

## Improving Students Understanding in Using of Grammarly to Check Grammar in Their Writing

Dollynoor Iلمان<sup>1</sup>, Alvindi<sup>2</sup>, Muhammad Nuh Siregar<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Fakultas Syariah dan Hukum, Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara

Jl. William Iskandar Ps. V, Medan Estate, Kec. Percut Sei Tuan, Kab. Deli Serdang, Sumatera Utara 20371

Email: [dollynoorilman@gmail.com](mailto:dollynoorilman@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [alvindi0304213071@uinsu.ac.id](mailto:alvindi0304213071@uinsu.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>,

[muhammadnuhsiregar@uinsu.ac.id](mailto:muhammadnuhsiregar@uinsu.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>

**ABSTRACT.** *This study examines the advantages and disadvantages of using Grammarly as perceived by students. Academic writing requires attention to language structure, yet students often face challenges due to limited knowledge of effective language principles. Grammarly, a widely used tool among students, assists in identifying sentence structure issues. This study seeks to identify Grammarly's pros and cons by analyzing student experiences and feedback. Utilizing a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through a questionnaire completed by 25 students. The results indicate that while Grammarly is useful for grammar and structure checks, 89.5% of the participants acknowledge certain limitations affecting its effectiveness. Specifically, 50.8% of the feedback highlights these disadvantages, while 45.5% views Grammarly's features positively. Additionally, 42.9% of students express mixed feelings about Grammarly's benefits, showing both agreement and disagreement with the software's effectiveness. In summary, although Grammarly provides valuable support in academic writing, students identify both strengths and limitations, with some expressing reservations about the tool's ability to fully meet their language-checking needs. The findings suggest that while Grammarly can be beneficial, its effectiveness varies, and it may not entirely replace the need for manual review.*

**Keywords:** *Students, perception, advantages, disadvantages, grammar, Grammarly.*

### INTRODUCTION

This study investigates students' perspectives on the Grammarly application as a grammar-checking tool, particularly in the context of academic writing. Academic writing often involves considerable time and effort due to its requirement for well-structured, clear, and persuasive arguments, as well as adherence to specific formatting standards (Ghosh et al., 2020). Grammarly has become widely used among students for this purpose, offering various features that enhance grammatical accuracy and language style, potentially alleviating the burden of writing (Karyuatry,

2018). The platform's functionality to detect errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure has positioned it as a valuable aid in the academic setting. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of Grammarly remains a point of discussion, as some research highlights both its strengths and limitations in academic usage.

Prior studies have shown mixed findings regarding Grammarly's utility. For example, Pratama (2021) reported that students appreciate Grammarly's functionality in improving grammar accuracy and clarity, although some users face challenges with internet connectivity and understanding Grammarly's automated suggestions. Similarly, Fitria (2021) found that Grammarly offers significant advantages for grammar correction, particularly for students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), as even minor errors can affect the clarity and coherence of academic texts. However, Ananda, Nisa, and Safura (2021) discovered that while students generally perceive Grammarly positively, difficulties arise when it suggests changes that may not align with intended meanings, thereby complicating its use for non-native speakers.

Other research further reveals Grammarly's limitations in addressing deeper semantic and syntactic issues in students' writing, such as coherence and cohesion, areas where manual feedback remains essential (Oktaviani et al., 2022). According to Ponti (2022), students' perceptions of Grammarly's value and limitations can be influenced by prior experiences with writing tools, as well as individual learning styles. Additionally, while Grammarly's automated feedback is immediate and accessible, students may rely too heavily on it, potentially neglecting the learning process that comes from engaging directly with their own writing errors (White & Arndt, 1991; Harmer, 2004).

Given these observations, this study aims to address research gaps by focusing on students' detailed perspectives on Grammarly's advantages and limitations. Specifically, it investigates Grammarly's role in supporting writing accuracy, as well as challenges students encounter when using the tool. The study seeks to understand if Grammarly meets the academic writing needs of students and explores areas where improvements may enhance user experience. By incorporating data from student feedback and triangulated analysis, this research contributes to the discourse on Grammarly's effectiveness as a learning aid in academic writing and offers recommendations for maximizing its potential as a support tool in education.

Building on previous research, this study aims to provide a

comprehensive view of Grammarly's role in academic writing by delving into students' firsthand experiences with the tool. Writing, especially in academic settings, requires a command of grammar, structure, and adherence to formal language rules to effectively communicate ideas and arguments (Nunan, 2003). However, many students find themselves overwhelmed by the demands of producing well-crafted essays, reports, and research papers (Reiger, 2020). Tools like Grammarly are increasingly used to support students in addressing these challenges, helping identify surface-level errors and encouraging students to adhere to academic standards (Brinton, 2000).

Existing studies highlight the varied perspectives on Grammarly's advantages. According to Brokaw (2022), students often find that Grammarly aids in organizing and refining their work, providing valuable support throughout the writing process's key stages: brainstorming, drafting, revising, and editing. However, studies also point out that Grammarly's suggestions may not always align with students' intended meanings, particularly for those whose first language is not English. This discrepancy suggests that, while Grammarly may improve technical accuracy, it can sometimes miss context-sensitive nuances, which manual feedback from instructors could address more effectively (Ananda, Nisa, & Safura, 2021; Daniels & Leslie in Oktaviani et al., 2022).

Research by Putri and Fitriawati (2020) and Fitria (2021) suggests that students benefit from Grammarly's error detection in basic grammar, punctuation, and spelling, but they also indicate that it lacks the ability to assess more complex aspects of writing, such as logical flow and argumentation. This gap is critical as it underscores the limitations of automated feedback tools in fostering deeper writing skills, such as critical thinking and synthesis of ideas—elements that are essential in academic contexts (Ghosh et al., 2020; Weaver, 1996).

Furthermore, the reliance on internet connectivity for Grammarly's functionality has been noted as a barrier, especially in regions with limited or unstable internet access, which can hinder its effectiveness for students (Pratama, 2021). This issue highlights the importance of developing tools that are accessible to all students regardless of their technological or geographical constraints. Additionally, research by Irwanto (in Oktaviani et al., 2022) has found that students' perceptions of Grammarly can be divided into positive and negative experiences, with many appreciating the convenience and immediacy of feedback but others expressing frustration over inaccuracies and context-insensitive suggestions. These

insights reveal that, while Grammarly can serve as a valuable resource, it is not a substitute for personalized feedback and guidance from educators.

This study aims to address these gaps by exploring students' nuanced perspectives on Grammarly's impact on their writing quality and development. Through a detailed analysis of student feedback, this study will explore both the benefits and limitations of Grammarly in supporting writing processes. By examining these insights, this study contributes to the ongoing discourse on the role of artificial intelligence in education, specifically in how tools like Grammarly can be refined to better meet the needs of diverse student populations. The findings are intended to provide educators, students, and software developers with a clearer understanding of Grammarly's strengths and areas for improvement, thereby informing strategies for enhancing academic support tools in the future.

## **METHODS**

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to explore students' perceptions of the benefits and challenges of using Grammarly for grammar checking in writing tasks. The descriptive qualitative method guides both data collection and analysis, allowing for a detailed exploration of student experiences. The study involved 25 students in the 8th Grade and 9th Grade at a junior high school, all of whom had prior experience in writing instruction. A questionnaire was utilized as the primary instrument for data collection, aligning with the qualitative approach of the research, as noted by Purwanto (2018), who defines research instruments as tools designed for data collection that align with research objectives and theoretical foundations. Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, and qualitative data triangulation was employed for analysis. This technique enabled a nuanced understanding of students' perceptions by analyzing responses to identify specific themes and general patterns. Ethical standards, including confidentiality and informed consent, were maintained throughout the study. An inductive approach was applied in the data analysis, focusing on identifying themes from students' responses. Triangulation served as a qualitative technique to verify findings, ensuring a comprehensive representation of the data while respecting participant confidentiality and voluntary participation.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

To understand the advantages and disadvantages of Grammarly in enhancing students' writing skills, a questionnaire was distributed among students. The survey, consisting of 20 questions 10 on advantages and 10 on disadvantages captured students' perceptions of Grammarly's utility in their writing process. Results are presented in Tables 1 and 2, followed by a synthesis of key insights.

Table 1. Advantages of Grammarly

No	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	Check grammar and spelling in Grammarly according to grammar rules	12%	80%	8%	0%	0%
2	Grammarly provides suggestions for improving writing style, tone, and choice of words to make it more effective and professional	36%	40%	24%	0%	0%
3	Grammarly provides appropriate word suggestions and alternative vocabulary to improve writing and expand the user's vocabulary	28%	52%	20%	0%	0%
4	Grammarly helps correctly correct punctuation errors according to the correct writing rules	28%	52%	20%	0%	0%
5	Grammarly not only identifies errors but also provides explanations and suggestions for improvement and writers can learn from every aspect of the errors provided by Grammarly	36%	16%	32%	16%	0%
6	Grammarly premium version provides accurate plagiarism features and can help users to ensure the originality of the work being written	32%	48%	20%	0%	0%
7	Grammarly can correctly identify sentences that are inconsistent in writing, such as in the inconsistent use of tenses or pronouns and help, users make assumptions about coherence throughout the text they write	12%	64%	24%	0%	0%
8	Grammarly provides scores and suggestions to improve the skills of writers and help writers develop their skills	16%	24%	44%	16%	0%
9	Grammarly is useful for saving writers time in the editing process	32%	36%	32%	0%	0%
10	Grammarly is easy to access for all skill levels	28%	32%	32%	8%	0%

Table 1 illustrates several notable advantages of using Grammarly. The primary advantage recognized by respondents is its grammar and spelling correction feature, adhering to grammatical standards, with 80% of students agreeing or strongly agreeing on its efficacy. Grammarly's functionality extends beyond basic grammar checks to offering suggestions for improved writing style, tone, and vocabulary, which 76% of respondents support as an aid to produce professional and polished writing. Furthermore, 80% of students acknowledged that Grammarly's vocabulary suggestions and alternative word choices enhanced their writing quality and expanded their vocabulary. The tool's capability to detect and correct punctuation errors, which 80% of respondents endorsed, was another highly appreciated feature. Additionally, Grammarly's explanations for corrections enable students to learn from their mistakes, with 52% of participants noting this as beneficial for reinforcing grammar knowledge.

Grammarly Premium's plagiarism detection feature received support from 80% of respondents, who valued it as an assurance of originality. Moreover, 64% of respondents noted that Grammarly identifies inconsistencies in writing, assisting users in maintaining coherence. The tool also provides scores and personalized tips, which 60% of respondents found valuable for their skill development. Finally, Grammarly's accessibility and time-saving attributes were noted, with 68% of students agreeing that it reduces editing time and is easy to use

Table 2. Disadvantages of Grammarly

No	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	Grammarly can hinder the development or understanding of grammar and writing skills of any individual which can lead to dependence on automatic suggestions rather than understanding grammar rules independently in the context of writing activities	20%	15%	44%	20%	0%
2	The grammar suggestions provided by grammarly are based on standard grammar rules and may not align with the type of writing being written	4%	44%	20%	32%	0%
3	Grammarly relies heavily on an internet connection to function and can hinder access or use in internet-restricted environments	44%	40%	16%	0%	0%
4	The cost of premium features from Grammarly doesn't suit students' pockets	24%	12%	48%	12%	4%
5	Grammarly free version has limited features compared to the premium version	44%	40%	16%	0%	0%

6	By always relying on Grammarly, you might miss learning opportunities independently	24%	36%	28%	8%	4%
7	Grammarly can propose changes that are not in accordance with the author's personal writing style	12%	36%	44%	8%	0%
8	Grammarly doesn't fully understand the context or the author's intent	8%	32%	56%	4%	0%
9	Grammarly is difficult to use because there is no Indonesian language option available	8%	28%	56%	8%	0%
10	Grammarly is too focused on correcting grammar	16%	48%	28%	8%	0%

Table 2 highlights several limitations of Grammarly. A primary concern is its potential to hinder independent grammar and writing skill development. About 35% of respondents expressed concerns over dependency on Grammarly's automated suggestions, which could impact students' ability to learn grammar autonomously. Additionally, the tool's grammar suggestions sometimes misalign with specific writing styles, with 44% of students agreeing that Grammarly's rigid adherence to standard rules can limit stylistic expression.

Another noted disadvantage is Grammarly's reliance on an internet connection. Around 84% of respondents agreed that this dependency can restrict its usability in limited internet-access environments. Furthermore, 72% of students regarded Grammarly Premium's cost as high, and the free version's limited features do not fully support users' needs. This is further compounded by Grammarly's overemphasis on grammar correction (64% agreement) and lack of Indonesian language support (64%), which presents accessibility issues for non-English users. Lastly, some respondents (56%) noted that Grammarly's suggested changes occasionally interfere with the author's intended meaning and personal style, causing discomfort with the adjustments.

## DISCUSSION

The study reveals that students perceive Grammarly as a helpful tool with both significant advantages and notable drawbacks. While the tool supports accurate grammar correction, vocabulary enhancement, and coherent writing structure, it also poses challenges in terms of dependency, cost, and context understanding. Grammarly's effectiveness as a grammar-checking tool is supported by prior studies. Fitriana and Nurazni (2022) emphasized that Grammarly fosters improvement in writing skills by offering real-time grammar suggestions, which aligns with the 80% of

respondents in this study who endorsed its utility. Similarly, Ananda et al. (2021) found that Grammarly is valued for accuracy in grammar checks, though students sometimes encounter obstacles with internet access and understanding Grammarly's feedback.

Comparative research supports these findings. Park and Son (2020) observed that grammar checkers are increasingly vital in educational contexts, helping users avoid grammatical errors and expand vocabulary. However, studies by Hamzah and Juwita (2019) and Nardi et al. (2022) caution against excessive reliance on such tools, as this may weaken students' grammar foundation, a concern that 35% of respondents in the current study echoed. Additionally, students' dependency on grammar software may hinder long-term language skill development (Zhang et al., 2021). On the disadvantage of Grammarly's strict adherence to standard grammar rules, the work of Tan and Lee (2019) demonstrated similar limitations in grammar-checking tools, especially for creative or informal writing styles. This drawback suggests the need for more adaptable, context-sensitive grammar checkers, as noted by Nasir et al. (2020), who highlighted the challenge of maintaining original writing style with automated corrections.

A consistent disadvantage highlighted across studies, including this one, is the high cost of premium grammar tools, as noted by Rahayu and Setiawan (2021). With only limited functionality available in free versions, this price barrier may hinder access for economically disadvantaged students, a finding that underscores the need for affordable grammar-support solutions in educational settings. Furthermore, studies by Chen et al. (2022) and Wijaya (2021) stress the limited contextual comprehension of tools like Grammarly. This research found similar limitations in Grammarly's inability to interpret the nuanced meaning, aligning with observations by Mustafa et al. (2023) regarding potential inaccuracies in automatic grammar correction. Contextual limitations, along with the lack of local language support, highlight the importance of developing regionally adapted tools, especially for multilingual contexts.

Despite these disadvantages, prior research and this study consistently support the advantages of Grammarly for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners. Sari and Hadi (2021) and Almas et al. (2022) advocate for Grammarly's usage in EFL settings, noting that its real-time feedback is beneficial for students learning English, although it is often recommended to use it alongside traditional learning for balanced skill development. In summary, while Grammarly's advantages in enhancing grammar,



vocabulary, and writing coherence are well-documented, the tool also has several limitations. The findings of this study, together with previous research, suggest that Grammarly is most effective when used as a supplementary tool rather than a primary learning resource. This balance allows students to benefit from Grammarly's strengths while continuing to develop essential writing skills independently.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

In conclusion, Grammarly provides a range of benefits as well as notable limitations based on student feedback:

- Grammarly provides several advantages: it identifies and corrects grammar and spelling errors effectively, offers style, tone, and vocabulary suggestions, includes plagiarism detection (premium), saves time in editing, and is accessible for users of all skill levels.
- There are disadvantages: Grammarly may hinder independent grammar and writing development, relies on an internet connection, and its premium cost may be prohibitive. Additionally, its suggestions can sometimes misalign with a writer's style, and it lacks contextual understanding, which may impact coherence.
- Despite these drawbacks, users find Grammarly useful for enhancing writing and inadvertently learning grammar. While it serves as a valuable tool for guidance on grammar and vocabulary, it should ideally be used as a supplementary resource rather than a substitute for foundational grammar education.

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