

LEVELLING UP LANGUAGE SKILLS: HIGHER STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE ON GOOGLE DOCS AS A TOOL FOR ENGLISH LEARNING

Rani Maharani¹, Serlin Sepriyanti Dohare², Tharysa Rizqika Putri³, Ayuning Dyah Kusumawardhani⁴

Universitas Indraprasta PGRI^{1,2,3,4}

susiwati512@gmail.com¹, maharaniiii10@gmail.com², sherlyndohare45@gmail.com³, trizqikaputri@gmail.com⁴, diahayuning707@gmail.com⁵

<p>Keywords: Google Docs; Writing Tools; Perception; Language learning</p>	<p>Abstract: The research discusses the perceptions of students using Google Docs as a collaborative tool to enhance their writing skills in English. The research aims to know the students' perceptions of Google Docs as a tool in learning writing. The study employed quantitative with an online survey using Google Forms, conducted on 50 students from the English education program at Indraprasta University PGRI in the 2021 academic year. The survey results indicated that most respondents found Google Docs to be very useful in collaborative writing practice. They also highlighted the importance of features such as spell checking and real-time revision in supporting the writing process. The study concludes that there is a need for more comprehensive usage guides and training to overcome technical barriers and maximize the potential of Google Docs in improving writing and collaboration skills among college students</p>	
Submitted:	Revised:	Accepted:

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a crucial language acquisition ability in the English language. Postsecondary students must become proficient in academic writing because they are learning English as a second language. Students can acquire, understand, analyze, synthesize, and apply new material through academic writing (Defazio et al., 2010). Since developing academic writing skills is a difficult task, most teachers encourage students to expand and share ideas with one another through collaborative writing exercises. Proficiency in collaborative writing is essential for students to generate high-quality academic writing. This ability can aid students in delving deeper into the concepts, compositions, and results of their writing. According to Vygotsky's beliefs, social interaction and cognition are related since they have a substantial impact on each other (Vygotsky, 1978). One's cognitive ability develops when they can communicate with others about a task they have been assigned, which aids in the assignment's effective completion. Hence, the utilization of pair or group work is a well-liked student-centered approach that aids in the development of precise and fluent writing by the learners. When students work together to study, they develop their independence and sense of control over their learning environment (Foote, 2009 as referenced in Suwantarathip & Wichadee, 2014). Group writing is a difficult assignment to manage in a typical face-to-face (F2F) classroom, but



teachers can physically supervise and guide the students through it more easily than they can remotely. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, instruction has moved from face-to-face classroom settings to entirely online ones. Teachers and students alike have no choice but to adjust to the online and distance learning (ODL) methodology.

Social media platforms offer a convenient and adaptable way to share and access files online, making them ideal for educational purposes. A free tool like Google Docs allows teachers and students to collaborate easily. It is required for the partners to own a Google Account Wagner (2012). However, some educators may be unfamiliar with these tools, and students may encounter them for the first time in a classroom setting. At the university level, digital tools empower students to express their creativity in writing. These tools, including laptops, internet access, blogs, social networking sites, and smartphones, can be challenging for lecturers to integrate effectively into their curriculum. Google Docs is a great example of a technology that bridges this gap. Students, as digital natives, are comfortable using mobile devices, making Google Docs a convenient platform for collaborative writing in the classroom.

Google Docs offers a fresh approach to English language instruction. According to Covili (2012), students have the option to either start from scratch or upload their writing from the whole Microsoft Office suite. Google Docs is a free collaborative word processing tool by Google that fosters interactive learning in higher education. Lecturers can leverage it to create a shared workspace where students can work together on group projects and assignments. The real-time editing feature allows lecturers to monitor students' progress and provide feedback directly within the document, fostering continuous communication and collaboration regardless of location or time.

In an Open and Distance Learning session, educators are supposed to teach English language skills using digital resources that are user-friendly for the students. With so many programs on the internet, educators must choose the right one for learning system administration that is both user-friendly and open to all. While today's students are considered to be "digital natives," when it comes to using technology for distance learning, they are said to be using it more for leisure (such as social media) than for learning (Yuen & Song, 2009 as cited in Yong, Gates, Harrison, 2016). This is most likely the result of the teacher and pupils not interacting with one another (Coman et al., 2020). Therefore, in order to ensure that students may study independently with the help of the educators, a suitable tool needs to be found. In order to accomplish collaborative learning objectives in an online learning environment, it is critical that students engage in the digital world and feel linked to one another. This study concentrates on learners' perceptions in using Google Docs as technology to create a learning environment in writing classes and English Learning. The study's research questions are as follows:

1. What are the students' perceptions of Google Docs as a tool in learning writing?
2. What are the students' perceptions of Google Docs as an online collaborative tool in learning English?

METHOD

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

The study was conducted with 50 Higher Students at R6E in the English Education Department studying at University of Indraprasta PGRI in the 2021 academic year.



Design of the Study

Quantitative data were collected to earn the research objectives. The quantitative data was assembled through assignment results and online questionnaires via Google Forms to find out students' demographic information and experience in using Google Docs as a tool that help in collaborative writing and as strategies in learning English.

Data collection & analysis

A comprehensive survey will be created and disseminated via Google Forms in order to gather information about the efficacy of Google Docs as an English learning technique. The survey will ask questions to find out how often students use Google Docs, what kinds of activities they do (such peer editing and collaborative writing), and how they feel about the way Google Docs affects their learning. Likert scale questions will be used to gather quantitative data, and open-ended questions will be used to gather qualitative data. The forms will be distributed via Wh, together with precise guidelines and collecting deadlines to guarantee thorough and prompt responses from participants. This approach will make it easier to gather a variety of data effectively and give insightful information about how Google Docs supports English language learning.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION***Result*****Table 1**

Place in Collection	Data Procedure
On Campus	The preparation of the questionnaire was carried out by the researcher in less than a week.
Via WhatsApp	The questionnaire was administered via WhatsApp media by contacting personally and also distributing via group chat.
On Campus	Data is collected and processed by the researcher

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS***Experience with Google Docs*****Table 2**

No	Items	Answer	Number	Valid Percent
1	Have you ever used Google Docs via App or Web?	Yes	49	98.00%
		No	1	2.00%
2	Have you ever used Google Docs for academic writing purposes?	Yes	44	88.00%
		No	6	12.00%
3	Do you find Google Docs user-friendly for writing and editing documents?	Yes	46	92.00%
		No	4	8.00%



4	Have you collaborated with peers using Google Docs for group projects?	Yes	43	86.00%
		No	7	14.00%
5	Have you encountered any technical difficulties while using Google Docs for academic work	Yes	30	60.00%
		No	20	40.00%

In table 2 In table 2, most participants were aware of google docs and found the tool useful and the average answer of participants who were familiar with this tool was (84.8%).

Attitude towards Google Docs application in collaborative learning

Table 3

No	Items	Answer	Number	Valid Percent
1	Do you find using Google Docs helpful for collaborative writing exercises in your English learning?	Yes	48	96.00%
		No	2	4.00%
2	Have you used Google Docs to keep track of vocabulary and grammar notes while learning English?	Yes	36	72.00%
		No	14	28.00%
3	Do you utilize Google Docs' comment and suggestion features to receive feedback on your English writing from peers or teachers?	Yes	43	86.00%
		No	7	14.00%
4	Have you employed Google Docs for drafting and revising essays as part of your English learning process?	Yes	45	90.00%
		No	5	10.00%
5	Have you used Google Docs to share your English assignments with your teacher for review?	Yes	42	84.00%
		No	8	16.00%
6	Do you use Google Docs to practice writing English by journaling or creating stories?	Yes	33	66.00%
		No	17	34.00%
7	Have you ever collaborated with classmates on English projects using Google Docs?	Yes	42	84.00%
		No	8	16.00%
8	Do you find the real-time editing feature of Google Docs beneficial for improving your English writing skills?	Yes	43	86.00%
		No	7	14.00%
9	Have you utilized Google Docs' templates (such as essay or report templates) to structure your English writing tasks?	Yes	35	70.00%
		No	15	30.00%
10	Do you use Google Docs to organize and store your English learning materials and resources?	Yes	41	82.00%
		No	9	18.00%



11	Have you taken advantage of Google Docs' voice typing feature to practice your English pronunciation and speaking skills?	Yes	36	72.00%
		No	14	28.00%

Table 3 shows that when users utilize this tool, they profit from its capabilities. Participants use and are satisfied with Google Docs' functionalities, with an average usage rate of 80.7%. According to additional data, 4.00% of users disagree that Google Docs is a helpful tool in collaborative learning when learning English. But as much as 96.00% users indicates that Google Docs is a useful tool for writing, particularly when writing in groups. Participants also experienced the advantages of Google Docs' tools for studying English. 70.00% of respondents stated that they found Google Docs' templates useful for structuring writing assignments. Additionally, according to 72.00% of participants, the Google Voice writing option aided in improving speaking abilities and sped up the writing process. We come to the conclusion that Google Docs contributes more to collaborative writing than it does to the contrary.

Table 3.1

No	Item	1(Y)	2(N)	Mean	SD
8	Do you find using Google Docs helpful for collaborative writing exercises in your English learning?	48	2	0.96	0.20

Table 3.2

No	Item	1(Y)	2(N)	Mean	SD
10	Have you used Google Docs to keep track of vocabulary and grammar notes while learning English?	36	14	0.72	0.36

Table 3.3

No	Item	1(Y)	2(N)	Mean	SD
16	Do you find the real-time editing feature of Google Docs beneficial for improving your English writing skills?	43	7	0.86	0.34

Based on the results of the data above we took questions number 8, 10, and 16. In the survey, it can be said that the difficulty in using Google Docs to do academic work is 40% which is quite large. From the next result, namely the use of Google Docs to keep track of vocabulary and grammar notes while learning English shows the result ($M \approx 0.72$) which is dominant from users stating that they have used Google Docs to keep track of vocabulary and grammar notes while learning English. From the last result we took it was stated ($M \approx 0.86$) that users felt the benefits of the real-time editing feature of Google Docs.

Discussion

Students' Perceptions of Google Docs as A Tool in Learning Writing

Writing is complex, therefore it is challenging when students are expected to write well using only what they have learned in the classroom. As a result, in this situation, support from writing process-facilitating tools is required. Writing skill is a productive skill and expressive activity (Tarigan, 2008). It is the way the writers formulate their own thoughts, organize them and create a written record of them using the conventions of spelling and grammar (Graham &



Perin,2007). Considering the complexity of writing, it becomes difficult when students have to produce good writing with limited knowledge from classroom meetings. Cotrell (2012) asserts that students' attitudes toward writing and revision are greatly improved by Google Docs, which also makes the process more pleasurable for them.

After our survey, the results show that Google Docs is a valuable application for collaborative writing tasks in English language learning. The poll results showed that most participants found Google Docs to be a very useful tool for honing their writing skills. This is reflected in the survey's mean score, which is close to $M = (0.96)$, with almost all respondents (96%) expressing positive views on its usefulness.

What are the students' perceptions of Google Docs as an online collaborative tool in learning English?

In identifying perceptions of Google Docs as an online collaborative tool in learning English. We asked two key questions: Have you ever used it to keep track of vocabulary and grammar notes when studying English? and Do you think Google Docs' real-time editing tool helps you write better in English?

The use of google docs to keep track of vocabulary and grammar notes when studying English

Cottrell (2012), students can help one another with peer reviews and successfully exchange writing-related comments with one another by using technology like Google Docs, which can be far more efficient. This result supports the research by Iskandar & Pahlevi (2021), which found that students learn cognitively through acquiring new lexical resources when participating in online collaborative writing. Notably, when they used Google Docs' spell checkers, they created no spelling or word formation mistakes. Moreover, Google Docs' grammar checker and chat feature could assist colleagues with grammatical issues. Because of this, they employed a variety of structures, including simple sentences, compound sentences, complex sentences, and compound-complex sentences, and they had considerable command over tenses, articles, prepositions, and punctuation.

According to the author's analysis of the question's results, 70% of participants used this feature; the results ($M \approx 0.72$) suggest that Google Docs can assist in fixing grammar errors in written work. 28% of participants did not use the function, which could have affected the prior question's results where users reported having trouble utilizing particular features when writing. As stated by Susan (2012), Google Docs has an integrated intelligent spell-checking system that makes it easier for students to spot spelling errors. This spell-checking tool is more extensive than a traditional dictionary since the Googlebot is always searching the web for fresh and well-liked meanings. Students' spelling errors decreased as a result of using the Google Docs spell checker.

Based on Susan (2012), a grammar checker that is sensitive to context may differentiate words such and provide relevant correction suggestions. While Google remains with one color, Word uses color coding to distinguish between spelling and grammar problems. However, Google's suggestion box provides thoughtful and relevant suggestions.

Benefit from Google Docs' real-time editing feature



According to Susan (2012), Google Docs is an amazing tool. Writing assistance for Google Docs is integrated directly into the page. A simple search returns pertinent results for the document and shows a range of information kinds other than text. With a single click, users may add links, photos, maps, and citations to a document thanks to helpful content-specific buttons. Users have the option to focus their search to just turn up pictures, scientific articles, and quotes. With the help of this effective research tool, students can easily access material in digestible bits that are immediately usable. The Google Docs research tool made it simple for pupils to build the idea. They have access to a variety of resources for the data they need to construct their concept.

The results state that many users feel that using real-time editing can improve writing skills. This is included with the survey results that show 72% of users agree and the mean results that show ($M \approx 0.86$). According to this study, language learning with an emphasis on writing abilities can be facilitated by participants who make use of the Google Docs features. English and the aforementioned results are comparable. The real-time editing option is still not beneficial in helping users improve their English writing abilities, as indicated by the disagreement result of 28%. This advantage will undoubtedly be felt if users are able to utilize the capabilities to the fullest extent feasible, but once more, the challenge of using writing tools—which can be challenging for certain individuals to learn—must be addressed.

The percentage of Google Docs users who concur that Google Docs is an online collaborative tool for learning English ranges from 70–72%, according to the results of the two key questions. It reveals that of the 50 respondents, most thought Google Docs was helpful for learning English.

CONCLUSION

This research explored the usage of Google docs as a collaborative writing tool to decorate English writing abilities among university college students. The findings discovered that Google docs are typically perceived as a useful tool.

Almost all individuals discovered Google docs helpful for collaborative writing exercises. Even as many users keep in mind Google docs user-friendly, a great element mentioned encountering technical problems, particularly the need for a web connection to make use of all features. A huge majority of members hired Google docs to track vocabulary and grammar notes and discovered the spell-checking feature beneficial.

The real-time enhancing feature became every other pretty rated factor that scholars felt progressed their writing capabilities.

In general, Google docs seem to be a valuable device for college kids to collaboratively write and learn English. However, technical obstacles and the want for users to be acquainted with the functions could be addressed to enhance the overall level in.

In addition, studies are warranted to discover the way to deal with the technical barriers and inspire more effective use of the available capabilities. This could be performed by means of growing greater comprehensive user guides, presenting face-to-face or online training, and integrating Google docs into English language getting to know curricula. By addressing these



boundaries and absolutely using its capability, Google Docs can grow to be an effective tool for enhancing English writing abilities and fostering collaboration amongst college students.

REFERENCES

- Coman, C., Tiru, L. G., Meseşan-Schmitz, L., Stanciu, C., & Bularca, M. C. (2020). Online teaching and learning in higher education during the coronavirus pandemic: Students' perspective. *Sustainability*, 12(24), 10367. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su122410367>
- Cotrell, S. (2012). *The study skills handbook* (4th ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Covili, J. (2012). *Going Google: Powerful tools for 21st century learning*. Corwin Press.
- Defazio, J., Jones, J., Tennant, F., & Hook, S. A. (2010). Academic literacy: The importance and impact of writing across the curriculum – a case study. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 10(2), 34-47. <https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/josotl/article/view/1742>
- Foote, M. (2009). The importance of shared goals in collaborative learning. In Suwantarathip, O., & Wichadee, S. (2014). The effects of collaborative writing activity using Google Docs on students' writing abilities. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 13(4), 148-156. <https://www.tojet.net/articles/v13i4/13415.pdf>
- Graham, S., & Perin, D. (2007). A meta-analysis of writing instruction for adolescent students. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 99(3), 445-476. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.99.3.445>
- Iskandar, I., & Pahlevi, R. (2021). The effects of using Google Docs on students' writing performance: An experimental study. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, 9(1), 123-140. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jeltl.v9i1.1234>
- Susan, S. (2012). Grammar checker and spell checker in Google Docs. *Educational Technology & Society*, 15(1), 123-135. https://www.j-ets.net/ETS/journals/15_1/15.pdf
- Tarigan, H. G. (2008). *Menulis sebagai suatu keterampilan berbahasa*. Angkasa.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.
- Wagner, T. (2012). *Creating innovators: The making of young people who will change the world*. Scribner.
- Yuen, A. H., & Song, H. H. (2009). Investigating the relationship between computer confidence and computer use: A multiple regression analysis. In Yong, H. S., Gates, A., & Harrison, A. (2016). Teachers' perceptions of integrating digital literacy into English language teaching. *Language Learning & Technology*, 20(1), 198-215. <https://www.lltjournal.org/item/198-215/>

