

## Perceived Acceptance of Enacting Google Docs in an Online Collaborative EFL Writing Classroom

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### Abstract

Despite a plethora of studies on the use of Web 2.0 technology in the English language teaching (ELT) landscape during the Covid-19 pandemic, few have examined the extent to which students accept the enactment of Google Docs (GD) for collaborative writing. To fill this void, grounded in Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) theory (Davis, 1989), this study aimed to examine students' perceived acceptance of GD enactment as a means of online collaborative English as a foreign language (EFL) writing practices. It sought to answer the following main research question: How did the students react to the enactment of Google Docs for collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic in terms of Perceived Ease of Use (PEU), Perceived Usefulness (PU), Attitude towards Using (ATU), and Intention to Use (ITU)? The statistical evidence indicated that GD was user-friendly and useful for the students given the overall Mean score ( $M=6.0$ ) and the significant effects of all the hypothetically tested variables, significantly influencing their behavior and intention to use the technology. The qualitative evidence showed that internet connection was their sole challenge and that more practical training on using GD would help them better operate it for such a pedagogical purpose. The study encapsulates the feasibility of enacting GD as a medium of online collaborative EFL writing practices in the age of the Covid-19 pandemic. Further research examining the acceptance of GD and other dependent variables, such as learning outcomes, engagement, motivation, and etc., in ELT context would be worthy of investigation.

**Keywords:** Covid-19, collaborative writing, English as a foreign language, English language teaching, Google Docs, second language, technology acceptance model, online, writing

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## Introduction

Covid-19, a deadly variant of SARs-like virus, originated in Wuhan, China, in late 2019, has resulted in the closure of all schooling activities since April 2020, marked by the stipulation of the pandemic status by the World Health Organization (WHO) (Djalante et al., 2020; Alfadda & Mahdi, 2021). Such a viral crisis has caused adverse impacts on education (Alfadda & Mahdi, 2021), not to mention on the English language teaching (ELT) sector across the globe, as it forced the teachers to shift their face-to-face (FTF) instruction to a total online in an unprepared way. This learning condition is widely recognized as “remote teaching” (Shin, 2020).

Such a learning condition has significantly adversely affected the ELT sector unprecedentedly. (Mardiah, 2020) unveiled that English teachers and learners encountered some learning barriers, such as inadequate access to the internet and technologies, low students’ motivation and engagement, and inadequate social and psychological interactions between the students and teachers, which worsens the digital divide (Shin, 2020). This, however, should be seen as the catalyst for English teachers or instructors to be innovative and creative in executing their pedagogical practices in the classroom. Hence, numerous pedagogical alternatives have been proposed to effectively carry out the English language instruction amid the Covid-19 pandemic. For example, a special issue of ELT during the Covid-19 was published in one of the most prominent Journals, TESOL Journal, that provided pedagogical insights for English teachers across the globe to adopt. These include using an online literature circle for online reading instruction (Ferdiansyah et al., 2020); native and non-native English speaking teachers cooperation (Yi & Jang (2020); video-based teaching practicum for pre-service English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers (Cho & Clark-Gareca, 2020); and video conferences for EFL learners (Moorhouse & Beaumont, 2020). Nonetheless, all the proposed pedagogical measures cannot be applied to a particular pedagogical context due to various contextual issues, especially those dealing with EFL writing instruction. In addition, most studies on ELT in the Indonesian educational landscape focused on investigating the challenges of English teachers and students (say, Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Mardiah, 2020).

English writing instruction, particularly at an Indonesian Islamic University, where this study was carried out, resembles a similar learning condition amid the Covid-19 pandemic, where a lack of writing practices or input remains the primary concern. Even under the normal situation, writing in English is generally conceived as the most challenging skill to teach and learn (Azis & Husnawadi, 2020; Husnawadi, 2021) due to the adequacy of learning hours and the intricate process of mastering this productive skill. However, with the advancement of technological devices, Web-2.0 technology, such as Google Docs (GD), a free word processing tool produced by Google Inc., such learning conditions could be effectively facilitated. This online learning platform has been widely used to mediate collaborative writing (CW), joint authorship of texts among the second language(L2) learners (Godwin-jones, 2018; Storch, 2019; Limbu & Markauskaite, 2015). Incorporating such technology also attests to CW in writing classes (e.g., Liu et al., 2018; Cho, 2017). The notion of CW is critical to be incorporated into online instruction amid the Covid-19 pandemic because it could foster the students’ communication, lessen their work overload, and develop teamwork (Yen, 2020). On the other side of the coin, technologies play the most critical role in learning during the pandemic because of their friendly, flexible, and safe learning environment affordances (Li, 2021). Nonetheless, their use would not promote

certain learning outcomes unless users willingly accept their implementation (Davis, 1989). For that reason, Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was employed in this study as the underpinning framework to explain and evaluate the use of GD, allowing the examination of the level of the writing students' acceptance of its enactment and the pre-set variables contributing to their acceptance (Davis, 1989) (see the theoretical framework for more details).

The caveat highlights CW's contextual and theoretical significance for marrying CW and GD based on the TAM framework during the Covid-19 pandemic. First and foremost, GD can be enacted for online collaborative writing practices. Secondly, although a plethora of studies has sufficiently documented the use of the Web 2.0 technology in ELT landscape during the Covid-19 pandemic, few have examined the extent to which writing students accept the enactment of GD for collaborative writing in the EFL writing context, particularly in the realm of the Indonesian Islamic university. For these reasons, drawing on the TAM model (Davis, 1989), this study aimed to examine the perceived acceptance of writing students on using GD as a means of collaborative writing in an online EFL writing classroom in the age of the Covid-19 pandemic at an Indonesian Islamic university.

Based on the rationales above, the following research questions guide the whole part of the study:

1. How did the students react to the enactment of Google Docs for collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic in terms of Perceived Ease of Use (PEU), Perceived Usefulness (PU), Attitude towards Using (ATU), and Intention to Use (ITU)?
2. What were the students' challenges for using Google Docs as a means of collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic?
3. How could the use of Google Docs as a means of collaborative writing in English be enhanced during the Covid-19 pandemic?

## Literature Review

### *Theoretical Framework*

This study drew on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) theory, which has gained buzzwords in the education context since a few decades ago. Developed by Davis (1989) from the theory of reasoned action (TRA), it has been widely adopted, adapted, and expanded as the underpinning theory to explain pedagogy mediated technology in a multitude of educational settings (e.g., Masrom, 2007; Cheung & Vogel, 2013; Shih, 2004). It encapsulates that the two most important factors, perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEU), significantly determine users' attitude toward use (ATU) and intention to use (ITU), which eventually actualize the system use (ASU) of the technologies, signifying the users' technology acceptance (Davis, 1989; Cheung & Vogel, 2013). PU pertains to the belief that using technologies help improve work performance, while PEU refers to the degree of user-friendly use of the technologies to perform particular tasks (Davis, 1989). Other external factors as the antecedent variables to TAM are also included in the theory (see figure 1 as quoted in Masrom, 2007, p. 3).

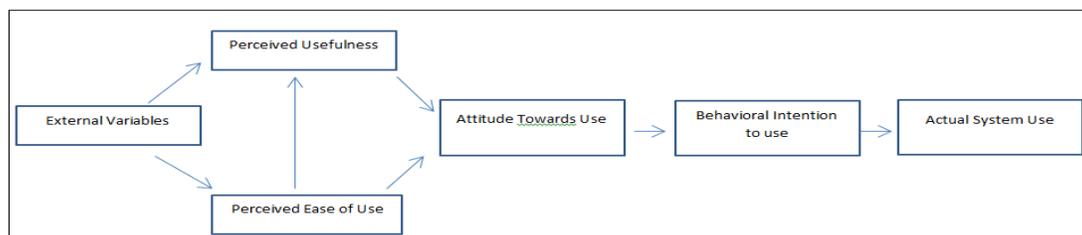


Figure 1, Original TAM Model (Davis, 1989 as cited in Masrom, 2007, p.3)

This model has been expanded for various technological pedagogical purposes, for example, TAM and e-learning (Masrom, 2007); TAM and Collaborative technology (Cheung & Vogel, 2013); TAM and internet utilization behavior (Shih, 2004). The current study, however, adapted Masrom's (2007) TAM and e-learning model (see figure 2) due to the similar research purposes, examining the core latent variables of the TAM model, while excluding the antecedent variables, such as external variables, including the actual use of the technology.

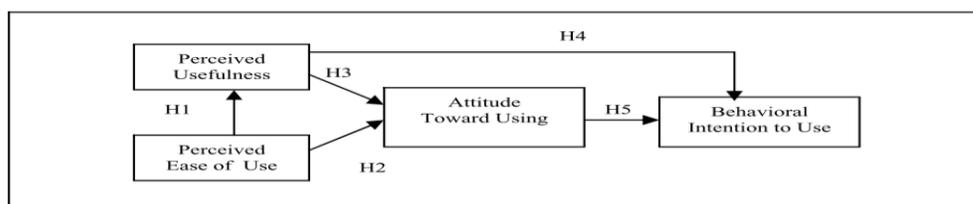


Figure 2. TAM and e-learning Model adopted from (Masrom, 2007, p.4)

Based on the diagram above, five hypothetical relationships were formulated:

- H<sub>1</sub>: Perceived Ease of Use (PEU) significantly affected the Perceived Usefulness (PU) of Google Docs for collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic.*
- H<sub>2</sub>: PEU significantly affected the Attitude towards Using (ATU) Google Docs for collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic.*
- H<sub>3</sub>: PU significantly affected the ATU Google Docs for collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic*
- H<sub>4</sub>: PU significantly affected the Intention to Use (ITU) Google Docs for collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic*
- H<sub>5</sub>: ATU significantly affected the ITU Google Docs for collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic*

### **Studies on TAM in ELT Landscape**

Due to its significances in predicting the users' technology acceptance, a plethora of studies have applied TAM in the ELT landscape (i.e. Hsieh, Huang, & Wu, 2017; Hsieh, Wu, & Marek, 2017; Huang & Teo, 2021; Mei et al., 2017; Alfadda & Mahdi, 2021; Mei, 2019; Tsai, 2015; Fattah Soomro, 2018 ). Using TAM to evaluate the use of LINE apps for flipped oral English instruction, Hsieh et al. (2017) discovered that the system characteristics positively affect PU and PEU, but PEU did not positively affect PU. Another statistical result showed that both PU and PEU positively contribute to the ATU, while ATU significantly determines the ITU of LINE use in the flipped learning for English oral instruction. Another study by Hsieh et al. (2017) investigating the overall perceived acceptance of LINE for Flipped instruction unveiled that the students positively

perceived the use of the technology given the Mean (M) score of ITU ( $M=3.80$ ), ATU ( $M= 3.73$ ), system characteristics ( $M= 3.72$ ), PEU ( $M= 3.69$ ), and PU ( $M= 3.60$ ) (p.11). Huang and Teo (2021) examined the effect of technology policies and constructivist pedagogy belief on English instructors' intention to use (ITU) technologies from fifty-nine Chinese universities. It was found that all the measured TAM variables were positively contributed to the English teachers' ITU technologies. Similarly, A qualitative investigation of TAM of Thai EFL lecturers by Kampookaew (2020) found that all the TAM variables positively affected the ITU technologies in their classrooms. Likewise, Mei, Brown, and Teo (2017) examined the factors influencing the acceptance of CALL 2.0 used by Chinese EFL teachers. Unlike PEU, PU significantly affected the ITU of the Chinese EFL teachers to use the CALL 2.0 technologies.

The abovementioned studies generated distinct causal outcomes because of the contextual factors, such as the different uses of technologies, e.g., LINE, CALL 2.0 technologies, and pedagogical approaches. For the same token, although this study adapted Masrom's (2007) TAM and e-learning model to evaluate the use of Google Docs for collaborative English writing practices, the students would perceive it differently; hence, generating distinct research outcomes than that of the previous studies. Secondly, although TAM has been widely adapted for various ICT-based instructions in the ELT context, deploying the theory to examine the enactment of Google Docs for collaborative English writing practices amid the Covid-19 pandemic in the EFL landscape remains scanty.

### ***Technology and Collaborative Writing in ELT Context***

Current L2 instruction has witnessed profound impacts of technologies on the classroom, not to mention L2 pedagogy for the last few decades (Hyland, 2003). The significances include promoting interaction and collaboration in and beyond the classroom, including students' L2 writing skills. They have influenced writing practices in many positive ways, allowing learners and teachers to present ideas using PowerPoint, Blogs, and numerous social media, such as Facebook, and Twitter, to mention a few (Otto, 2017). The emergence of Web 2.0 technologies, such as Wikis, Blogs, and Google Docs, has contributed to the novel means of mediating collaborative writing instruction, which affords the students to jointly construct texts beyond the schooling wall regardless of the space and time (Yim & Warschauer, 2017). Storch (2013; 2019) defines CW as a co-authorship of texts involving more than one individual, engaging them throughout the process and production of the texts. Kessler (2017) states that the incorporation of CW into L2 writing classrooms is much affected by Vygotsky's social, cultural learning theory, in which knowledge is seen as the product of joint social practices.

CW-mediated technologies have gained increasing prominence and are currently being applied in L2 or English classrooms (Kessler, 2017). Bikowski and Vithanage (2016) unveiled that the group taught using the CW approach outperformed their counterparts in the solitary writing group. Another finding also showed that the students preferred collaborative to individual writing. Similarly, Limbu and Markauskaite (2015) examined how the students perceived online collaborative writing (OCW) effectiveness. It was found that the collaborative online learning environment promoted task division, collaboration, idea generation, and writing skills. Likewise, Zheng and Warschauer (2017) argued that employing multimodal technologies promotes

collaboration, interaction, and textual authorship than being executed individually. Writing mediated by technologies escalates students' engagement and interaction.

Drawing on the abovementioned studies, it can be concluded that web-based technologies for CW have been attested to empirically promote students' writing skills than solitary writing through peer feedback, engagement, and interaction in and beyond the classroom where the teachers act as the facilitators of learning. For that reason, the current study employed an online collaborative writing approach during the Covid-19 pandemic, during which physical attendance is forbidden to curb the spread of the deadly virus. Concerning writing instruction during the covid-19 crisis, Google Docs can be enacted as a medium of collaborative writing that may engage students and teachers and peer interaction and feedback (Zayapragassarazan, 2020).

### ***ELT amid the Covid-19 Pandemic***

Covid-19, which originated in mainland China, Wuhan, in late 2019 has brought about unprecedented impacts on the education sector (Daniel, 2020; Yi & Jang, 2020), especially on the ELT landscape. The emergence of the deadly virus has been predicted more than a decade ago by Cheng et al. (2007), who warned the Chinese government in their article highlighting the possible re-emergence of the SARs-Cov like a virus as the "only time bomb" (see Cheng et al., 2007). The ignorance has resulted in the pandemic status stipulated by the World Health Organization (WHO) on April 11, 2020 (Djalante et al., 2020), imposing the physical and social distancing procedure, thrusting the shutdown of all schooling activities (WHO, 2020). With regard to the Indonesian education context, all the schooling activities have been subject to be carried out online following the decree stipulated by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia on March 24, 2020, forcing the teachers to move their instruction online without any preparation. Such a sudden shift of instruction is generally termed "remote teaching (Shin, 2020). This learning condition has been found to widen the so-called "digital divide," the gap between the technologically advantaged students and their disadvantaged counterparts (Shin, 2020). Also, it has resulted in the lack of access to learning, technological and pedagogical skills, motivation, engagement, and stressful learning conditions (Rasmitadila et al., 2020).

Nonetheless, this situation should be seen as a challenge for English teachers to rejuvenate their pedagogical practices (Shin, 2020; Yi & Jang, 2020). As a result, numerous pedagogical panacea in the realm of ELT during the Covid-19 have been offered, which include "International Society for Technology in Education" (ISTE) (Morgan, 2020, p. 134); Flipped Classroom (Khan & Abdou, 2020); Blended Learning (BL) (Godwin-Jones, 2020). Further, recent studies published by the Arab World English Journal in two special issues examined challenges, advantages, and disadvantages of online EFL instruction using Moodle (Benadla & Hadji, 2021); benefits and challenges of online English writing instruction (Sheerah et al., 2022); and challenges and opportunities of online English writing assessment (Al-bargi, 2022). Nonetheless, a few studies have been done concerning English writing instruction, particularly examining the perceived acceptance of technology use in the Indonesian EFL writing classroom during the Covid-19 pandemic.

### ***Studies on Google Docs in L2 Context***

The widely used technology for writing is the Web 2.0 technologies (Otto, 2017), and one of such technologies is ~~Google Docs~~ (GD), which has gained its popularity for promoting

collaborative writing (Godwin-Jones, 2008; Yim & Warschauer, 2017; Storch, 2013) in that it affords the students opportunities to jointly author and edit texts, and give feedback simultaneously. Although many studies on the use of GD focus on the efficacy of CW using the technology, some studies have documented its contribution to L2 writing skills development. Abrams (2019) examined the effect of CW using GD and unveiled that the students engaged in the joint composition outperformed their counterparts in a less collaborative writing group in terms of coherence. The study also encapsulated that the use of GD assisted the students and instructors in creating a group and used various features. It also showed that the function history depicted the students' understanding of the task and indicated their difficulties in lexico-grammatical choices and pragmatics. GD was found to be effective in storing and organizing data. It also allowed the teachers to figure out the students who highly contribute to the text's authorship. The challenges of using GD included the difficulty to count the number of words used by the students and its inability to compile the individual student's works. Another study by Li (2019) who drew on the concept of Desire2Learn and GD for teaching French, unveiled that both technologies could yield an inclusive and collaborative learning environment, promote active or engaging learning environment. GD, in particular, enabled the teacher to record all the learning activities done outside classroom, and to give feedback and comment on the students' work. Likewise, Zioga and Bikos (2020) investigated the effect of using GD for collaborative writing on producing argumentative writing in the Greek language classroom. The study discovered that there was a significant increase in the students' argumentative writing discourse given significant value " $(t(20)=5.83, p<.001)$  between the pre- ( $M=31.67, SD=8.75$ ) and the post-test ( $M=45.81, SD=14.65$ )" (p. 138). The study highlighted that Google Docs was influential in promoting the argumentative writing discourse of the students. Another study by Woodrich and Fan (2017) looked into how GD could promote the students with different linguistic backgrounds to participate in learning English in a blended learning environment. It was discovered that the students benefitted from the incorporation of GD on English language skills development. The anonymity that GD afforded could promote the students' participation and enjoyment. Alharbi (2020) carried out a qualitative case study and explored how incorporating GD facilitated and promoted writing practices in English. It was found that it afforded the teacher-students and peer feedback, peer drafting and editing, and responses towards the feedback and revision. The study also uncovered that the students overall positively perceived the employment of GD in the English writing classroom. Nguyen (2020) discovered that most of the students and teachers at a Vietnamese university preferred to use GD as a means of collaborative writing.

Based on the studies above, it can be concluded that GD has been widely adopted as a means of CW. Secondly, incorporating the Web-2.0 technology in such a collaborative learning environment benefitted the students in many ways, including its affordances for mediating teacher and peer feedback, drafting, revising, and promoting their writing skills. However, although studies have adequately documented the efficacy of GD in the L2 writing context, little evidence has been generated on how the technology used to facilitate writing practices amid the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly in the Indonesian EFL context. More specifically, studies documenting the perceived acceptance of GD as a medium of collaborative instruction, the possible challenges it may bring about, and its refined enactment in the online English writing classroom during the Covid-19 pandemic in the Indonesian EFL context remain sparse. For these reasons, this study aimed to examine such a pedagogical issue.

## Method

### *Research Design*

This study drew on a mixed Action Research (AR) method that respectively garnered both the quantitative and qualitative data through a close-ended questionnaire, and phone-interview and open-ended questionnaire. The use of the research method was to help improve the pedagogical situation hampering the students' learning (Burns, 2010). In this learning context, the enactment of GD was aimed to facilitate the students' collaborative writing practices in the age of the Covid-19 pandemic or New Normal.

This study took place at the English Education Program of Mataram State Islamic University, Indonesia, during which online instruction was compulsory to curb the spread of the Covid-19 virus. It involved 106 fifth-semester students from four English Essay classes whose English level ranged between pre-elementary and elementary levels. The course was taught for 100 minutes a week. The students were required to collaboratively author three different genres of Essay writing in English: Descriptive, Narrative, and Expository Essays throughout the semester.

### *Data Collection and Analysis*

To answer research question No. 1 (RQ1) regarding the students' perceptions of the enactment of Google Docs for collaborative English writing during the Covid-19 pandemic, the 7-Likert scale questionnaire, "Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and e-Learning", indicating "Strongly disagree, disagree, somewhat disagree, neutral, somewhat agree, agree, and strongly agree", adapted from Masrom (2007) was distributed via Google Form to the students. The questionnaire consisted of four constructs "perceived ease of use (PEU), perceived usefulness (PU), attitude toward using (ATU), and intention to use (ITU)". The first three constructs comprised four items, while the "INT" consisted of three items. The adaption included fitting the item to the context of the study. For example, the original statement "I found E-learning easy to use" (Item 1 for the construct "Perceive ease of use") was slightly modified into "I found Google Docs easy to use for collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic" (See appendix for details). The reasons for adapting the questionnaire were mainly because of its high reliability (Cronbach's Alpha value  $\alpha=0.8$ ) (see Masrom, 2007, p. 5), which indicated that it had a high internal consistency of items (Field, 2009). Secondly, the TAM questionnaire had been widely adapted to measure the students' acceptance of technology use (e.g., Chen Hsieh et al., 2017; Tsai, 2015). All the items were translated into the Indonesian language to avoid misunderstanding. To analyze the results, this study drew on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) as coined by Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, and Ringle (2019) using SMARTPLS3 software developed by Ringle, Wende, and Becker (2015) because it enabled the researchers to elucidate the complex model of a multitude of constructs, variables as well as the causal relationships (Hair et al., 2019). This data analysis technique comprises two prominently used procedures, assessment of measurement model and structural model. The former refers to examining the reliability and validity of the constructs, while the latter assessed the hypothetical relationships developed in this study.

To elicit the qualitative data regarding the RQ2 and RQ3, an open-ended questionnaire was distributed to the students via Google Form at the end of the course. A follow-up semi-structured interview via a smartphone involving twelve purposively selected students was carried out to

corroborate the qualitative findings. It drew on the phone-interview procedures for qualitative data collection technique coined by Burke and Miller (2001) that comprised pre-, during, and post-interview stages because of the physical restriction. The students were purposively selected according to their level of participation and willingness and recorded via a smartphone. The two qualitative data collection procedures were applied in the Indonesian language to allow the participants to express themselves without communication barriers or misunderstandings. The qualitative data garnered from both the open-ended questionnaire were analyzed using Voyant, a free web-based text analysis tool, which can be accessed via <https://voyant-tools.org/>. To analyze the data elicited from the phone-interview, Braun and Clarke's (2016) thematic data analysis procedures were used, which include data understanding, coding, identifying themes, reviewing themes, defining themes, naming and reporting. To validate the findings, two translation experts were invited to review the translation outcomes. Also, the findings were confirmed to the participants to avoid misinterpretation via a phone call.

### Findings and Discussion

#### ***RI: Students' reaction towards the enactment of Google Docs for collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic in terms of Perceived Ease of Use (PEU), Perceived Usefulness (PU), Attitude towards Using (ATU), Intention to Use (ITU).***

The statistical outcome shows that the assessment of the measurement model indicates high reliability and validity given the factor loadings, Cronbach's Alpha value, and Composite Reliability (CR) above the standard recommended value of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019). Nunnally (1978) and (Field, 2009) suggested that the overall Cronbach's Alpha value ( $\alpha=0.80$ ) was considered satisfactory. It echoes the model coined by Masrom (2007), which also generated the same value  $\alpha=0.80$  (see table 2). In addition, the statistical analysis also yielded a satisfactory level of validity as evidenced by the value of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) above 0.50, which indicates a minimum half of the construct describes the item variance (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 2. *Construct Reliability and Validity*

Constructs	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE	CR	rho_A
Perceived Ease of Use	PEU1	0.849	0.825	0.657	0.884	0.831
	PEU 2	0.858				
	PEU 3	0.780				
	PEU 4	0.751				
Perceived Usefulness	PU1	0.826	0.854	0.696	0.901	0.854
	PU2	0.826				
	PU3	0.852				
	PU4	0.832				
Attitude towards Use	ATU1	0.847	0.902	0.773	0.932	0.903
	ATU2	0.853				
	ATU3	0.908				
	ATU4	0.907				
Intention to Use	ITU1	0.927	0.914	0.853	0.946	0.915
	ITU2	0.920				
	ITU3	0.925				

With regard to the students' reaction toward the use of GD for collaborative writing practices during the Covid-19 pandemic, the statistical evidence indicates that overall, they accepted the use of the Web 2.0 technology. This is evidenced by the descriptive statistics that

yielded the average *Mean* value ( $M=6.0$ ), specifically with PEU ( $M=5.95$ ,  $SD= .87$ ), PU ( $M=6.0$ ,  $SD= .88$ ), ATU ( $M=6.10$ ,  $SD= .86$ ), and ITU ( $M=5.66$ ,  $SD= 1.01$ ) signifying their overall acceptance (see Table 3 for details). Davis (1989) advocated that the higher the PU and PEU of the technology, the more likely its application is accepted by its users, which eventually leads to their attitude, intention, and actual use of the technology. This encapsulates that GD could facilitate collaborative writing practices during this new normal learning condition.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics

Constructs	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Perceived Ease of Use	2	7	5.95	.87
Perceived Usefulness	1	7	6.00	.88
Attitude towards Use	3	7	6.10	.86
Intention to Use	3	7	5.66	1.01

N: 106

In terms of the structural model, the figure 3 below illustrates the  $R^2$  value of the hypothetical relationships between the latent variables measured. The effect that the respective independent variables on the dependent variable were significant given the respective all  $R^2$  values of over 0.60, indicating substantial effect (Hair et al., 2019). In detail, the PEU influenced 70.5% PU perceived by the students, while both of the variables affected 63.8% of the ATU, and PU and ATU contributed 73.1% to the ITU the GD for collaborative writing practices during the Covid-19 pandemic as perceived by the students (see figure 3).

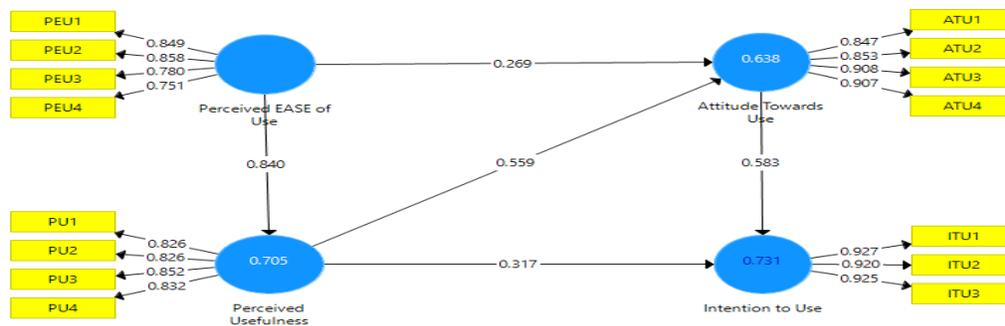


Figure 3. Measurement model

Further hypothetical relationship analysis, as depicted in Table 4, showed a significant relationship between all variables in that all the null hypotheses ( $H_0$ ) were rejected. The results of  $H_1$  and  $H_2$  tests revealed that PEU significantly affected the PU and ATU, respectively, given statistical evidence ( $\beta=.840$ ,  $t=28.174$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and ( $\beta=.269$ ,  $t=1.824$ ,  $p<.034$ ). The other statistical relationships ( $H_3$  and  $H_4$ ) unveiled that PU had a significant effect respectively on the ATU and ITU ( $\beta=.559$ ,  $t=4.369$ ,  $p<.000$ ) and ( $\beta=.317$ ,  $t=3.543$ ,  $p<.000$ ). The  $H_5$  that measured the effect of ATU on the ITU unveiled that the former significantly affected the latter ( $\beta=.583$ ,  $t=6.734$ ,  $p<.000$ ).

Table 4. Hypothetical Relationships

Constructs	$\beta$	SD	T	p	Decision
$H_1$ Perceived Ease of Use -> Perceived Usefulness	0.840	0.030	28.174	0.000	Accepted
$H_2$ Perceived Ease of Use -> Attitude towards Use	0.269	0.148	1.824	0.034	Accepted

H <sub>3</sub>	Perceived Usefulness	->					Accepted
	Attitude towards Use		0.559	0.128	4.369	0.000	
H <sub>4</sub>	Perceived Usefulness	->					Accepted
	Intention to Use		0.317	0.089	3.543	0.000	
H <sub>5</sub>	Attitude towards Use	->					Accepted
	Intention to Use		0.583	0.087	6.734	0.000	

These statistical relationships accord with the results of some previous studies on TAM in the ELT landscape. For example, Huang and Teo (2021) discovered that all the measured TAM variables were positively attributed to ITU. Similarly, Kampookaew (2020) qualitatively evidenced that the measured variables of TAM significantly contributed to the ITU technologies of Thai EFL teachers in their classrooms. Mei et al. (2017) unveiled that PEU and PU had a significant effect on the ITU CALL 2.0 technologies. However, other previous studies showed contradictory findings related to the specific variables being measured in this study. Hsieh et al. (2017) discovered that PEU did not positively affect PU in the use of LINE apps for Flipped English instruction, although another published study unveiled that their use of LINE was overall accepted (see Hsieh et al., (2017). Likewise, Masrom (2007) unveiled that ATU did not have a significant effect on the ITU. The author reasoned that the technologies and their users highly determined it. For example, the current study employed GD as a medium of collaborative writing instruction, while previous studies adopted LINE and other respective technologies. It signifies that different (uses)technologies for specific pedagogical purposes affect the causal relationships in the TAM; hence, affecting their overall level of technology acceptance.

The overall acceptance of GD in this study can be attributed to its feasibility for collaborative English writing instruction in the era of the new normal. The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in the shift of FTF to complete online instruction to date. The nature of collaborative writing using GD in this study contributed to the overall acceptance perceived by the students because the Web-2.0 technology-mediated the writing students in the collaborative authorship of texts beyond the schooling wall regardless of time and space (Yim & Warschauer, 2017). Furthermore, the notion of CW in the online instruction amid the Covid-19 pandemic maximized the students' interaction, reduced their work overload, and promoted their collaborative performance as a team. Similarly, Azis & Husnawadi (2020) discovered that online CW could promote students' inter-relationships and belonging.

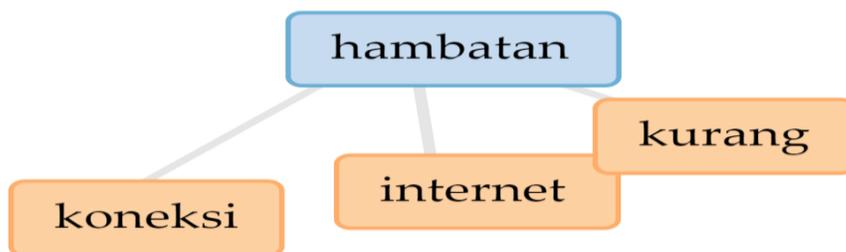
With regard to the use of GD for L2 writing instruction, Abrams (2019) found that students who collaboratively used GD outperformed their counterparts solitarily using the same technology. It enabled the writing instructor and students to use various features and create group work. In addition, Zioga and Bikos (2020) and Woodrich and Fan (2017) found that GD's use developed the students' writing skills and English skills development. Similarly, Li (2019) unveiled that GD could promote inclusive and collaborative writing and learning engagement. Alharbi (2020) unveiled that the students positively accepted the employment of GD for writing instruction as it allowed them to provide authors the text and give feedback collaboratively.

Based on the statistical evidence that showed the students' overall technology acceptance and the hypothetical relationships that indicate the PEU and PU significant influence on the students' attitude and intention to use the GD for collaborative writing practices amid the Covid-

19 pandemic, this current study encapsulates that the use of the web 2.0 technology was overall useful and easy for the writing students.

**RQ2. Challenges Encountered by the Writing Students Regarding the Use of Google Docs**

Although the majority of the students experienced no barriers to using GD to write their essays collaboratively, some of them stated that the primary problem pertained to the inadequacy of internet connection and quota as visually depicted in figure 4.



**Note: Translated terms**

Indonesian	English
Hambatan	: Learning Challenges/barriers
Internet	: Internet
Kurang	: Less/Low
Koneksi	: Connection

Figure 4. Visual Link (accessible via <https://bit.ly/3AMWejh>)

The following excerpts also illustrate the writing students’ responses regarding their challenges for using GD for such pedagogical purposes extracted from the open-ended questionnaire and phone interview.

Table 5: Summary of Students’ Perceived Learning Barriers

Themes	Sample Excerpts
Internet Connection	<p>“I find it challenging when I run out of internet balance or quota....” [open ended questionnaire: Student 3]</p> <p>“I personally feel that the internet signal and quota are the two main problems as I cannot continue my writing when trying to finish it” [open ended questionnaire: Student 4]</p> <p>“Sometimes, the internet connection does not support this kind of learning using Google Docs because I live in a remote area in Lombok” [open ended questionnaire: Student 6]</p> <p>“For me so far, there is no problem, but I think the internet connection is the primary barrier” [open ended questionnaire: Student 19]</p> <p>“Sometimes, it is difficult to get into Google Docs because of low internet connection” [open ended questionnaire: Student 26]</p> <p>“I think the problem I encountered during the writing practices was the instability of the internet connection...” [Phone interview Students 2]</p>

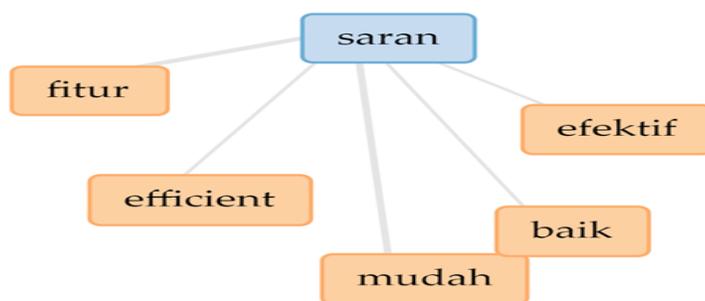
*“I think so far using Google Docs is so helpful,..... but the challenge may be the internet signal because I live in a forest area.”* [Phone interview Students 6]

The qualitative evidence above unveiled that there had been one primary barrier of using GD for collaborative writing, namely the lack of internet connection and the absence of email entry notification. The former is a prominent issue related to online instruction, particularly in developing countries, such as Indonesia. A study by Ebadi and Rahimi (2019), for example, discovered that internet connection remained the only challenge that the students at an Iranian university encountered. Likewise, Hafour and Al-Rashidy (2020) uncovered that the students found the low internet connection as their barrier during the synchronous collaborative writing via GD. In the Indonesian EFL context, Mardiah (2020) unveiled that the lack of access to the internet and technologies were among the learning barriers during the learning online learning amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Indeed, some of the students in the current study live in remote areas where the access to the internet remains sparse.

For this reason, it is incumbent upon the Indonesian government to provide broader access to the internet to successfully implement online instruction, including providing technological and pedagogical training for EFL teachers (Rasmitadila et al., 2020). The disparity between the students who had sufficient access to the technologies and their counterparts with the technological inadequacy in this study also confirmed the worse state of the digital divide caused by the Covid-19 pandemic (Shin, 2020). Nonetheless, this study provides empirical evidence of the overall acceptance of using GD to facilitate the writing students’ joint authorship of the text during the hard time. This learning barrier can be minimized by allowing the students to work on their writing tasks in a more flexible manner, say one week to jointly write essays with their group members.

### ***RQ3. Pedagogical Refinement of Using Google Docs as Suggested by the students***

Although the majority of the students thought that they were satisfied with the use of GD for collaborative writing practices during the pandemic due to its ease, efficiency, and effectiveness, some of them suggested that its enactment in the classroom could be refined by providing more practical training to help them better operate the web 2.0 technology as visually illustrated in following Figure 5.



#### **Note: Translated terms**

Indonesian	English
Saran	: Suggested refinement
fitur	: Feature

Efektif	: Effective
Mudah	: Easy
Baik	: Good

Figure 5. Visual Link (accessible via <https://bit.ly/2Vu1YPZ> )

The following sample excerpts also illustrate the students' advice for the refinement of the GD use. Despite this, the students admitted that GD's enactment had been efficient, helpful, and effective for them to practice their writing amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 5. *Summary of Students' Suggested Refinement*

Themes	Sample Excerpts
Further Practical Training on Google Docs	<p><i>"I would suggest that before using Google Docs, the lecturer should give practical examples of exercises on how to use the technology in details to avoid the misunderstanding"</i> [open ended questionnaire: Student 99]</p> <p><i>"To apply Google Docs, the lecturer should introduce the all its features to the students to help them better understand on how to operate it"</i> [open ended questionnaire: Student 58]</p> <p><i>"At the beginning, I thought using Google Docs was confusing even though you introduced us on how to use it by sharing the YouTube video on our Whatsapp group. If I can advise, please give more practical training, more details on how to deploy it...."</i> [Phone interview Students 4]</p> <p><i>"I think generally using Google Docs is facilitative, but please provide more examples on how to operate it at the outset...."</i> [Phone interview Students 12]</p>

This qualitative evidence corroborates the statistical results related to the PEU and PU significant levels and effects on the students' attitude and intention to use the Web 2.0 technology for collaborative writing practices in the time of new normal. It also echoes that of previous studies on GD for collaborative writing in that it could foster the students' attitude toward learning (Lin et al., 2016); learning enjoyment (Woodrich & Fan, 2017). Ebadi and Rahimi (2019) unveiled that the students in their study positively perceived the use of GD for collaborative writing due to its usefulness and ease of use because it provided them with editing and user-friendly features respectively that resemble other prominent words processors programs. Future use of GD for collaborative writing requires further training for the students who are new to this technology.

## Conclusion

This study aimed to unveil the students' perceptions on the enactment of GD for collaborative writing practices amid the Covid-19 pandemic at the English Education Program of Mataram State Islamic University. Grounded in the TAM theory coined by Davis (1989), it was unveiled that the students positively perceived the use of the Web 2.0 technology given the overall acceptance level ( $M=6.0$ ). It also yielded that the PEU and PU and ATU significantly affected the students' ITU the technology for collaborative writing practices in the age of new normal. These positive causal relationships signify that GD was user-friendly and useful for the students to jointly execute their writing tasks, leading to their intention to use the Web 2.0 technology. The qualitative evidence showed that the writing students found the unstable internet connection and email notification

regarding their writing tasks as the primary challenges. In addition, the only suggested refinement was further training on the use of GD for them to better operate the technology for writing practices. Drawing on these findings, it is suggested that future use of GD for collaborative writing in an online learning environment should provide more practical examples of its use for the students. Also, related stakeholders, such as universities, schools, and governments, should provide better technological infrastructure to deal with the learning barriers, and low internet access. In addition, one-week collaborative writing tasks should be enacted asynchronously rather than at one time synchronously. This way allows the writing students to technically prepare themselves at the outset by seeking for adequate or stable internet connection.

#### Recommendations

Further studies are needed to examine the efficacy of GD on the students' writing skills during the covid-19 pandemic. For instance, future studies may adopt a pure experimental design to investigate the impact of using GD on the students' writing skills compared to using other Web 2.0 technologies. In addition, future research can also explore more in-depth phenomena through a narrative inquiry study that explores the students' experiences about the use of GD for writing in the age of new normal. As this study is based on Likert-scale perceptions, future studies may document the students' technology acceptance level qualitatively, such as through a case study design. Examining students' acceptance and its impacts on other dependent variables, such as learning engagement, motivation, learning outcomes, and etc., in the context of ELT would be worthy of investigation. Nonetheless, the current study provides solid empirical evidence on the enactment of GD as a means of collaborative writing in the age of the Covid-19 pandemic seen from TAM theory. It sheds light on the feasibility of GD for such a pedagogical purpose, which can be a reference for English writing teachers.

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## APENDIX

This survey adapted from Masrom (2007) is to understand your overall perception of enacting Google Docs for collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic. There is no right or wrong answer. Please circle the answer which best reflects your overall thoughts about each statement. Your answers are anonymous and confidential. Thank you in advance for your time.

Name :	
Gender :	1. Male 2. Female
Student No:	
HP/WA No:	

No	Statement	Very disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	agree	Very Agree
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	I found Google Docs easy to use for collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	Learning to use Google Docs would be easy for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	My interaction with Google Docs was clear and understandable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	It would be easy for me to find information at Google Docs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	Using Google Docs would enhance my effectiveness in collaborative writing during the Covid-19 pandemic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	Using Google Docs would improve my writing performance in English during the Covid-19 pandemic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	Using Google Docs would increase my productivity in my English class during the Covid-19 pandemic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	I found Google Docs useful for collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	I like the idea of using Google Docs for collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	I have a generally favorable attitude toward using Google Docs collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	I believe it is (would be) a good idea to use this Google Docs for my writing class during the Covid-19 pandemic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.	Using Google Docs collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic is a good idea	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13.	I intend to use Google Docs collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	I will often return to Google Docs for collaborative writing in English during the Covid-19 pandemic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15.	I intend to visit Google Docs frequently for my writing class during the Covid-19 pandemic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## SAMPLE WRITING TASKS FROM GOOGLE DOCS

**Collaborative Expository Essay Writing**  
**When: Tuesday, 29 June 2021 at 14:40 pm-16:20**  
**Class/Group: IVD/5-7**

Dear my beloved students,

Welcome to our online collaborative writing class. **Please read all things set below.** It is so regretful that we are no longer able to carry out the face-to-face classes due to the lockdown of the campus. It is, however, for the sake of our wellbeing. After all, health is of the most importance. Nonetheless, whatever it takes, we have to continue this class by using any means of learning that is available to us right now, such as Google Docs (Synchronous) and Schoology (Asynchronous). I hope this collaborative online writing practice may help facilitate our learning to write a descriptive essay in English during this COVID19 outbreak. Stay and learn at home while having a cup of tea or coffee :).

**Objectives: By the end of this lesson, You will be able to..**

1. Outline ideas for a descriptive essay about a tourism site in English collaboratively in a way that is meaningful and **lexicographically** correct
2. Provide constructive feedback regarding the outline and essay of a description of a tourism site in English collaboratively.
3. Write a descriptive essay about a tourism site in English collaboratively in a way that is meaningful and **lexicographically** correct

**Lecturer's roles:**

1. Provides access to the Google Docs collaborative learning according to the classes and group numbers
2. Provides direct or indirect feedback during and after the writing of your essay
3. Ensures the collaborative writing class to run smoothly
4. Respond to any queries from the students

**Group 7:** With your group members, write an expository cause and effect essay about the factors contributing to a successful English language learner. You should write a minimum of 350 words essay. You should answer the following essay question prompt "What are the possible factors contributing to becoming a successful English language learner? Provide evidence or facts to justify your claim. You are given 60 minutes to complete your essay.

MEMBERS
Alfia Rahmawati
Alma Yuliandini
Alma Widiyanti Aldanela

### What It Takes To be A Successful English Learner

Learning English is very important, especially for education and the future. Now English lessons have been included in the curriculum at all levels of education. There are even schools that require their students to speak full English during teaching and learning activities at school. However, most students have difficulty in mastering English. Some factors that determine if an individual can be a successful English learner include familiarization with English and mental management.

To be able to master English, students must familiarize themselves with English. First, they must often read books, articles, or literature in English. This can increase their knowledge, improve their reading ability, and increase their vocabulary. In addition, students can also try to listen to the native speakers. It can help improve their pronunciation, and can also improve their listening skills. It can also be learned mainly by listening to English songs. For students who like music, of course learning like this will be very fun. Another fun thing that students can do as a means of learning English is to watch English films. It is the most complex. This can help add their new vocabulary and idioms, improve their pronunciation, and improve their listening skills. Finally, students have to practice often. They can invite their friends or family to speak English. On the other hand, they can also try to chat in English. Practice makes perfect.

The other factor that contributes to be a successful English learner is mental management. Students must have strong motivation in learning English. Motivation has an important role in the learning process. Students who have motivation will be more motivated to carry out learning activities. They will be more enthusiastic in learning which certainly has a good impact on mastering English. In addition, self-confidence also greatly affects the success of mastering English. Students who have self-confidence have greater courage to practice their English. It certainly helps them in mastering English. A study shows that the effect of motivation and self-confidence on student learning achievement is 27.6%. This also applies to learning English. Therefore, to become a successful English learner, students must raise their motivation and self-confidence.

In conclusion, the success of English learners is influenced by two factors, namely the familiarization with English and mental management. Students who want to be a successful English learner must familiarize themselves with English by reading books in English, listening to native speakers or English songs, watching English movies, and practicing speaking English. In addition, they also must manage their mentality to raise motivation and self-confidence.

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