

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This study intends to investigate the EFL students' perceptions of Grammarly use in proofreading essay tasks. This chapter depicts the background of the study, the research problem, the purpose of the study, relevant studies, and the relevant theoretical framework.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

In recent years, the phenomenal growth in digital technologies has provided new alternatives for university students to learn any subject, particularly English. In this regard, students are faced with everything that requires skill in operating the technology and teaching and learning activities (Halim, Sharina, & Zur, 2022). In an educational context, many online correction tools exist to help students improve their writing (Ghufron, Saleh, & Sofwan, 2016). One notable example is Grammarly, which belongs to the category of online grammar checkers. It aids students and academic institutions by examining their written work for spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors and furnishing them with extensive and beneficial feedback (Barrot, 2020; Daniel & Leslie, 2013; Fitria, Mifah, & Sabarun, 2022; Ghufron et al., 2016; Nova, 2018). In addition, Grammarly provides explicit feedback for almost all flagged usages, and explicit feedback is conducive to much higher response accuracy than generic feedback (Ranalli, 2018; Suzuki, Nassaji, & Sato, 2019).

Empirical studies related to the use of Grammarly have been widely carried out on international scales, such as in the United States (Koltovskaia, 2020),

Australia (Cavaleri & Dianati, 2016), and Canada (Dong & Shi, 2021). Also, in the Asian context, many studies related to the use of Grammarly in learning writing have been conducted, such as in China (Guo, Feng, & Hua, 2021), Japan (Daniels & Leslie, 2013), and the Philippines (Barrot, 2020). Meanwhile, in Indonesian setting, the research related to the use of Grammarly in learning writing has been also carried out with various focuses such as the effect of Grammarly on students' self-directed learning (Halim, Sharina, & Zur, 2022), Grammarly strengths, and weaknesses (Fitria, Sabarun, & Miftah, 2022; Nova, 2018), and the way Grammarly improve students' writing quality (Darayani, Karyuatry, & Rizqan, 2018).

Most of the scientific studies were conducted regarding the use of Grammarly in learning writing. However, the studies of EFL students' perceptions of Grammarly in proofreading essay tasks still needed to be explored. Therefore, to fill those gaps, this present study attempted to investigate the university scale of students' perceptions, which referred to cognitive responses of Grammarly in proofreading essay tasks, an attempt to increase knowledge of Grammarly features such as language style, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Proofreading was the last step of the writing process, including checking and correcting errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and mechanics to improve the written expression (Holladay & Brown, 1981). In addition, this study attempted to focus on students' perceptions of context as the main discussion to know their reflective learning phenomenon of learning writing using Grammarly.

## **1.2 Research Question**

Regarding the focus of the study discussed earlier, the researcher formulated the following research question: "How do the EFL students perceive Grammarly use in proofreading essay tasks?"

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

In this context, the study aimed to investigate the EFL students' responses to writing acquisition learning facilitated by Grammarly in terms of lexical processes based on their cognitive perspectives.

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study were utilized as a reference for those who intended to conduct research in analyzing the students' perceptions of using Grammarly in proofreading essay tasks. There were some following contributions of this study. Firstly, this study was helpful for the students who were expressing their reflective responses to using Grammarly as a learning media. Secondly, for lecturers or teachers, this study served to understand students' perceptions, including the usefulness of Grammarly in the writing acquisition learning process. In particular, identifying the students' perceptions could improve students' writing, easiness of Grammarly, efficiency in revision, features to revise writing, behavioral intentions of utilizing Grammarly, and the weaknesses of Grammarly usage in writing. Lastly, this study was a reference for the university that Grammarly was a learning media that could be applied in the teaching and learning process as a preparation for a better education program system in the future.

## 1.5 Definition of Key Terms

For this study, the terms used were defined as follows:

**EFL Student:** In this study, an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) student referred to a learner who learned English in non-English speaking countries.

**Students' Perceptions:** This research referred to how the students perceived the usefulness of Grammarly in the writing acquisition learning process. In particular, identifying the students' perceptions could improve students' writing, easiness of Grammarly, efficiency in revision, supporting features to revise essays, students' behavioral intentions of utilizing Grammarly, students' self-directed learning, and the weaknesses of Grammarly usage in writing.

**Grammarly:** In this research referred to the desktop app (Windows-based) or add-in in Microsoft Word. This allowed access to writing suggestions directly in a wide array of native applications and websites. It was accessible online through popular web browsers such as Chrome, Safari, and Firefox and was compatible with Mac, Windows, Android, and iOS devices (Grammarly, 2020).

**Proofreading:** The term proofreading came from the word "proofread." This study referred to the last step of the writing process, which included checking and correcting errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and mechanics to improve the written expression.