

Exploring the use of Google Classroom for writing from the perception of diverse learners in online learning

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ABSTRACT

Google Classroom is advantageous in enhancing virtual engagement and interaction among students, facilitating the dissemination of announcements and submission of assignments, as well as fostering collaborative learning. Due to, this study investigated how varied online learners perceived using Google Classroom for writing. Data from student interviews were gathered using a qualitative phenomenological approach. Based on the findings, students considered Google Classroom was easy to use and practical, which encouraged independent learning and self-control. They valued services like simple access, assignment submission, persistent access to the content, teacher comments and notifications, and assignment submission via mobile device. However, grammar did not get improved significantly, and students still had difficulties using appropriate grammar. To sum it up, Google Classroom can be a useful tool for online writing classroom instruction, but it should be combined with direct instruction and other educational resources to develop the understanding of grammar.

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1. Introduction

Learning is no longer constrained by geography, distance, or time. With electronic devices like smartphones, tablets, laptops, and PCs that are connected to the internet, teachers and students can engage in learning activities. The concept of learning media centers on utilizing collaborative spaces to convey ideas and generate targeted educational materials, with the aim of enhancing the performance of both educators and learners (Hansch et al., 2015). The LMS includes Quipper School, Chamilo, Google Classroom, Edmodo, Moodle, Schoology, and Khan Academy (Ramadhani et al., 2019).

One platform that has gained popularity in recent years is Google Classroom, which is a free web service developed by Google for schools that aim to simplify creating, distributing, and grading assignments in a paperless way. Google Classroom is advantageous in enhancing virtual engagement and interaction among students, facilitating the dissemination of announcements and submission of assignments, as well as fostering collaborative learning (Iftakhar, 2016). Many studies have been conducted in investigating the benefits of Google Classroom in learning (Northey et al., 2015; Daud, 2019; Salam, 2020; Febiyanti et al., 2021) argue that Google Classroom offers significant advantages, is ample in its features, and presents novel challenges in the realm of lifelong learning in a unique manner. Through Google Classroom, students can enhance their prospects of mastering English writing online by expediting the completion of assignments, such as composing brief texts (Islam, 2019). For foreign language students, it was proposed that the introduction of online discussions not

only enhanced their English language proficiency but also resulted in greater participation compared to traditional face-to-face classroom settings (Satar and Akcan, 2018). On the other word, opting for asynchronous technology could be a more favorable option for English language learning. This is because it not only enables students to engage with a wider community of English speakers globally but also offers support for those with limited language proficiency (Osborne et al., 2018)

Writing is the process of structuring ideas which can sharpen the intelligence. The learners should understand and think of many things to produce good writing (Junianti, 2020). Writing, however, in particular, can be a challenging task for many learners, and finding effective ways to support writing instruction in an online environment is an ongoing challenge for educators. Suhaira (2021) said Students encounter difficulties in achieving proficiency in English writing due to the distinct grammatical structure of English in comparison to their native language. In language production, students are required to employ their comprehension in order to generate speech or written content for the purpose of effective communication (Nunan et al., 2003; Aditiya, 2022). Therefore, to communicate effectively, students need to use their understanding to produce spoken or written language through language production (Harmer, 2007).

This study aims to explore the use of Google Classroom for writing instruction from the perspective of diverse learners in online learning. The research will focus on how diverse learners perceive the use of Google Classroom for writing instruction, and what benefits and challenges they face when using the platform. The study will employ a qualitative research design. The findings of this study will contribute to the understanding of the use of Google Classroom for writing instruction in an online learning environment, and will provide valuable insights into how educators can use the platform to support diverse learners. The study will also contribute to the broader conversation on the role of technology in supporting writing instruction, and how educators can effectively integrate technology tools into their teaching practices to support student learning.

2. Method

This research will use a descriptive qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. The goal is to gain a rich and deep understanding of the meaning and essence of the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2013). The interview was simply one of the tools employed in this study. By conducting an interview, the data was obtained to gain an understanding of the students' perceptions regarding the utilization of Google Classroom for enhancing their writing skills. Creswell (2012) state that the one way to elicit unrestricted responses from participants and document them is by conducting an interview, which involves asking open-ended questions. Furthermore, in this study, the researcher employed a semi-structured interview to get detailed information. This method is used to explain the phenomenon of using Google Classroom for writing from the perspective of various students in online learning. The participants of this study were second semester students majoring in English education at Mataram University. The researcher selected 9 students from different cultural backgrounds, different languages and different English proficiencies.

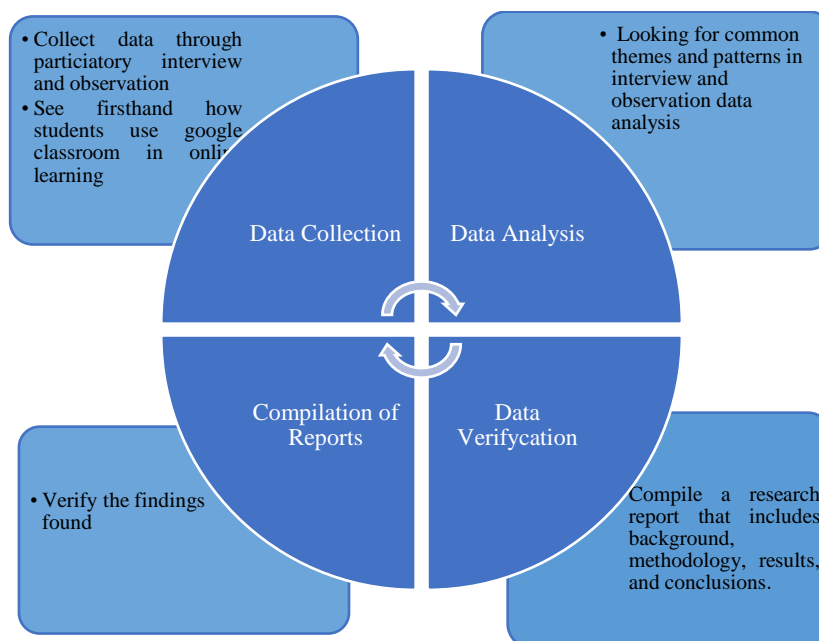


Fig. 1. Phenomenological schema

3. Findings and Discussion

From the data obtained, it can be seen that students find Google Classroom practical and easy to use. They can access it anytime and anywhere, and can submit assignments easily. According to Islam (2019), Google Classroom, an online tool for teaching and learning, aids in streamlining the educational process, making it suitable for both teaching and learning activities. The intention behind using Google Classroom as a learning tool is to provide support for students in their learning journey. The students' response also indicated their understanding of the material shared through Google Classroom. According to Nookhong and Wannapiroon (2015), Google Classroom facilitated the sharing of ideas among students, enabling them to exchange materials, engage in discussions on learning topics, and enhance their knowledge collectively. Study by Ratnaningsih (2019) showed that By typing their assignments, students can effortlessly submit them without resorting to email, printing, or face-to-face meetings with their teacher. Mercer & Dörnyei (2020) argue in the fast-paced world of the twenty-first century, a strong dedication to learning is essential for achieving successful learning outcomes. This dedication acts as a safeguard against getting involved in irrelevant activities and unproductive exploration, which are further exacerbated by the influence of social media. The learning process can only proceed through its application, which allows students to access it on their smartphones from any location. Apart from that, Google Classroom also facilitates re-access to previously provided learning materials. Shaharanee et al. (2016) found that Google Classroom is a valuable tool for facilitating teaching and learning, and its user-friendly interface encourages people to utilize it whenever necessary. Iftakhar (2016) state that the purpose of Google Classroom is to support teachers in managing the development and submission of student assignments in an eco-friendly setting without the use of paper.

According to research, Google Classroom was identified as a suitable Learning Management System (LMS) due to its integration with university and school systems. Additionally, it appears to fulfill students' desire for a user-friendly interface that facilitates increased interaction (Heggart & Yoo, 2018). In addition, Google Classroom can also improve student autonomous learning. This finding was supported by Ratnaningsih (2019) who mentioned that students can gain knowledge from the class discussion through the utilization of Google Classroom. The students build self-learning and self-development. Google Classroom has the potential to enable self-directed learning among students (Al-Marroof & Al-Emran, 2018). Learners can increase their vocabulary by viewing comments from teachers in Google Classroom. In addition, the comments feature also helps students to improve their own assignments. The notification feature in Google Classroom also helps students not to miss announcements or assignments that must be completed, thus increasing their learning discipline.

Ratnaningsih (2019) stated that regarding the submission of written assignments, the students exhibit self-discipline. Additionally, the teacher and students have the opportunity to engage in online chat or collaborate on writing tasks using a computer or smartphone. The feedback process plays a crucial role in supporting students' enhancement of writing skills (Al-Saleh, 2018; Barnawi, 2010). The teacher has the ability to offer online corrective feedback on students' writing via Google Classroom. Utilizing e-learning methods also prepares students for independent learning, as it necessitates their commitment to self-improvement (Afrilyasanti et al., 2017).

However, even though Google Classroom has many benefits, this study also found that there was no improvement in grammar in writing classes using Google Classroom. Students still feel confused about using correct grammar, and there are no tools provided by Google Classroom to check grammar. According to Nunan et al. (2003), in general, grammar is perceived as a collection of guidelines that dictate the appropriate arrangement of words within a sentence. Therefore, in addition to using Google Classroom, teachers need to provide learning materials related to grammar to help students improve their writing skills.

Overall, this study provides insight into the use of Google Classroom in online writing learning. By paying attention to the benefits and limitations of the platform, teachers can integrate Google Classroom into their writing lessons more effectively and efficiently.

The researcher discovered from the interview data that there were both benefits and drawbacks associated with using Google Classroom for learning writing.

Table 1. Themes and codes for students' perceptions on the use of Google Classroom in learning writing

Themes	Codes
Students thought Google Classroom was convenient and easy to use.	a. The student had access to Google Classroom whenever and wherever they wanted. b. The students were able to complete their assignments with ease and freely access the content multiple times thanks to Google Classroom. c. With Google Classroom, students could only submit assignments from their phones
The students were able to improve their self-directed learning.	a. The Google Classroom comments made by teachers can help students expand their vocabulary
The capabilities of Google Classroom may improve students' self-control.	a. Students made use of the comment option to help them fix their assignments. b. Google Classroom's notification feature might make it easier for students to quickly determine whether or not the teacher has already submitted the assignment. c. The students could do the assignment on time with the notification from Google Classroom.
Using Google Classroom in writing class did not improve students' grammar	a. The students still struggled to use proper grammar b. there was no grammar checker available in Google Classroom.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research conducted, it can be concluded that the use of Google Classroom in writing provides benefits for various students in online learning. Using Google Classroom helps students write in a more structured and effective way, and increases their accessibility to reading materials and videos related to the topic being studied. In addition, using Google Classroom also helps students to communicate more easily and effectively with their educators and classmates, thus helping them improve their writing skills by providing useful input and feedback.

However, the obstacles faced by students were also identified in this study. Accessibility limitations and the need for more structured guidance are obstacles for some students in using Google Classroom. Therefore, educators and policy makers need to consider these factors in designing online learning strategies that are more inclusive and effective for diverse learners.

Thus, the results of this study provide important insights for educators and policy makers in designing online learning strategies that are more inclusive and effective for diverse learners. In addition, the results of this study can also provide a more in-depth view of the use of Google Classroom in writing, so that it can help increase the effectiveness of its use in online learning.

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