The Use of Grammarly as A Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) To Grammatically Improve Student’s Writing Skill

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Abstract: Despite the ability to know, comprehend, and articulate a concept into a paragraph or essay is the most fundamental writing skill that students can have (Yamin, 2019), writing is a difficult skill to learn (Maharani, 2018). Furthermore, due to the importance of technological advancements in preparing students to face the 21st century skill of digital literacy in the classroom, teaching writing in this 21st century becomes more challenging since it requires the inclusion of technology. In relation to it, this library research aiming to scrutinize the body of contemporary literature found that the use of Grammarly as one kind of implementation of MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning) is able to improve students’ writing. It is since Grammarly helps its users to improve grammatical factors such as spellings, pronouns, verb agreement, punctuation, and word use. It is further found that there are several strengths of Grammarly, namely: it is useful feedback for learning gain, easy access in downloading and utilization, high rate of evaluation speed, and free service. However, the weaknesses of Grammarly are misleading feedback, over-checking on references list, and inability in checking context and content of writing. Thus, the users are recommended to use Grammarly wisely and to be fully aware of its weaknesses.

Keywords: Writing, MALL, Grammarly

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a difficult skill to learn (Maharani, 2018). It is since writing requires mastery of certain cognitive and language skills (Maharani, 2018; Villar Faller, 2018). It means that besides speaking, a learner is expected to master the productive skill of writing as one of two ways to demonstrate his or her ability to communicate effectively. Specifically, according to Yamin (2019), the ability to know, comprehend, and articulate a concept into a paragraph or essay is the most fundamental writing skill that students can have. Furthermore, according to Fairbairn & Winch (2011), the purpose of writing is to express thoughts rather than to demonstrate competence in the use of spelling, punctuation, and grammar conventions. However, in this modern era, the notion of writing skills have become even more crucial since today’s society are able to view written information in virtual platform meaning effective writing skills are highly needed.

Writing is a tool of communication in the form of written text. It is one of the most essential skills in productive language skills besides speaking. Writing skills is the ability to transform ideas and thoughts to the listener to deliver information or convey to the readers (Masduqi, 2016). Writing proficiency is important to provide instructional material provided to enhance students’ ability in writing (Yundayani et al., 2017). Furthermore, the instructional material has to be appropriate with the student's characteristics and the situation of the society. Teachers are required to have clear and understandable instruction to meet the goal of learning. Moreover, it was emphasised that writing skills can be developed through applicative activities that enable students to learn the grammatical concept of writing.

Writing is considered the most complex and difficult skill to master (Wahyuni Sri & Ummam M. Khotibul, 2017). It is stated that writing anxiety was experienced by students who were afraid of making mistakes. Besides its technical characteristics, the fear of writing anxiety is also a combination of feelings and beliefs in the psychological field. Further in the research stated that linguistic difficulties become the biggest factor that causes writing anxiety. The linguistic proficiency in writing skills is mostly about the lack of knowledge in grammar and vocabulary. English grammar has been an endless topic among teachers and students in the educational field.

Writing skills is one of the building blocks of language learning that should be implemented as the major interest and concern to teachers, students and researchers (Ariana, 2010). It is even more challenging for students when it comes to writing in a foreign language. The reason why teachers should be paying extra attention to writing is that it enables students to be more independent, comprehensible, fluent and creative in writing skills. It is necessary for the teachers to be creative in conducting the writing class to help improve the quality of students’ writing. Needless to say, that it is a tremendous challenge faced by the teacher in writing. Ariana stated a research conducted among 64 American companies resulted that half of them pay intensive attention to the applicants’ writing to consider whether to employ them or not. Several mistakes were found such as spelling and grammatical factors in the writing. It is proven that it is not only hard for the EFL students but also for them who got exposed for a long time to English as a native speaker.

This leads to the understanding that teachers and students should also be able to master the technology itself, given the importance of technological advancements in preparing students to face the 21st century skill of digital literacy in the classroom (Mandala Putra & Santos, 2020). It is further since technology has had an impact on human activities, making them more convenient to carry out. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, it has been discovered that technology has played a
significant role in many aspects of human life. The twenty-first century has had an effect on many things, including how students and teachers learn in the classroom. Whether it is because of the students or the teacher, the twenty-first century has changed many things (Fatimah & Santiana, 2017). In other words, students use technology to look up information when they're trying to learn something new. Moreover, it has influenced how people learn in the 21st century. This type of learning can be called a "digital learning classroom."

In terms of the way 21st-century students live, it can be stated that technology cannot be left out of their daily lives, and students have a good grasp of ICT skills (Kopáčková, 2015). It means that the teacher must help the students learn how to manage the skill so that they can be more interested in learning through technology. One of the possible learning activities that can be done in today's learning with the help of technology is called "mobile learning" (M-learning). By using technology, students will be able to learn at any time and in any place. It means that students will be able to choose what they want to do while they are learning. This is not the same as learning languages with a mobile phone, but there is another way to learn languages with your phone. This is called "mobile assisted language learning."

MALL, which stands for Mobile-Assisted Language Learning, is a type of educational technology that uses smartphone applications to assist students in learning, particularly in the twenty-first century (Loewen et al., 2019). The use of mobile devices for language learning is defined by Darshih & Askin (2020) as the use of digital personal assistants (PDAs), ordinary cellphones, smartphones, tablet computers, Android or mp3 players for the purpose of educational tools; all of these devices are used for educational tools. Yunus & Salehi (2012) added that there apps which are well-known in this digitalizing age for their use of coding technology (automatic Internet applications) that can assist them in learning and studying, such as Wike, Twitter, Ms. Word, Grammar software, and other similar programs. Articulately, Mammadova (2019, p.54) also asserts that grammar and spelling checker online software plays an important role in the teaching and learning of the English language in schools.

According to Fitria (2021), there are some simple and free tools that users can use to improve their English writing skills. Grammarly is one of these tools. Grammarly can be found at https://www.grammarly.com/ and can be used to check your writing and can be downloaded in mobile phone as well. The online learning assistant 'Grammarly' is recommended to be used in the EFL writing class and can be accessed through a web browser (Automatic Internet Programs and Mobile app). Grammarly uses an electronic database, called corpus for the proofreading of grammatical texts. This program also includes features to improves pronunciation, punctuation, and synonyms (use of vocabulary). Plagiarism prevention is also included as benefits of using this program. Grammarly assists teachers and students in correcting EFL writing, despite the fact that teachers have used a variety of teaching methods, ways, strategies, or even resources, both online and offline (Daniels & Leslie, 2013). Additionally, Grammarly are not only capable of distinguishing between punctuation errors (such as missing spaces between periods) and errors in orthographer's spelling, including proper nouns, but it can also provide numerous alternative options for the dispeller's terms.

There are so many grammatical errors found in students’ writing especially in the EFL context. The analysis on grammatical errors (Kumala et al., 2018), found that there were 810 errors found in 27 students that became the subject of the research. The first factor that makes the error is the carelessness of the students in writing. About 73% of the students were careless (61%) of the students had difficulties in first language interference. Those are considered as a big number of the students, especially since the sample of the students was from the English Education Department of the University of Muhammadiyah Semarang. Furthermore, the students who had difficulties in the comprehension of grammar is (67%). The high percentage is concerning because the students were majoring in English Education. A significant difficulty is believed to be found in the students that are mastering different subject besides English.

Another grammatical errors analysis (Royani & Sadiah, 2019) found that the highest number of the students made grammatical errors in verb agreement with 41% of the whole sample. This number is very high compared to the other aspect such as pronoun with 18% and the usage of the words of 15%. Below that, 12% of errors were found related to the sentence pattern along with 9% of spelling problems. At last, 5% of capitalization errors were found completing all of the aspects of grammatical errors found in the study. The research can be concluded that there were six classifications of grammatical errors in students writing such as verb agreement, word usage, sentence pattern, pronoun, spelling and capitalization. The type of grammatical mistakes was analysed (Asni et al., 2018), resulted with 38.97% of omission error along with 15.73% errors of spellings. Apparently, English grammar was still a big boundary for the students to write. The data showed 7.28% was having problems in the order of the sentences. The research concluded that the biggest factor was caused by the complexity of the English grammatical system which resulted to several grammatical errors.

The common type of grammatical errors made by the students in five different Schools on the eastern coast of the UAE was very common (Barham, 2020). The most common errors found in the students' essays were passivation, verb tense and form, subject-verb agreement, word order, presupposition, articles, plurality and auxiliaries. The research was conducted with 105 students and 20 teachers completing the questionnaire. It is used to reflect their difficulties in writing particularly in grammatical context. English grammar was the main concern of the students who were tested. The study suggests that there has to be a way to solve this common problem so the students’ writing skills can be improved significantly. A creative way of learning English grammar is believed to be the solution. It requires teachers to dig deeper in finding a suitable solution regarding this problem.

In order to improve and encourage the quality and accuracy in mastering writing skills, several mistakes dealing with grammatical, structural, spelling, or even word choices should be highlighted by the teachers in order to emphasize that they are responsible for providing such feedback or correction toward students writing (Wichadee, 2013). The teachers' goal is to analyze the application of grammar in minimizing the mistakes that students have made in terms of syntax, vocabulary, and semantics (spelling and punctuation), in order to deal with the problems mentioned above and others. When an error is found
on a piece of paper, the teacher highlights it. Such activities are done by computer software such as Grammarly which arguably may contribute significantly to the effective learning of the English language. As a result, Grammarly has been named one of the most innovative artificial intelligence (AI) companies in the world by Fast Company.

Furthermore, it may be possible to gain a better understanding of how EFL learners, particularly those who struggle with writing, can improve their language skills through the use of online software or even their own smartphone. Using this understanding, researchers and practitioners can develop unique, relevant, and innovative pedagogical concepts or approaches that make effective use of Grammarly for English language training. This article will thoroughly justify the definition of Grammarly and its features before demonstrating how Grammarly can be used in the EFL classroom to improve students’ writing. Despite the fact that there have been several articles conferring this case, the researchers intend to concentrate first on demonstrating how Grammarly is fully beneficial for EFL students as the assistant assisting the teachers in guiding the students on writing activities. The main aim of this study is to scrutinize body of literature to point out that Grammarly can be used as Mobile-Assisted Language Learning capable of improving students’ writing skills.

RESEARCH METHOD
This study was library research that used the model of library research by George (2008) which included explanations of issues, definitions, and suggestions for how to deal with the issues. In this case, the issues were about 21st-century learning methods. The data were drawn from reliable and credible international journals articles which were published in the last 10 years. The data were scrutinized in order to gain information to answer the aim of this study. Relevant information found in the data sources correlated with the aim of this study were highlighted to further provide comprehensive discussion on the issue discussed in this study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
The vast change of technological development requires a teacher to be adaptive in using the media of teaching. Teachers are implementing various kinds of teaching media or tools to be able to cope with the recent needs in language learning. In the 21st century, Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) was popularised particularly in the EFL context. Positive perceptions towards MALL were gathered from the pre-service teachers at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha (Pratiwi et al., 2020). The research suggested that EFL teachers should be prepared and adaptive to the digital era in order to create a powerful lesson. Furthermore, the study has created many opportunities for further research to expand the problems and needs at the implementation of technology in EFL.

Lailiyah & Cahyono (2017), stated that some EFL teachers are still reluctant to use technology in teaching because of the low level of self-efficacy. The research found that 69.6% of teachers have accomplished a high level of self-efficacy towards technology integration in teaching. It means that the other 30.4% of teachers required more effort to reach the high level of self-efficacy of technology in teaching. Technology and interactive teaching emphasis several important aspects such as communication, interaction, discussion and the intercourse between the teacher and the students in the learning process.

Grammarly is one of the mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) which is using Artificial Intelligence (AI) in helping user improve their writing. MALL in 21st-century learning is essential because the learning ecosystem is moving towards advanced technology. Especially during the pandemic, students are required to work remotely. Ghunron & Rosyida (2018), investigated the Grammarly software to see whether or not Grammarly will improve students writing skills. The researchers believed that Grammarly is effective to help teachers and learners correct grammatical mistakes in writing classes in the EFL context. The research showed that Grammarly successfully improved the punctuation, spelling mistakes. Corrective feedback is popular among English teachers. Studies have shown the effectiveness of giving corrective feedback as the teaching strategy. Corrective feedback is the solution for students who do not have enough linguistic proficiency skills.

There are several ways to use Grammarly effectively. First and foremost, people should go to their official website www.grammarly.com. The websites provide us with many options in helping us improve our writing. We can directly copy our writing on the website and the system will automatically suggest the correction to the user. Based on the data on the website, there are more than 30 million people every day who use Grammarly for their writing. More than 30.000 teams or organizations use Grammarly to seek support. Grammarly successfully created a new ground of study in natural language processing (NLP) and was recognized by Fast Company as one of the world’s most innovative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the world. The company offered free access to help the user improve their English. But there is also more advanced help which is called the Grammarly premium and Grammarly business.

There are several strengths and weaknesses of Grammarly (Nova, 2018).

Strengths:
1. It is useful feedback for learning gain.
   Based on the research on the users’ experience, Grammarly got a lot of positive feedback. Some users were become more careful in writing and learn a lot from making mistakes. Mistakes are sometimes viewed as a failure in the education system but there is a great benefit that we can learn from making mistakes.
2. Easy access in downloading and utilization.
   The design of the website is very easy to use. Its simplicity helps the users to improve their writing effectively. Users can download their work with just one click. Besides that, Grammarly software can be downloaded for Windows and Mac. The software can be installed on the computer, in addition, to using Grammarly on the official websites.
3. High rate of Evaluation Speed
   It takes a short time to get suggestions or feedback on our writing. The comparison between this AI system and human beings is significantly different. Grammarly can evaluate the writing in a matter of seconds whereas human beings will take hours to proofread writing.
4. Free Service
The fact that the service is free enables anyone with internet access and a computer can easily improve their writing. Many users with a financial problem can get access to this website. Especially during the pandemic, the efficiency of using money is critical for many people.

Weaknesses:
1. Misleading Feedback
   Grammarly with its AI is powerful, but sometimes it can be misleading. The writer intention was sometimes not recognized by the system suggesting a misleading suggestion. It is also depending on the context of the writing; users have to be aware to make sure the suggestion is relevant with the intention of the writing.
2. Over-Checking on References List
   The problem occurred when the reference list cannot change the name, title and article. Reference is automatically added in MS word by using software such as Mendeley, therefore, the correcting reference list is useless. Not only references, but Grammarly cannot also differentiate other languages (non-English) so sometimes it suggested we change it to the closest English word spelling.
3. Inability in Checking Context and Content of writing.
   In writing, the language context and content is crucial to be added in our writing. The language used in a particular context and content will be different. Grammarly however could not distinguish the differences. Therefore, users have to be careful in choosing the given suggestion.

Challenges:
1. The challenge of using Grammarly is that the users have to be completely aware that they have to pay attention to the given suggestion. Users have to make sure that the suggestion will not make the writing worst or against the intended context and content of the writing. The other challenge will be to create an independent behavior in writing that the writers is not too dependent of using Grammarly every time they write something. At last, the internet connection might be the other challenge since it will need internet access to get Grammarly to work properly.

CONCLUSION
In Conclusion, Grammarly is a revolutionary software that can be used to improve the writing. The 21st learning enables students to implement Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in the EFL context. Grammarly is one kind of MALL that has been proven for many researches of its ability to improve writing. Grammatical errors that occur in students writing can be improved by using Grammarly. It helps its users to improve grammatical factors such as spellings, pronouns, verb agreement, punctuation, and word use. There are several strengths such as it is useful feedback for learning gain, easy access in downloading and utilization, high rate of evaluation speed, free Service. Moreover, the weaknesses of Grammarly are misleading feedback, over-checking on references list, and Inability in checking context and content of writing. The users are recommended to use Grammarly wisely and to be fully aware of its weaknesses. Moreover, un-independency towards Grammarly is dangerous because it will make the writers reluctant to learn grammar by their own.

REFERENCES