

“Grammarly” as AI-powered English Writing Assistant: Students’ Alternative for English Writing

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Abstract

The presence of ‘Grammarly’ as one of the online grammar checkers as the impact of technology development. This paper aims to reveal an overview of ‘Grammarly’ as an AI-powered English Writing Assistant for EFL students in English Writing. This research applies descriptive qualitative research. Based on the analysis, using Grammarly software shows the performance increased. Before using Grammarly, the performance of the student’s test score is 34 out of 100. After using Grammarly, the performance student’s text score is 77 out of 100. This score shows the quality of writing in this text increased. The performance can be increased based on Grammarly's suggestions in a Premium account. The researcher recommends the students use Grammarly. Grammarly is a web tool to perform grammar checks well, starting from the spelling of words, sentence structure to standard grammar. Grammarly is free for checking grammatical rule spelling rules, also correct errors of punctuation and capitalization. Grammarly runs on an Artificial Intelligence (AI) system, which showing corrections and suggestions quickly but still precisely. For accuracy, two service options available both free and paid features. Grammarly's free version still has limitations and in-service features, unlike the paid version (premium) which has full advantages and benefits, many features, and complete.

Keywords: Grammarly, Artificial Intelligence (AI), writing, grammar

Introduction

Writing is a difficult skill (Maharani, 2018). It is supported by the statements that writing is such a difficult task that involves a great deal of cognitive and language skills (Faller, 2018) and (Maharani, 2018). Writing also is one of two productive skills besides speaking that a learner is expected to achieve the goal to ensure her/his communicative competence (Sharma, 2004, p. 272). According to Yamin (2019) states that the ability to know, comprehend, and articulate a concept into a paragraph or essay is the most basic writing skill that students can possess. Besides, according to Fairbairn & Winch (2011, p. 83), instead of demonstrating



competence in the use of the conventions of spelling, punctuation, and grammar, the point of writing is to express thoughts.

Suffering from the foreignness of the language used, English Foreign Language (EFL) learners/students perhaps make some errors while writing and finishing an English sentence or essay in several aspects of writing such as in spelling, punctuation, and grammar (Fitria, 2020a). When they make the error, the learners do not know it and it happens unintentionally (Fitria, 2018). Therefore, it considers the necessary aspects of good writing such as the knowledge of the conventions of those aspects; spelling, punctuation, and grammar (Smith, 2013). Spelling is the art of combining a word correctly from letters, so it is connected to the proper choice and good arrangement of letters that form a word (Fitria, 2020b). Punctuation is a punctuation mark used in writing, and each punctuation or symbol has its function. Grammar is one of the language components in English Foreign Language (EFL) writing besides spelling and punctuation (Perdana & Farida, 2019).

Mammadova (2019, p. 54) states that grammar and spelling checker online software plays an essential role in English language teaching and learning. It is used when other language teaching materials are required, that is when teachers cannot find what they need in other resources both printed or online. Bouchoux (2019, p. 545) states that there are some easy and free tools for users can use to improve English writing. One of them is Grammarly. Grammarly can be checked and accessed on <https://www.grammarly.com/>. Grammarly locates grammar, spelling, punctuation, and other errors in their writing. The users can install Grammarly's free browser extension or download Grammarly for Microsoft Office. A premium version of Grammarly is available for free.

Grammar websites allow the student to teach themselves with multiple ways of having a concept represented (O'Sullivan, 2016). There are many popular items of grammar software is grammar check online, free grammar checker, online editor, Grammarly, etc (Mammadova, 2019, p. 54). As for how to check English grammar using the following tools, it requires an internet connection (data package) and by using some of these online grammar check services, there are two service options that users will find, namely the use of free and paid features. The free online English grammar check service certainly has limitations and also lacks service features, unlike the paid English grammar check (premium) which has full advantages and benefits, many features and complete.

Grammarly is an award-winning online grammar checking tool available for free. Grammarly is one of the best English grammar check tools and the most widely used tool in the world. Grammarly is available as a Google Chrome extension and can detect grammar mistakes, spelling mistakes, wrong sentence construction, and check for plagiarism. These can be good tools for the rules learning and error correction method since they enable students/learners to do a task then correct errors. Grammarly is the most powerful tool the users can use to check for errors in our typed work. Grammarly detects and corrects prepositional errors, irregular verb conjugations, inappropriate use of nouns, and also corrects words that are misused. The users can get all these features for free and we can also upgrade to the Premium version to get more advanced features.

'Grammarly' is one of the online grammar checkers that can be used in assessing EFL writing classes. It is a website for online proofreading that the user



can use for checking errors such as grammar. Besides, pronunciation, punctuation, synonyms (use of vocabulary), and identification of plagiarism are also corrected (Ghufron & Rosyida, 2018). Grammar helps people such as teachers, educators, and scientists to describe and understand how computer software is used such as it can lead to teaching and learning English when errors are found (Mubarok & Syafi'i, 2020).

The products of Grammarly are powered by an interconnected system that incorporates rules, developments, and techniques of artificial intelligence such as machine learning, deep learning, and processing of natural languages. The way a person will execute a task is simulated by an artificial intelligence device. By multiple methods, AI systems accomplish this. For example, machine learning is a complex AI technique that involves training an algorithm to show and perform tasks by presenting loads of examples instead of offering a sequence of rigidly predefined steps.

The AI method at Grammarly blends deep learning with some approaches to natural language analysis. Human language has several layers that can be analyzed and processed: through grammatical constructs and phrases, through characters and individual phrases, including paragraphs or complete texts. Natural language processing is an AI branch that involves training machines to understand and process human language (for example, English) and performing useful tasks such as machine translation, interpretation of emotions, a ranking of essays, and, in our case, enhancement of writing. The crucial part of building an AI system is how to train it well. In that way, AI's are sort of like men. By watching the adults around them and by positive or negative feedback, kids learn how to act. As with girls, if we want to grow up to be helpful and efficient with our AI system, we need to be careful of what we expose it to and how we intervene when things get wrong. Choosing high-quality training data for our method to benefit from is the first move. In the case of Grammarly, the data can take the form of a text corpus, a large array of sentences arranged and labeled by human researchers in a way that AI algorithms can recognize. If we want AI to learn the patterns of proper use of commas, we need to show it sentences of incorrect commas so that it can learn what a comma error looks like. We need to display it with efficient comma-use sentences so it knows how to correct comma errors when it finds them.

Feedback from humans is often needed by AI systems. For example, after multiple users click "ignore" on a specific suggestion or computational linguists from Grammarly make changes to the algorithms behind that suggestion to make it more reliable and helpful. Much like humans, AI sometimes makes mistakes. It is particularly when an AI faces a situation that it does not have a lot of familiarities it. On naturally written text, English grammar is taught, so it is good at finding problems that arise naturally when people write. It is less effective at treating sentences where errors have been purposely added because they do not resemble errors that exist normally.

The mission of Grammarly is to allow users to be understood. But there is still no single set of rules that in every case can function for every person. AI's performance can mix all kinds of data and respond to the situation. After all, language is complicated and messy. It is important to be versatile enough to handle all the variables that go into good communication with any method that seeks to make our use of language better. If we are interviewing for a job or



sending a joke to our buddies, the aim is to help the user communicate themselves in the best way possible.

There are several previous studies related to Grammarly. The first research is written by (Ghufron & Rosyida, 2018) entitled "The Role of Grammarly in Assessing English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Writing". This study aims to evaluate the use of grammar software and the effective terms compared to instructor correction guidance in minimizing student errors in EFL writing. The findings of the study confirm that the student's work is assessed by using grammar have a substantial decrease in their mistakes relative to those work is evaluated by the teacher (indirect corrective feedback). The program is more effective in eliminating mistakes in terms of vocabulary usage (diction), language use (grammar), and writing mechanics (spelling and punctuation). The second research is written by (Dewi, 2019) entitled "The Effectiveness of Grammarly Checker on Student's Writing Quality of English Department Students at IAIN Tulungagung". The goal of this study was to find a substantial difference in the writing standard of the students amongst students who use and do not use the Grammar Checker. The outcome indicates that the mean score of students in the experimental category before using Grammar Checker was 63.78 and the mean score of students after using Grammar Checker was 80.49. There is also a mean score change in the test category from 68.57 to 73.57. The third research is written by (Nova, 2018) entitled "Utilizing Grammarly in Evaluating Academic Writing: A Narrative Research on EFL Students' Experience". In assessing academic writing, this thesis aimed to recognize the attributes of the Grammar program as an automatic writing assessment. The outcome showed that with clarification and example, this software offered helpful color-coded reviews, accessibility of account access, evaluation speed of a high rank, and free service for evaluating and assessing academic writing. The fourth research is written by (Karyuatry, 2018) entitled "Grammarly as a Tool to Improve Students' Writing Quality: Free Online-Proofreader across the Boundaries". This research aimed to recognize the strengths and shortcomings of the grammar software as an automatic assessment of writing. The outcome showed that with clarification and example, this application offered valuable color-coded input, ease of account access, a high rate of evaluation speed, and free service for evaluating academic writing. Further study is required on the efficacy of the reviews offered by Grammarly in enhancing the standard of writing for students. This research aims to find out if the use of Grammar will increase the standard of writing relevant to descriptive writing by the students. The results indicate that 32 (8 %) out of 40 students have passed the grade as grammar is used in teaching writing. The researchers concluded that Grammar can be used as an appropriate method to reduce mistakes and enhance the writing standard of students. Fifth research is written by (Fadhilah, 2018) entitled "Effectiveness of Grammarly Application for Writing English Abstract". The purpose of the study was to establish the effectiveness of Grammarly application writing English abstract. The findings showed a pre-test value of 64.86 with a standard deviation of 18.89 and a standard deviation of 6.82 with a post-test value of 85.72. The findings of the hypothesis test using a paired t-test obtained a p-value of 0.00 (<0.05), which implies that the grammar application was successful in writing English abstracts. Thus, Grammar was used successfully as a method to enhance the writing of abstract English texts by students relevant to the proper use of English grammar. The sixth research is



written entitled “The Implementation of Grammarly Tool to Boost Students’ Writing Skill of Exposition Text”. The purpose of this study is to increase the writing capacity of students by using the grammar method in SMA Dharma Karya UT students. The outcome of this research revealed that after introducing the Grammar tool in writing class, there was a substantial increase in student writing skills. Most students obtained satisfying scores by the end of each time after using the Grammar method. This can be verified by the outcome of the grades of the students in each cycle's writing exam. The mean score of the students in the pre-test was 66.85 percent. Then, after applying the grammar tool, the mean post-test 1 score of the students was 72.65 percent and 79.10 percent post-test 2. In view of the above results, the achievement of the writing capacity of students in post-test 2 has reached the objective of classroom action testing. It can be seen from the outcome that grammar can have a positive impact on the writing abilities of students.

Based on the previous studies, several similarities and differences are found related to this research. From the six studies discuss Grammarly, as the first research discusses the role of Grammarly in EFL Writing, the second research discusses the effectiveness of Grammarly checker toward student's writing quality, the third research discusses the use of Grammarly in evaluating academic writing, the fourth research discusses Grammarly in increasing students’ writing quality, the fifth research discusses the effectiveness of Grammarly application for writing English, and the sixth research discusses the implementation of Grammarly tool to boost students’ writing skill. This research also discusses the same topic about the use of Grammarly, but this research focuses on Grammarly’s performance which can increase the student’s writing essay also shows the quality of the students’ English writing.

Research Method

This research uses qualitative descriptive research. Qualitative research is to analyze a specific field or a small number of people or areas. Qualitative researchers usually use theoretical or purposeful rather than probability sampling, and seldom make explicit conclusions regarding the (Maxwell, 2005, p. 115). Taylor (2005, p. 236) states that qualitative draws certain assumptions, the assumptions are based upon the individuals.

In collecting data of this research by using document analysis. The document as a term referring to a wide variety of printed, visual, digital, and physical content to the study (Merriam, 2009, p. 139). The document here is a selected text taken from the internet with the topic “Simple Present Tense” and “Simple Past Tense”. In analyzing data in this research by using several ways such as choosing a text, copying the text into Grammarly software, analyzing and describing the result in the form of writing aspects such as spelling, punctuation, and grammar descriptively.

Findings and Discussion

Grammarly is an online grammar checker and spelling checker in English structure and corrects mistakes in writing. Grammarly provides correct word recommendations if there are wrong words in the English structure. Before, using



Grammarly, the users can upload a file for checking, below the pictures of Grammarly after the user has installed it. Below the beginning view of uploading the document in Grammarly as follow:

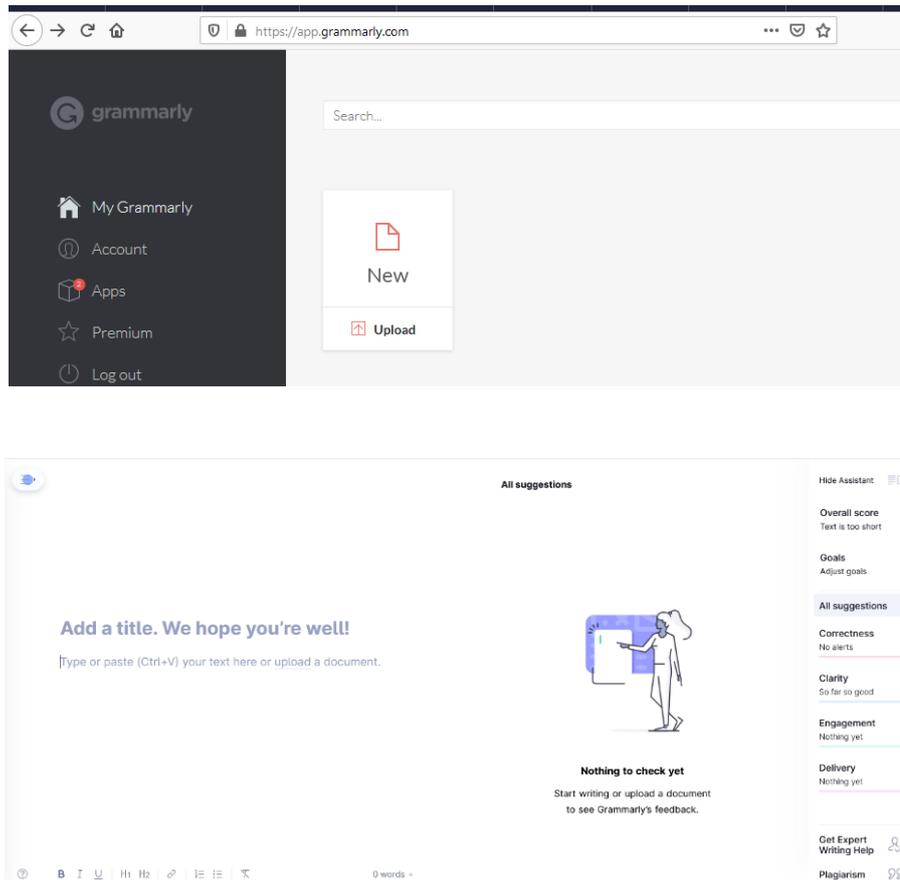


Figure 1. Uploading the Document/Text in Grammarly

The Grammarly document allows the user to compose text directly on the document, download their Grammarly document as a text file, upload text, and adjust the setting. After users register for a Grammarly account, users only need to click, just upload the file or paste text that Grammarly wants to correct. Automatically, this application will scan, check, and provide information on which parts need to be corrected in the document. For checking the document, Grammarly consists of two features both individual (free and premium version) and team (business version), the description as follows:



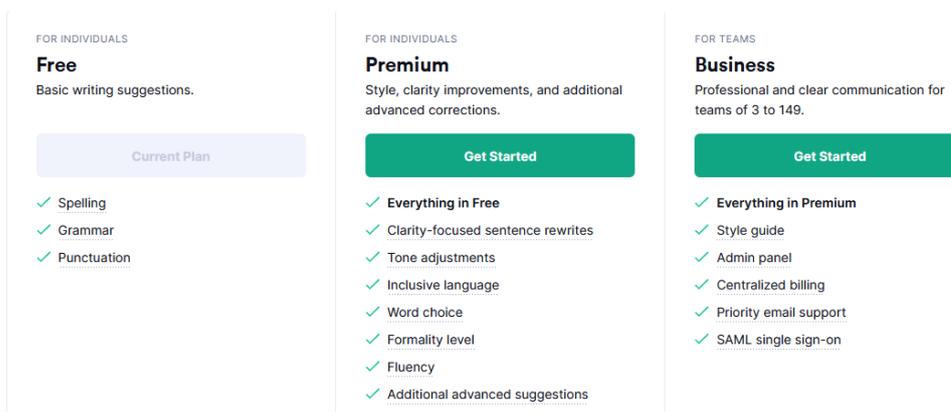


Figure 2. Grammarly Features

Based on the picture above shows that checking English grammar by using the Grammarly software requires an internet connection (data package) and by using some of these online grammar check services. There are two service options that users will find, namely the use of free and paid features. Free features can be used for individuals, while paid can be used in ‘premium’ and ‘business’. Of course, the free English grammar check service (free online grammar check) certainly has limitations and also lacks service features, unlike the paid English grammar check (premium) which has full advantages and benefits, many features, and complete. In ‘free’ feature related to basic writing suggestions such as in the aspect of spelling, grammar, and punctuation. In a ‘premium’ feature related to the style, clarity improvements, and additional advanced corrections. Then, in the ‘business’ feature related to professional and clear communication for teams of 3 to 149.

The users/students can use the ‘free’ features which can correct the writing aspect of spelling, punctuation, and grammar. The example as follows:

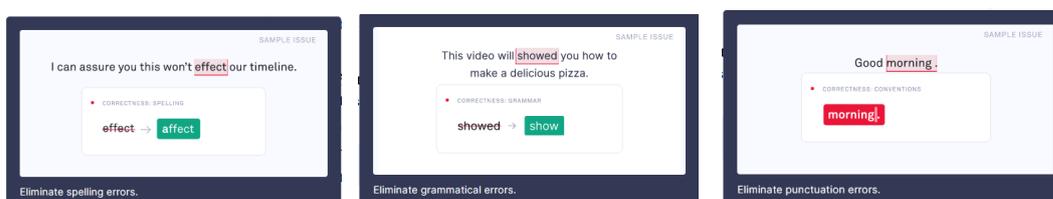


Figure 3. Free features of Grammarly in spelling, grammatical, and punctuation

From the pictures above shows the errors such as in spelling, grammatical, and punctuation error. In spelling, Grammarly eliminates spelling errors. For example, in the sentence “I can assure you this won’t affect our timeline”. The word “effect” shows a spelling error, then Grammarly correct it by changing to other words “affect”. In grammar, Grammarly eliminates the grammatical error. For example, in the sentence “This video will showed you how to make a delicious pizza”. The word “showed” shows grammar error, then Grammarly correct it with changing to other words “show” because the modal “will” must follow the Verb 1 as stated in the formula in the simple future tense. While, in punctuation, Grammarly eliminates punctuation errors. For example, in the sentence “Good



morning.”. The word is correct but there is a space before the period then Grammarly corrects it by removing a space before the period.

According to (Tucker, 2015, p. 159), the free version of Grammarly includes a contextual spell checker and identifies grammar and punctuation errors. As students compose emails with a Gmail account, the green Grammarly icon will appear in the lower right-hand corner of their composition window. If they make an error, the green icon turns red with a number corresponding to the number of errors. This effectively alerts the students to the errors in their writing. The errors are underlined in red, and Grammarly provides suggestions for correcting the problems. The students must think critically about the suggestions to ensure they are correct. Once students have a free Grammarly account, they can click the Grammarly icon next to their browser window, start a new document, and compose their writing directly in a Grammarly document. Alternatively, students can upload a document, or copy and paste the text to check for errors, copy and paste the text into grammar documents. Since the students use Google Docs, they compose their writing originally in Google Docs and then copy and paste their text into Grammarly to help them edit and revise their writing before the final submission.

Following the slogan "Type with confidence", this application allows users to type in English without worrying about wrong grammar. This application is a tool who has s job is to detect spelling and grammar errors in English. The function of Grammarly is to correct wrong writing. So automatically, Grammarly will tell you where the error is and immediately correct it. Below the example of a text that will be checked by using Grammarly as follow:

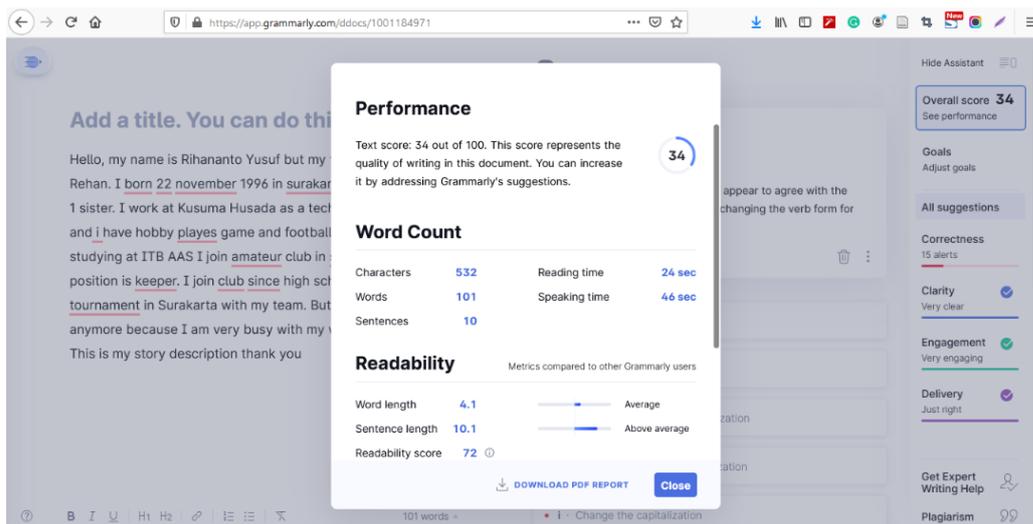


Figure 4. The Performance Before Using Grammarly



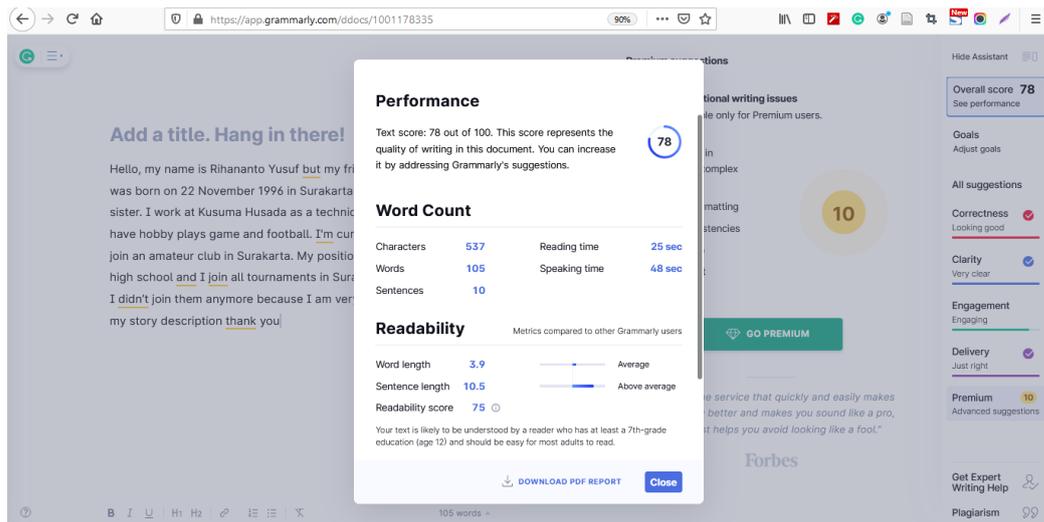


Figure 5. The Performance After Using Grammarly

By using Grammarly software, the performance increased. Before using Grammarly, the performance of the test score is 34 out of 100. This score shows the quality of writing in this text. It can be increased by adding Grammarly's suggestions. After using Grammarly, the performance text score is 77 out of 100. This score shows the quality of writing in this text. We can increase the score based on Grammarly's suggestions in a Premium account. Below the result of text both before and after using Grammarly software as follow:

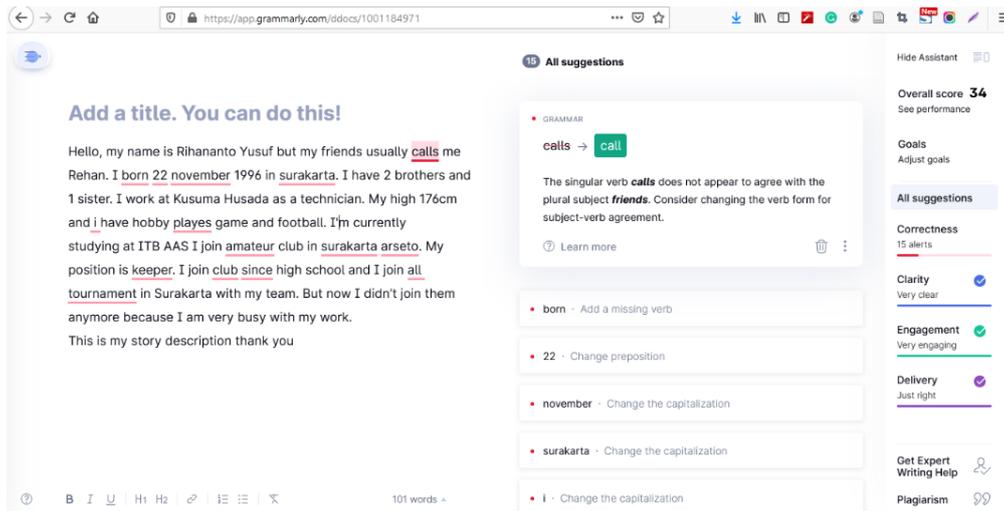


Figure 6. The View of Document Before Using Grammarly



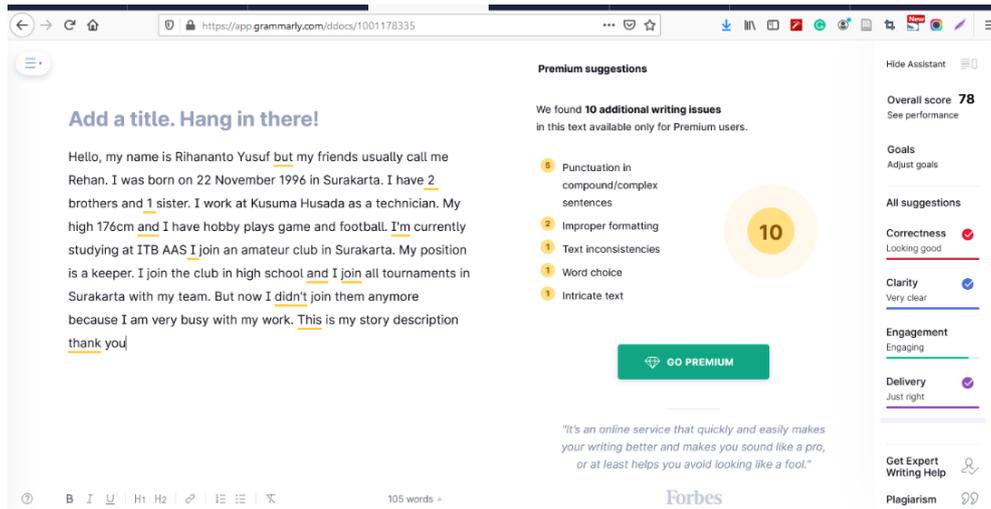


Figure 7. The View of Document After Using Grammarly

Below the table result both before and after using Grammarly, from this example we will know the Grammarly performance, as follow:

Table 1. Table result both before and after using Grammarly

| Text Before Using Grammarly | Text After Using Grammarly |
|---|---|
| Hello, my name is Rihananto Yusuf but my friends usually calls me Rehan. I born 22 november 1996 in surakarta. I have 2 brothers and 1 sister. I work at Kusuma Husada as a technician. My high 176 cm and i have hobby plays game and football. I'm currently studying at ITB AAS I join amateur club in surakarta arseto. My position is keeper . I join club since high school and I join all tournament in surakarta with my team. But now I didn't join them anymore because I am very busy with my work. This is my story description thank you. | Hello, my name is Rihananto Yusuf but my friends usually call me Rehan. I was born on 22 November 1996 in Surakarta. I have 2 brothers and 1 sister. I work at Kusuma Husada as a technician. My high 176 cm and I have hobby plays game and football. I'm currently studying at ITB AAS I join an amateur club in Surakarta Arseto. My position is a keeper . I join a club in high school and I join all tournaments in Surakarta with my team. But now I didn't join them anymore because I am very busy with my work. This is my story description thank you. |

The example of the text above shows that there is 15 correctness of 15 errors by using Grammarly software in underlined black. Besides, Grammarly shows the correctness of the word and the reason why the selected word is incorrect. In the text, the word “calls” shows grammar error because the singular verb “calls” do not fit with the plural subject friends. It needs to change the verb form for subject-verb agreement. The word “born” also shows grammar errors because it seems that we are missing a verb. It needs to add the linking verb ‘was’ to show the past event. The word “22” shows a grammar error. It seems that preposition use may be incorrect here., the correct word also “on 22”. The word “november” and ‘surakarta’ also show the capitalization error. It refers the word “November” and “Surakarta” are as proper noun in this context. It needs to capitalize this word “November” because of refers to a proper noun. The word “i” show grammar error. The pronoun I should always be capitalized. The word “plays” show



spelling error. The word “playes” is not in the dictionary. If we believe this spelling is correct, we can add it to our dictionary to prevent error, or it can be changed into the correct word “plays”. The word “amateur” shows grammar errors. The noun phrase “amateur club” miss a determiner before it. It needs to add an article ‘a’ or ‘the’ before the word “amateur”. The word “amateur” shows grammar errors. The noun phrase “keeper” seems to be missing a determiner before it. It needs to add an article ‘a’ or ‘the’ before the word “keeper”. The word “club” shows a grammar error. The noun phrase club seems to be missing a determiner before it. It needs to add an article ‘the’ before the word ‘club’. The word “since” shows a grammar error. It shows that preposition use may be incorrect. The correct preposition is ‘in’. The word “all tournament” shows a grammar error. It shows that the tournament may not fit in number with other words in this phrase. The correct phrase is “all tournaments”.

Grammarly is assistive software for correcting text in alignment with English conventions. After the text is uploaded into the Grammarly cloud, the software will analyze it by using several different algorithms and can identify a surprising range of both grammar and style issues (Carter & Laurs, 2017). LornaMarie (2018, p. 119) states that Grammarly is one of the world’s most accurate grammar checkers. While according to Gitsaki & Coombe (2016, p. 227), Grammarly is error detection and plagiarism software. Its plagiarism detection engine works and operates by using a type of analysis such as identifying similarities between one’s writing with others and the source commonly available or have uploaded on the internet.

Grammarly also is capable of pinpointing weak paraphrases with only minor text modifications. Roughton et al. (2019, p. 410) define that Grammarly as an online writing tool that provides many resources to assist the users with appropriate grammar and spelling checks, punctuation checks, vocabulary enhancement, proper wording, and plagiarism check. Grammarly highlights the error’s problem. It makes it easier for students to edit their writing successfully and easier to identify other students’ errors. If the students become familiar with the common errors they make in their writing, they are more likely to catch those errors in the future (Tucker, 2015, p. 160).

There are many reasons why we choose Grammarly as the best online grammar check tool. First, this tool is used by nearly 20 million internet users. This astonishing number cannot be separated from the compatibility of Grammarly when installed in popular browsers and Microsoft Office. Even this software also provides a Grammarly Keyboard to be installed on a smartphone. Second, Grammarly is free and easy to install. Once the extension is installed in the browser, the indicator will appear in the lower right corner of the text editor. You will know how many grammar mistakes we made. Any words that are written incorrectly will be marked with a red line. To fix it, just hover over the word. Our favorite feature of Grammarly is its ability to recognize technical terms, including abbreviations and acronyms. For Grammarly, these terms will not be considered as grammatical errors. If students want Grammarly to check other things besides grammar and punctuation, you can take advantage of the Grammarly text editor. This tool will later provide suggestions on the elements of formality, whether the content is short and dense, and diction.



A complex artificial intelligence (AI) framework in Grammarly software designed to interpret phrases written in English is behind all of Grammarly's goods. Through studying millions of sentences from academic companies, Grammarly's team of computer linguists and deep learning engineers builds cutting-edge algorithms that study the rules and latent habits of good writing (A corpus is a broad set of text for testing and development purposes that has been organized and labeled.) As users write with Grammarly, the AI analyzes each sentence and searches for ways to strengthen it, whether it is fixing a verb tense, recommending a better synonym, or providing a simpler phrase structure. A complicated AI system like this, as we can understand, requires a lot of processing resources, even more than can be given by a personal computer or mobile device. It operates in the cloud, rather than on the user's computer locally, for that reason. An Internet connection is all you need to validate the writing with a grammar product. Users can help boost their feedback as users use grammar. Grammarly is a little smarter if users click "ignore" on an unhelpful suggestion. It will make changes to the recommendations over time and high concentrations of ignorance to make them more beneficial.

In the field of grammar, spelling, and punctuation correction, grammar's earliest breakthroughs in AI-powered writing enhancement occurred. Grammarly's writing apps are intended to work where we do on the user's tablet and our screen, in our web browser or word processor. The discrepancy between Grammarly and built-in spelling and grammar checkers is not just the precision or breadth of reviews. The browser extension of Grammarly, for instance, allows stricter grammar recommendations and provides ways to help us sound more formal and professional. For any text area on any platform, Grammar Premium users may change their style settings. We should turn to the university or business atmosphere to flag contractions, vague backgrounds, and other casualties we wish to prevent when we write something formal.

The researcher recommends the students use Grammarly. Grammarly is a web tool that functions to perform grammar checks very well, starting from spelling of words, sentence structure, to standard grammar. Grammarly is free, so it is highly recommended for those who want to translate various documents or articles that use foreign languages. If usually tests or articles have language complexity, and we do not understand English, then Grammarly is very helpful in checking the spelling of sentences in English structure and correcting errors in writing. Grammarly provides correct word recommendations if there are wrong words in the English structure. Grammarly runs on a sophisticated Artificial Intelligence system, which is built to analyze English sentences. So, Grammarly is unlike any other spell checker which relies on a set of rules. Grammarly can be considered when making corrections or suggestions which means Grammarly will inform us quickly but still precisely.

Conclusion

AI can correct documents accurately With the advent of AI, the role of a company's editor can easily be replaced. One application that is widely used is Grammarly. Grammarly application can correct English grammar that is not by language rules. Grammarly is a tool that helps you correct your writing articles in English. The company offers two services, free (for freelance/informal writing)



and premium (for academic or professional writing). The premium service is divided into two, individual, and team packages. Meanwhile, there are six Grammarly products, consisting of The Grammarly Editor, Browser Extension, Grammarly for Microsoft Office, Grammarly for Your Desktop, The Grammarly Keyboard, and Grammarly for iPad. Initially, Grammarly focused on providing solutions for checking the grammar and spelling of school students. Now, Grammarly offers artificial intelligence-based virtual assistants through browser extensions, web-based editors, add-ins for Microsoft Office, to desktop interfaces and mobile keyboards. It is a digital writing platform that uses artificial intelligence and processes language naturally and grammatically. Grammarly works by suggesting corrections for spelling mistakes that are automatically highlighted, suggesting synonyms for words on double-tap, and substitutions for or suggestions for removing overused words.

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