,66 %	62,25 %

From table 4.5, it can be seen item number 14 with the statement “*Grammarly needs a stable internet connection to be used comfortably*” has the highest mean score (78,24%), it showed that the perception of English study program students regarding the use of Grammarly requires a stable internet connection so that it can be used comfortably. After that, followed by item number 15 took the second place with the statement “*I found some difficulties when using Grammarly*” and a mean score of 60,59%, it showed that the perception of English study program students regarding the use of Grammarly found several difficulties in using it.

And for the lowest a total mean score of 48,24% can be seen on item number 16 with statement “*Grammarly does not help me in improving my essay writing quality*” this indicates that the perceptions of English study program students regarding the use of Grammarly can help them improve the quality of their essay writing. With a total mean score of 62,25%, this value is included in the ‘Positive’ category.

Discussion

This study discusses the results by focusing on the purpose of the research. The purpose of this study is to find out the perception of English Study Program Students of FKIP Universitas Riau toward using Grammarly in writing essay. In order to describe the students’ perceptions, the researcher used questionnaire. The first indicator of the research is students’ perception on the motivation to use Grammarly. The mean score of students’ motivation in using Grammarly is 75,44%, it shows in Table 4.3. This score is categorized as positive according to Herlinda’s

(2019) formula. After presenting the quantitative findings, students' perceptions in using Grammarly show that they have positive perception.

One of the reasons why students are motivated to use Grammarly is because they are not confident in their writing abilities, so with Grammarly they are able to overcome the writing problems and obstacles they face. They find many mistakes in their writing because they do not understand grammar rules properly. In line with research Puspitasari (2013), students are still confused about correct grammar and they choose Grammarly to help them correct their writing. This is also in line with the findings by Lailika (2019) and Fitria (2021) regarding students' perceptions in using Grammarly, namely to increase their confidence in writing. They revealed that students can check their writing with Grammarly first before presenting it to the class or teacher, because by using Grammarly, students can find out mistakes in writing. Therefore, they can overcome these mistakes and by knowing these mistakes they can improve their writing skills.

The second indicator of the research is students' perceptions on the strength in using Grammarly. The students' mean score on the strength of using Grammarly is 80,52%, as show in Table 4.4. This score is categorized as very positive according to Harlinda's (2019) formula. Students' perceptions of Grammarly on the strength indicator show that they have a very positive perception. Another positive response to Grammarly feedback was related to time savings. Nova (2018) found that Grammarly can correct writing errors in a short time. Students just enter the text and Grammarly automatically detects the errors. This allows students to revise mistakes more quickly.

This finding is also in line with Lailika (2019) who found that students felt they could manage their time well after using Grammarly. The reason is Grammarly corrects their writing very quickly, so they can immediately revise it and do other tasks. Additionally, O'Neill & Russell (2019) found that Grammarly is better than teacher assistants in providing feedback, because Grammarly provides immediate feedback while teachers provide feedback after a few days. Most importantly, Grammarly's comprehensive usability can help students improve the quality of their writing. Lailika (2019) found that students believe Grammarly can detect language errors, typos and grammatical errors. It also helps users recognize complicated statements and replace them with more relevant alternatives, as well as correct spelling and punctuation (Cavaleri & Dianti, 2016). And with Grammarly which is able to help detect language errors, typos and grammatical errors, it makes students more confident in the essay writing they write.

The third indicator of the research is student's perceptions of the weakness of using Grammarly. The students' mean score on the weakness of using Grammarly is 62,25%, as show in Table 4.5. Regarding the disadvantages of Grammarly, this research revealed that most students agree that Grammarly requires a stable internet connection to be used comfortably. Grammarly cannot provide immediate feedback if the students have a poor internet connection. Fitria

(2021) also found that unstable internet connections prevented students from getting direct feedback from Grammarly. Without a stable internet connection, students cannot upload or get feedback from Grammarly because it is a cloud-based program that is connected to the main server via the internet.

And there are many inaccuracies in the feedback provided by Grammarly (Dembsey, 2017). About 26% of the participants in this study agreed that Grammarly input did not always help them in writing and 29% of them experienced difficulties when using Grammarly. Additionally, Dodigovic (2021), found that around 66% of errors detected by Grammarly were accurate error identifications, while the rest were incorrect. Furthermore, Guo et al. (2021) found that Grammarly missed many errors, accounting for approximately 7% of the total number of errors detected.

The researcher concluded from the study's results that students kept to use Grammarly because Grammarly assisted them in doing their own self-proofreading. It was in line with Ni Chang et al., (2012) who found that students could read and then review written feedback on their own thanks to electronic feedback. This was important since feedback enabled pupils to grow and study on their own. They maintained that Grammarly's feedback was sound technically, but as it is merely a program, it cannot comprehend the writing intentions of its students. Students believed that Grammarly could still be used to help them in proofreading, considering the mistakes given by Grammarly were not fatal errors.

Conclusions

Many students used Grammarly because they felt it was crucial to receive feedback from Grammarly, and because Grammarly could fix any errors in their writing, it gave them more confidence when they wrote. The advantages of Grammarly, according to students, can help them write better, overcome language-related issues, and motivate them to proofread on their own. Students' opinions about use Grammarly are mixed. Grammarly's accuracy tool, which enhances spelling and punctuation and adds variety to writing, was one of the benefits that students evaluated highly. Additionally, it saves pupils time when they have to write corrections. However, few students thought Grammarly needed a steady internet connection to work correctly and that it needed more edits because some of the entries were thought to be incorrect. In response to these mistakes, students make sure to constantly double-check and make sure.

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