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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore and illuminate possible relationship between Google Classroom and ESL learners' narrative essay writing. Ninety-five Year 5 and Year 6 of 40 male and 55 female learners participated in this research. The learners were chosen because they were not interested in writing and always complained when it comes to writing activities. A quantitative research method was employed to guide this study. An online survey was used and the data collected from the online survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The analysis of the survey questionnaire revealed that Google Classroom shows significant results for the learners. The results of this study revealed that most learners positively perceive the use of Google Classroom as they find the features of Google Classroom beneficial for writing their narrative essays. Future research can be conducted on using Google Classroom to teach other language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and grammar by using a larger sample size to improve academic achievement among primary school learners.
Keywords: Narrative Essay Writing, Use of Google Classroom, Beneficial Features.

Introduction

In today's era of globalization, the ability to write has become incredibly important in the English language. It cannot be refuted since it is now the world's common language. The importance of English can be seen in many aspects of everyday life especially in education, economy and also social interaction. Writing skills are an important part of communication. Good writing skills allow you to communicate your message with clarity and ease to a far larger audience than through face-to-face or telephone conversations.

It is undeniable that good writing skill has a great influence on a country as a whole (Ltd, 2021). It is in a nation's best interest to promote excellent English writing abilities in the early years of a learner's education as young children have a greater potential to learn English better than adults. By doing this, learners will be capable to communicate their opinions,

thoughts and ideas effectively. As a result, it's necessary that mastering the English language starts from the beginning, in a welcoming classroom with a certified ESL instructor (Ltd, 2021). As Walsh (2010) says, writing is important because it is used extensively in higher education and the workplace. If learners don't know how to express themselves in writing, they won't be able to communicate well with professors, employers, peers or just about anyone else.

It is common in the context of Malaysian ESL classrooms that learners face problems in the writing lessons (Ghabool et al., 2012). One of the major problems teacher's faces involves the learners' inability to develop their sentences in the second language (Muhammad et al., 2016). When learners make a major breakthrough in learning, it is music to a teacher's ears. There is nothing more rewarding for a teacher, than seeing their learners smile and laugh while they learn. Learners love coming to class when they are taught in a fun and creative way. Through the integration of ICT, the instructor may assist learners to be more interested in writing, allowing for more participatory and engaging writing in the class (Ltd, 2021).

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) has an important role in the world since we are now in the information age era. It has evolved in such a manner that they have become an indispensable tool in our daily life, for instance in our educational environment. In the field of education, information technology (ICT) refers to systems that allow for the collection, modification, administration, accessibility, and transfer of data in various formats. Thus, using ICT will enhance learning among learners. Nowadays, computer technology brings a set of advantages to promote and enhance language skills. For example, it permits learners to develop their language competencies by interacting with the authentic material in an interesting and meaningful way. Additionally, it is one of the most effective tools for teaching writing.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) in Malaysia ensures that learners are not merely learning how to utilise ICT, but also how to integrate it to improve their learning successfully. It is a powerful resource for young learners in learning English language which helps in their language development. Malaysia's Ministry of Education has created three key programs for integrating ICT into education (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2003). The first strategy stresses that ICT should be available to all learners, implying that ICT would be used to bridge the gaps between schools. The second strategy focuses on the role of ICT in education as a tool for teaching and learning. The use of ICT as an educational tool for getting and communicating information is also emphasised in this approach. The third strategy emphasises the use of ICT to improve the administration system's efficiency, efficacy, and effectiveness. Thus, it is probably an excellent idea to use ICT in an ESL classroom to promote better writing in English lessons.

Literature Review
Writing Problems among Learners
Young learners in our community today have a higher degree of exposure to a broader spectrum of information and accessibility than ever before, and these learners also need their teachers to help them understand the nuances of communication in the world of the 21st century (DeVoss et al., 2010). Greenhalgh (1992), quoted in Tony (2001) stated that the most frequent advice learners are given on their work progress comes from ESL writing teachers. Teaching writing is not as easily said as it is done, as it appears to be a daunting challenge for teachers to produce learners with excellent writing skills. Writing skills are therefore considered to be a complex cognitive ability because it requires learners to use proper

intellectual skills, cognitive strategies, verbal information, language rules, and motivation (Tierney et al., 1989). To ensure learners succeed in writing.

Researchers suggest that teachers should assist learners in taking control of their own writing. A conscientious teacher should therefore be a reactive reader who helps learners identify and solve writing problems. A review of the related English language learning studies in the context of Malaysian schools indicates that the first language (Bahasa Malaysia) interferes significantly with learning a second language. For example, examining the language learning problems of learners by, Maros et al (2007), cited in Musa, Lie, & Azman, (2012) reported that interference with Bahasa Malaysia is like an impediment to the achievement of English literacy among secondary school learners.

Yusof and Karim (2019) investigated that writing is well known to be a daunting skill mastered by language learners, among others. Learners have difficulty meeting the written requirements due to a low level of language proficiency. The lack of knowledge of English vocabulary, grammar, spelling and punctuation also led to a lack of interest in writing. Starkey (2004) states that writing in an academic context in English requires various aspects, including structure, vocabulary, language usage, punctuation, correct capitalization and paragraphing. He added that the effective piece of writing is structured, clear and consistent with precise language and accurate use of words.

Learners Engagement in ICT

Learners engagement has always increased when ICT is used in combination with traditional face-to-face instruction. DeVoss et al (2010) discovered that technology changes the way our learners communicate and share information with increasing numbers of listeners, and the gadgets used in classrooms, like computers or iPads, become resources of writing; report, distribute, collaborate, engage, and remix picture, text, sound, video, and motion together to be as much as the overall vision.

Robinson and Hullinger (2008) found that incorporating technology gives plenty of time for leaners to develop critical and reflective thinking which activates higher order of thinking such as analysis, synthesis, judgment, and application of knowledge (Chen et al., 2010). That finding is also supported by Duderstadt, Atkins, and Houweling (Chen et al) who also found that online learning promote higher order thinking skills among students in an online learning class. Thurmond and Wambach (2004) stated that an increase of collaborative work is found among students who took online courses. Thus, it is essential that educators need to change their mind set of writing on a paper to a better ways in which students can aggregate their ideas into a structured, reflective manner and this can be done by using Web 2.0 Technologies.

The Use of Google Classroom to Teach Writing

Most writing classroom tasks can be done through Google Classroom such as drafting, revising, peer editing, collaborating and feedback. Learners can work through various paper drafts, and teachers can assess and provide input at multiple points. According to Kevin & Federico (2019), Google Classroom is an important interactive tool for teaching EFL writing courses. Google Classroom helps in many different aspects such as learning and enjoying English while simultaneously keeping teachers connected to leaners throughout the entire writing process (Islam, 2019).

One of the most important aspects of Google Classroom is monitoring learners' progress throughout the process and providing feedback via Google Doc comments. Teachers have the opportunity to provide immediate feedback to learners at any point throughout the process of writing (Ahmadi, 2018). According to Yusof and Karim (2019), the process of writing is already difficult for learners, but it is even more difficult in a virtual context. Scaffolding the writing process by dividing it down into smaller portions makes it more doable. To support the learners during teaching, teachers should give them an outline to help them structure their writing. This will help the learners to write the rest of the writing process.

Offering learners additional graphic organizers and resources increases learners' engagement with writing activities and assignments (Miss, 2020). According to her, learners should be familiarized with the rubric that will be used to assess their writing. This include uploading it to Google Classroom, describing it, referring to it during teaching and learning, offering feedback that indicates where learners are on the rubric, and allowing learners to self-evaluate during the writing process. Most research on integrating ICT, specifically Google Classroom has only been done in urban and suburban settings. Thus, this research will examine learners' perceptions of using Google Classroom in rural settings and see how it affects their writing.

Research Question
This study intends to find answers to the following research question:

    i.   What features in Google Classroom that the learners perceive as beneficial?

Methodology
This study is a survey research. It adopts a quantitative approach to investigate features of Google Classroom that learners find beneficial in writing narrative essay.

Sample and Sampling
The school that the researcher carries out this research is a rural school in an island. The learners socio-economic background is quite low. The school consists of around 240 learners and they are of mixed ability with most of them at average and low proficiency levels. The researcher uses purposive sampling strategy as the sample and the decision to choose the respondents, the sites, and the sample size to be studied are all available to him as he is a teacher in that school. The researcher knows his learners' problems and he uses respondents in the sample to reflect more on the population and their problems in writing narrative essays. The researcher chose Year 5 and Year 6 classes which have 95 learners. There are 40 male and 55 female learners. All the learners are chosen as respondents for this research. The researcher plans to distribute the questionnaire after using the Google Classroom in the learners writing lesson. These learners were never taught using Google Classroom before by their teachers.

Instruments
This research collected quantitative data using a questionnaire. A questionnaire is used to answer the research questions for this study. The researcher gives the questionnaire to all his learners after the three weeks session. It is used to see the perceptions of learners on the features in Google Classroom that learners find beneficial.

Data Analysis

The researcher used nominal scales to measure ESL learners' perception on the features in Google Classroom that helps learners in narrative essay writing. The independent variable for this research is the features of Google Classroom whereas the dependent variable will be narrative essay writing. Questionnaire will be used to answer the research question. The questionnaire used in this research is divided into two parts where the first part was designed to collect the demographic variables such as email address, age and gender. The second part of the questionnaire is on Features in Google Classroom (FGC). These items will be analyzed using descriptive statistics. The data given by the respondents are tabulated into tables. Percentages and frequency of the responses are calculated using SPSS. The researcher then analyzed the findings and made conclusions based on it. The items for FGC are statistically analysed using frequency and percentages.

Results and Discussion

The research question of the present study examined features in Google Classroom that learners find beneficial.

These findings aim to assess the importance of Google Classroom features, allowing learners to write essays more effectively. The results (Table 1) indicated that most of the learners have a positive perception of the features in Google Classroom. Study results show improvement in learners writing after using these features. Among those features of Google Classroom that respondents find beneficial are Google Meet, sharing, voice typing, collaborative and scaffolding and tech tools like ''Grammarly''. On the contrary, some features in Google Classroom that learners find least helpful are spell checker, calendar, rubrics and Google Form. They were not keen on using these features as they make the respondents feel compelled when writing the essay.

The result in Table 1 shows that the Google Meet feature in Google Classroom helps the respondents to write narrative essays. This is because the respondents find Google Meet as an easy way to connect with their teachers and peers to do online discussions. The findings also revealed that Google Meet increases respondents' participation and interaction because the teacher can use breakout rooms to divide the respondents into smaller groups during online discussion. This finding is similar to studies by Liu & Chuang, (2016) who suggested that Google Classroom was used to facilitate the interaction of a professor or teacher with learners in the virtual world hence attracting their attention and keeping them actively engaged during teaching and learning process. It is also encouraging to compare this result with that found by Wijaya (2016) found that learners already feel the benefits of e-learning as they feel communication and interaction have become easier through Google Classroom.

Table 1

Frequencies and percentages of Features in Google Classroom (FGC) items

No	Item	SD		D		N		A		SA	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	Google Meet helps me to write narrative essay by connecting with my teacher for online discussion.	2	2.1	5	5.3	9	9.5	63	66.3	16	16.8
2.	Sharing feature in Google Classroom helps	0	0	4	4.2	7	7.4	50	52.6	34	35.8

No	Item	SD		D		N		A		SA	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
	me to exchange my essay with the teacher without the need to print it.										
3.	Voice typing helps me to overcome my problems in content, mechanics and organization.	0	0	0	0	5	5.3	70	73.7	20	21.1
4.	I like the collaborative features in Google Classroom as teachers and peers can give feedback and edit my work.	7	7.4	12	12.6	5	5.3	30	31.6	41	43.2
5.	Spell checker helps me to identify spelling errors as I type.	20	21.1	20	21.1	25	26.3	12	12.6	18	18.9
6.	Dealing with the Google Classroom application such as Calendar was convenient with regard to keeping track of my narrative essay writing.	10	10.5	9	9.5	60	63.2	10	10.5	6	6.3
7.	Scaffolding features such as mini lessons and graphic organizers helps me to structure my narrative essay writing better in Google Classroom.	0	0	10	10.5	20	21.1	35	36.8	30	31.6
8.	Rubric features in Google Classroom helps me to self-evaluate throughout the writing process.	4	4.2	11	11.6	25	26.3	33	34.7	22	23.2
9.	The use of other tech tools like 'Grammarly' in Google Classroom helps me to identify and correct my grammar mistakes.	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	52.6	45	47.4
10.	Google Form pasted at the end of the essay document in Google Classroom facilitates me to self-evaluate before submitting the narrative essay.	10	10.5	25	26.3	30	31.6	15	15.8	15	15.8

On the contrary, according to the results of this study, the features that respondents find least helpful are spell checker, calendar, rubrics and Google Form. According to the data, the respondents felt stressed when they used these features to write narrative essays. This is because respondents were not very keen on using Google Classroom for these features as these features make the respondents feel compelled when writing the essay. It alleviates respondents anxiety as they get worried finishing the narrative essays by time. Respondents do get stuck or their flow stops when they have run out ideas. This leads respondents' experience negative feelings as these features remind them to complete their narrative writing before due dates and to write their narrative writing perfectly without making any errors. As mentioned in a research by Arindra et al (2020), rubrics go bad because they combine performance elements with format expectations. Rubrics try to list or count every possible mistake without teaching learners the expectations of the discipline. Furthermore, rubrics may lead to anxiety if they include too many criteria and may limit learners' imagination. The findings here is further backed up by Yusof and Karim (2019) stating that assignments that give instructions about every single thing the learners needs to do, or which can only be done in one very narrow way, leave no room for creativity or original thought and can stifle learners' engagement.

Next, from the data analysis of the features of Google Classroom learners found beneficial, the respondents believed that collaboration and sharing contributed to writing narrative essays. Respondents find it beneficial since writing in Google Classroom gives a sense of autonomy to them as they have more choice in developing their ideas based on the constructive feedback from teachers and peers. The collaboration feature encourages learners to revise their work after teacher and peers' feedback, which improves the scoring of their Section C essay. According to the data, respondents strongly agree that they also share their different thinking processes to write their best outcome of the essay assigned which also triggers healthy competition among the learners. This finding also corroborates the ideas of Wessam (2018) who states that introducing Google Docs for writing greatly impacted learners' motivation as they gained much confidence and higher scores when they started reading the teacher's feedback and working accordingly.

Apart from that, the sharing feature in Google Classroom also helps respondents to exchange their essays with the teacher without the need to print it. This is because learners can complete assignments and assessments directly through Classroom, and their work is also saved to Drive. This finding is in line with Fallon's (2015) sharing feature of Google Classroom allows the learners and their lecturer to exchange documents in common digital formats (DOC, PDF, JPG), thus reducing the necessity to print documents and the risk of losing it.

Next, this study revealed that respondents find voice typing and 'Grammarly' tool features in Google Classroom beneficial. These features help them to overcome their problems in content, mechanism and organization. From the findings, it can be seen that respondents enjoyed being able to show their thinking in writing in a new way, as opposed to the standard pencil and paper. This can be seen where struggling respondents could now talk to the laptop through voice typing. The researcher found that his respondents were struggling to write essays by hand. The respondents know what they want to write but are not able to do so as they find it difficult to spell the words. Thus, the researcher concluded that the feature of Voice typing in Google Classroom is effective as it helps the learners be creative with their narrative stories to show their thinking to the reader. This fialso agrees with Fallon (2015) findings, which showed that their narrative writing improved after introducing voice typing for some of the struggling typers in the classroom. She also mentioned that technology

tools like Kami and 'Grammarly''s clarity and suggestions help learners to refine their word choice, sentence structure, unclear sentences and redundant phrases and give feedback to them on improving the sentences.

Conclusion

The results positively indicated that most of the respondents positively perceive the features in Google Classroom. Study results clearly show improvement in learners writing after using these features. The ESL learners positively perceive Google Classroom as they find most of the features in Google Classroom to be beneficial in writing narrative essays. Learners demonstrated growth in a multitude of ways after being exposed to Google Classroom in their writing lessons. The learners were enthusiastic in writing Section C essays and did not hesitate to show their ideas, opinions, thoughts and sharing with their classmates and gave their best responses towards their writing assignment. This shows that Google Classroom provide unique learning opportunities that when done effectively, can vastly improve learners' writing. By using Google Classroom as an alternative approach to the traditional methods of teaching writing, the learners could learn collaboratively and consider teacher and peers feedback for the development of their writing skills. Not to mention, the majority of the learners enjoyed using Google Classroom due to its manageability and convenience. Therefore, it is safe to say that teachers can now be at ease with the effects of technology in the classroom since the present study showcases the positive impact of Google Classroom on learners' narrative writing.

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