



A Comparative Study on the Use of Grammarly Application in Teaching Writing to Foreign Language Learners

Khairul¹, Ernati², Lely Refnita³, Farah Hidayah⁴

^{1,2,3}Lecturer, Bung Hatta University, Padang, Indonesia ⁴Student, Bung Hatta University, Padang, Indonesia
Corresponding Author: Khairul

Date of Submission: 05-07-2025

Date of Acceptance: 16-07-2025

ABSTRACT: This study is aimed to analyze the effectiveness of the use of Grammarly application in enhancing students' competence in writing narrative text. It is categorized as quasi-experimental study. Sixty students were involved in this study; 30 students in experimental group and 30 students in control group. In the process of teaching writing narrative text, the students in experimental group were taught by using Grammarly application while those in control group were taught by using conventional method. Pre-test and post-test was given to the participants of both groups to collect the data of this study, and then data were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS version 22. The result of data analysis on normality test revealed the value of P observed is greater than the value of P at α 0.05. It means that the scores are normally distributed. The result of data analysis on homogeneity test also demonstrated that the value of p-observed is greater than the value p at α 0.05. It also showed that the students, taught by using Grammarly application, demonstrated significantly higher achievement in writing narrative text compared with students taught by using conventional method.

KEYWORDS: effectiveness, Grammarly, competence, writing, narrative text.

I. INTRODUCTION

In academic atmosphere, writing has been daily activities done by people to put their opinions or ideas or feelings based on their experience using written expressions in acceptable form of language (Saragih, Silalahi, and Pardede: 2014). It is the process of using symbols (alphabet, punctuation, and spaces) to convey thoughts and ideas in a readable format (Lines in Kumalasari: 2020) It is a combination of process and product of discovering ideas, putting them on paper, and working with them until they are presented in such a manner that it is comprehensible to readers (Hastuti, 2020).

In the current digital era, people have been familiar with the use of some computer software

(automatic internet software) to help teachers in their teaching writing, such as Wiki, Facebook, Ms. Word computer software, Grammarly software. One of them that can be implemented in EFL writing class is „Grammarly“. It is an online proofreading website that can be used to scan documents for grammar mistakes, correction for spelling, punctuation, synonyms, and plagiarism detection (Scevchenko and Lytvyn: 2008). It was supported by Lubis (2014) stating that it can check the text and determine the correct word usage with more than 250 grammar rules up-to-date, covering everything from subject-verb for need manufacture of articles to provide correct placement. Even, Daniels and Leslie (2013) declared that Grammarly software is also effective to help teachers and learners in correcting writing. In line with this, Stevenson (2016) has found that automated writing evaluation can be used as one of effective media in the writing classroom. O'Neil and Russell (2019) have also found that using automated writing evaluation can be a very valuable facility for under-average students by providing them with feedback on good writing.

Grammarly is not only able to identify punctuation (such as the missing spaces after the periods) and the spelling mistakes, including the proper noun and provided several alternative possibilities for the misspelled words, but it can also identify fragments and offer advice on verb form, although often no suggested corrections are presented. Ghufroon & Rosyida (2018) found that students whose work is assessed using Grammarly make significantly more errors than students whose work is assessed by a teacher. It means that it is more effective to reduce errors in term of vocabulary usages, language use, and writing mechanics (spelling and punctuation). It is in line with Lim and Phua's (2019) research findings. They found that EFL students' writing skills could be developed through practices and reinforcement from helpful feedback, and in addition, it takes considerable effort for teachers to provide detailed feedback to many students in the class.



The use of Grammarly application will build independent students who are not afraid to write even though they make mistakes when writing. Because of that, the students do not need to hesitate to write because they can recognize and correct their research mistakes by using this Grammarly application (Jayavalan & Razali, 2018). Using Grammarly also helps students to achieve their academic goals since it can correct their writing in essays.

Checking English grammar by using Grammarly could be done in three stages: creating a plugin in the browser, creating a Grammarly account and using Grammarly. Before using it, it is necessary to learn and follow the steps on how to create an account and start writing with this app, as follows: 1) go to website to register a Grammarly account, 2) register page (choose to sign in with Facebook or Google), 3) sign in to your account using your email (create an easy-to-remember password), 4) select Personalize Grammarly (for school, work, or other projects), and 5) set up an account (choose the free version of the Grammarly account or the premium version).

Based on the problems as previously discussed, the problem of this study could be formulated as: "Is the use of Grammarly effective significantly in improving the students' competency in writing Narrative text?"

II. RESEARCH METHOD

A systematic and scientific approach was involved in this study to investigate whether or not the use of Grammarly was effective in teaching writing to students who learned English as a foreign language. In more specific, primarily this study was aimed to describe whether the students taught by using Grammarly demonstrated a higher competency in writing narrative text compared with those who were taught by using conventional method. This could be achieved by carefully designing and controlling the experimental conditions to eliminate bias and confounding variables. Relating to this, quasi-experimental research was applied with pre-test post-test Non-equivalent control group design (Refnita, 2018). The pre-test was given before being subjected to treatment, while a post-test was given after treatment was subjected to each group. The Grammarly was applied in the experimental group while conventional teaching method was used in the control group (Gay et.al; 2006). The design of the research could be illustrated as follows:

Table 1: Research Design

Group	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
Experiment	O1	X1	O2
Control	O1	-	O2

Seventy two students were selected as participants in this study, using purposive sampling because the criteria to get a representative sample were self-determined; that is that their English language skill was almost in the same level. Thirty students were selected as members of experimental group and the other half were selected as members of control group.

To measure the students' competency in writing narrative text, writing test was used as a research instrument. The normality test was done using Lilliefors test to make sure that the test was valid. And then, homogeneity test was needed to be done to know the similarity of the two conditions or population. Finally, t-test was used to determine the comparison of writing competency between the experimental class and the control class. The data of this study were analyzed by using SPSS version 22. The formula of the three test were shown below.

1. Normality Test

$$X^2 = \frac{(f_i - f_h)^2}{f_h}$$

The explanation of symbols:

$$X^2 = \text{Chi Square test}$$

$$f_h = \text{Expected Value}$$

$$f_i = \text{Observed Value}$$

The criteria of Normality test is that If $L_{table} > L_{observe}$, the data distribution is normal, and If $L_{table} < L_{observe}$, the data distribution is not normal.

2. Homogeneity Test

$$F = \frac{\text{the biggest varians}}{\text{The smallest varians}}$$

Terms of homogeneous:

If $F_o \leq F_t$, H_o is accepted (homogeneous) and H_a rejected.



If $F_o \geq F_t$, then H_o is rejected (not homogeneous) and H_a is accepted.

3. T-Test

$$t_o = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{\sqrt{S^2 (1/n_1 + 1/n_2)}}$$

Where;

- t_o = The value of “t observe”
- x_1 or x_2 = mean of EG or CG
- n_1 or n_2 = number of sample of EG or CG
- s_2 = standard deviation

To test the hypothesis, the value of T-statistics and the value of T-table was compared at $\alpha 0,05$ and $df = n_1 + n_2 - 2$ (Gay, 2016). If the significance value of the t-counted $<$ t-table at $\alpha 0.05$ and $df = n_1 + n_2 - 2$ H_o is accepted and H_a is rejected. This means that using Grammarly is not more effective than conventional method in improving students’ writing competency. However, if the significance value of the t-counted $>$ t-table at $\alpha 0.05$ and $df = n_1 + n_2 - 2$, H_o is rejected and H_a is accepted. This means that using Grammarly is more effective than conventional method in improving students’ writing competency.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Data of this study comprise the result of the pre-test and post-test on writing narrative text, and research instrument used to gather them was writing test. Then, the collected data were analyzed by using SPSS version 22. The findings of such analysis data were shown as the followings.

Table 2: The result of Pre-test

Aspect	Experiment G	Control G
N	30	30
Mean	71,17	67,13
SD	4,91	4,93
Highest Score	80	76
Lowest Score	63	60

Table 2 above shows that mean score of students in experiment group is slightly different from that of students from control group. However, standard deviation of the two groups is almost the same. It also reveals the rank between the highest score and lowest score of students taught using Grammarly is almost the same with the rank between the highest score and the lowest score of students taught using conventional method. It indicates that homogeneity of writing competency of the two groups of students is quite the same.

Table 3: The Result of Post-test

Aspect	Experiment G	Control G
N	30	30
Mean	85,37	72,43
SD	4,66	6,02
Highest Score	96	82
Lowest Score	75	60

Table 3 above showed that mean score, the highest score and the lowest score of students from experiment group is higher than those of students from control group. It indicates that students taught using Grammarly demonstrated better writing competency compared with those taught using conventional method. However, standard deviation of the control group is higher than that of experiment group. It indicates that, after treatment, writing competency of students taught using conventional method is more heterogeneous, compared with writing competency of students taught using Grammarly.

Table 4: The Gain Score of Experimental Group

Aspect	Pre-test	Post test	Gain Score
N	30	30	30
Mean	71,17	85,37	14,20
SD	4,91	4,66	0,25
Highest Score	80	96	16
Lowest Score	63	75	12

Table 5: Gain Score of Control Group

Aspect	Pre-test	Post test	Gain Score
N	30	30	30
Mean	67,13	72,43	5,80
SD	4,93	6,02	1, 09
Highest Score	74	82	8
Lowest Score	58	60	2

Table 4 and 5 above demonstrated that the gain score for mean, highest score and lowest score of students from experiment group is higher than those of students from control group. However, standard deviation of the control group increases, while standard deviation of experiment group slightly decreases



Table 6: The Result of the Normality Test

Group	P value	α
Pre-test Experimental	0,276	0,05
Post-test Experimental	0,214	0,05
Pre-test Control	0,095	0,05
Post-test Control	0,224	0,05

Data above indicate that normality test in the pre-test and post-test groups in the experimental and control class, a significance value of $> \alpha$ (0.05) was obtained; therefore, the four data were declared to be normally distributed.

Table 7: The Result of the Homogeneity Test

Group	Levene Staistic	df1	df2	sig
Pre-test	0,095	1	58	0,823
Post-test	0,224	1	58	0,060

Data above shows the value of p (Sig.) pre-test (0.823) is greater than α 0.05, and the value of p (Sig.) post-test (0.060) is also greater than α 0.05. This means that the sample variance is homogeneous.

Testing the hypothesis in this study used the Independent sample T-test, and the result of data analysis can be shown as follows.

Table 8: The Result of Independent Sample Statistic

	Group	n	M	SD	SEM
Learning Result	Post-EG	30	85,37	4,66	0,85
	Post-CG	30	72,43	6,04	1,10

Data on Table 8 above shows that learning result of students taught using Grammarly was higher than that of students taught using conventional method. It is indicated by the mean score gained by each of the two group of students (85,37 vs 72,43). Data above also reveals the standard deviation for control group (6,04) is much higher than for experiment group. It means that writing competency of the former students spreads more evenly than that of the latter students.

Table 7: The Result of T-test for Gained Scores

	Group	n	M	SD	SEM
Learning	increase -EG	30	14,20	3,986	0,728

Data above show that the gained score of students taught using grammarly is much higher that that of

students taught using conventional method. This difference proves that using grammarly gives significant contribution for the improvement of students' writing competency.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

As discussed previously, the result data analysis revealed that after treatment, students taught using Grammarly demonstrated higher score in post-test than those taught using conventional method. The use of Grammarly has helped them checking for various types of language errors and grammar errors they made in writing a narrative text. As it is widely known, such application provides the writers with suggestions with an excellent English grammar. Furthermore, Gain et al. (2019) noted that the usage of Grammarly's virtual application could help with spelling checker tools. It automatically provides the user with more choices to do for the vocabulary. Relating to this, Ghufroon (2019) said that Grammarly checker has a role in assessing English writing mistakes. In a nutshell, this software controls or maintains the flow of writing correctly so that no more errors come out (Qassemzadeh & Soleimani, 2016).

This study also found the gained score of students taught using Grammarly was much higher than those taught using conventional method. It also proved that Grammarly application has really help them to check grammar errors and spelling errors they while writing narrative texts. It supports them with such as automatic editing as feedback, and of course its automaticity will help much according to the author's internet connection speed (Perdana et al. 2021)

The result of data analysis using independent sample T-test for post-test of experiment and control group, and T-test for the gained score of experiment and control group with the acquisition of Sig. (2-tailed) = 0.000, at $< \alpha$ (0.05), reveals that students who were taught using Grammarly got higher learning result significantly than those who were taught using conventional method. It proved that using Grammarly was more effective in increasing students' writing competency. This finding is in line with the findings of Irfan et al (2020). They found how students of English school study program have used this innovative application to prepare their academic works. Therefore, the finding of this study is an evidence that Grammarly application is really effective in improving the quality of students' writing.



V. CONCLUSION

Based the findings and discussions as previously mentioned, it could be concluded that using Grammarly application in teaching writing gives a significant contribution for the improvement of students' competency in writing narrative texts. Despite the result of this finding that supports the hypothesis of this study, it is suggested that this Grammarly application could be used as an alternative tool for writing-related tasks. This application is handy because of its effectiveness in checking and correcting grammar errors as well as spelling errors in writing.

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