Applying Grammarly Software to Correct Mistakes Committed by Master Two Students in Writing Dissertations

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Abstract

The development of Computer Assisted Language Learning has been rapidly increasing, especially in the field of language evaluation in which students' performance in the writing skill could be improved. Master two students are required to submit a dissertation in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Master's degree. Hence, it is assumed that the use of some computer software can be considered as a sophisticated language tool to assist students' problems in writing their dissertations. During my experience as a supervisor and examiner of master dissertations, I have noticed that students commit some grammar, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation mistakes which would lead the examiner to focus on those mistakes rather than focusing on the content of the dissertation. For instance, Grammarly software is a tool that can be used to scan dissertations to check the grammatical errors by providing the use of correct grammatical rules. This software helps students to select the proper words and vocabulary usage based on the content. It also provides the suggestions, corrections, as well as explanations are presented, so students can easily know and understand the errors of their writing through the automated feedback. Hence, this study will focus and limit the problem to the implementation of Grammarly tool to boost students' writing skill, thus growing students' writing enthusiasm and writing quality in dissertations. Finally, teachers are recommended to know how to implement computer technology in the process of writing dissertations to achieve the desirable results.

Keywords: Computer Assisted Language Learning, Master Dissertations, Academic Writing, Grammarly Software

ملخص

يتزايد تطوير تعلم اللغة بمساعدة الكمبيوتر بشكل سريع، لا سيما في مجال تقييم اللغة حيث يمكن تحسين أداء الطلاب في مهارة الكتابة. يُطلب من طلبة الماستر تقديم أطروحة في استيفاء جزئي لمتطلبات التحصل على الشهادة. ومن ثم، فمن المفترض أن استخدام بعض برامج الكمبيوتر يمكن اعتباره أداة لغوية متطورة لمساعدة مشاكل الطلاب في كتابة أطروحاتهم. من خلال تجربتي كمشرف وممتحن لأطروحات الماستر ، لاحظت أن الطلاب يرتكبون بعض الأخطاء النحوية والمفردات والهجاء وعلامات الترقيم التي من شأنها أن تدفع الممتحن للتركيز على تلك الأخطاء بدلاً من التركيز على محتوى الرسالة. على سبيل المثال، يعد برنامج Grammarly أداة يمكن استخدامها لتصفح الأطروحات للتحقق من الأخطاء النحوية من خلال توفير استخدام القواعد النحوية الصحيحة. يساعد هذا البرنامج الطلاب على اختيار الكلمات المناسبة واستخدام المفردات بناءً على المحتوى. كما أنه يوفر الاقتراحات والتصحيحات وكذلك التفسيرات المقدمة، حتى يتمكن الطلاب من معرفة وفهم أخطاء كتابتهم بسهولة من خلال التعليقات الآلية. ومن ثم ، ستركز هذه الدراسة وتحد من المشكلة في تنفيذ أداة Grammarlyلتعزيز مهارات الكتابة لدى الطلاب ، وبالتالي زيادة حماس الطلاب في الكتابة وجودة الكتابة في الرسائل. أخيرًا ، يُنصح الأساتذة بمعرفة كيفية تنفيذ برمجيات الكمبيوتر في عملية كتابة الأطروحات لتحقيق النتائج المرجوة.

الكلمات المفاتيح: تعلم اللغة بمساعدة الحاسوب ، رسائل الماستر ، الكتابة الأكاديمية ، برنامج Grammarly

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1. Introduction

At university, different types of academic courses are available in all study programs, and each academic course has its own set of challenges. In addition to the study programs they would follow, students are required to write scientific works in the form of dissertations. Writing is one of the language skills that technology can help to improve. According to Nurfiryalianti et al (2014, p.3), all students can deliver their thoughts, ideas, and experiences to the readers through writing, but some students cannot. All of this occurs because they may feel insecure about their writing due to a lack of grammar or vocabulary. For instance, they can use an online grammar checker to help them write to solve this problem. This tool can detect and provide feedback on students' writing errors. Grammar checking is essential when writing a text and learning a language (Mozgovoy, 2011, p.210). Grammarly is one of the most popular online grammar checkers for students today. It can detect errors in grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, word spelling, and even plagiarism.

2. Academic Writing

Academic writing is broadly defined as any writing done to fulfill a university requirement (Birhan, 2017, p. 61). According to Akkaya (2018), it is one of the steps in the academic research process in which scientists report situations of thinking, experience, observation, application/testing, and so on. Furthermore, academic writing is typically used for publications that are read by teachers and researchers, as well as for presentations at conferences (Lindsay, 2018).

Academic writing is also a type of text in which ideas are organized and justified. It includes essays, theses, and research reports (Gillet et al., 2009, p205). It differs from fiction writing in that it expresses the writer's point of view on the subject. Academic essays are typically written to compare two points, discuss a solution, introduce a project, summarize information, or report on a research study or experiment (Boardman & Frydenberg, 2002).

Academic writing, according to Oshima & Hogue (2007), is the type of writing used in college and university. It differs from other forms of creative or personal writing, such as writing a letter or sending an e-mail to friends and family. He defines, academic writing as a formal writing that must be clear, concise, and terse. It employs authentic texts and examples from a variety of disciplines (Bailey, 2011). Lindsay (2018) confirms that the writer avoids using flowery or overly ornate language. As a result, academic writing should be straightforward, literal, and explicit.

3. Significance of Grammar Accuracy in Academic Writing

Despite the fact that the pedagogical approach in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) shifted from the traditional grammar-centered approach to the communicative approach in the 1970s (Hegelheimer & Fisher, 2006, p.265),

grammatical accuracy in L2 learners' writing is still regarded as a critical indicator of students' language proficiency and intelligibility in academic settings (Hartshorn, Evans, Merrill, Sudweeks, Strong-Krause & Anderson 2010, Hinkel 2004, Silva 1993). The growing demand for English writing ability, in particular, required students to complete academic writing tasks in a variety of genres, such as technical reports, article summarization, or course project papers, in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context (Woo, 2015, p.160). Previous research, on the other hand, revealed a lack of grammar accuracy in EFL students' English writing and the need for appropriate revision of grammar errors. Ellis (1994), Ferris (2004), Lee (2005), and Hyland and Hyland (2006).

Lee (2005) also argued against the viewpoints that dismissed the importance of grammar instruction in English education. He emphasized the importance of balancing communicative language instruction with grammar instruction, given students' deficiencies in grammar accuracy and writing skills (p.284). Previous research presented positive aspects of grammar-focused feedback in writing classes in an attempt to promote improvement in grammar accuracy in English writing.

According to Ferris (2004), grammar error correction assists adult learners in becoming aware of their errors and preventing the fossilization of mistakes, which leads to an improvement in their linguistic competence. According to Ferris and Roberts' (2001) study, students who received error feedback outperformed and demonstrated better self-correction skills in writing classes than those in the control group who received no error feedback. Chapelle (2001) amphasized that grammar errors feedback draws students' attention to grammar errors in their English usage. So, feedback has been identified as an effective medium for improving writing language accuracy.

4. Automated Writing Evaluation

A leading computer program in the application of computer language learning in the EFL classroom is an automatic evaluation writing (AWE) based on Artificial Intelligence (Park, 2019, p.120). Many computer programs not only enable language learners in improving their language skills, but also allow language teachers to use more effective teaching tools. One fascinating development is the use of computer programs to automatically evaluate writing. Feedback from computer programs, in particular, benefits not only language learners but also teachers, because learners can immediately rectify their own writing and teachers can reduce the workload of checking and evaluating writing (Chou et al, 2016, p.150).

O'Neil and Russell (2019, p.50) claimed that teachers should rely on software because it can not only evaluate all writing indicators but also comprehensively evaluate students' works through teachers' critical feedback.

Correct feedback from teachers can be used to check the content and organization of students' English writing (Ghufron & Rosyida, 2018, p.395).

Grammarly, My Access, Citerions, and Cywrite are just a few examples of AWE software that can be found online. Grammarly is one of the most accurate online grammar checkers in the world, but its performance as a feedback tool in universities is rarely studied (O'Neil & Russell, 2019, p.51).Grammarly categorizes errors into six categories: context spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, style, and vocabulary enhancement .This software provides comprehensive and useful feedback, including correction and suggestions. It has a high impact, high accuracy, and a fast evaluation speed with no errors (Nova, 2018, p.85).

5. Grammarly Software

According to Qassemzadeh and Soleimani (2016), Grammarly software was founded in 2009, with its main manufacturing unit in San Francisco, California. Alex Shevchenko and Max Lytvyn are the creators of this software. Grammarly's users are spread out all over the world. As a result, its service area is global. Its main features include a grammar checker, a spell checker, and other features such as proofreading and plagiarism detection.

Grammarly is one of the most powerful online grammar checkers, making it simple to double-check one's writing. It is asserted to be the accuracy of English grammar (Cavaleri, 2016). For instance, Ghufron and Rosyida (2018) claimed that "Grammarly is an online proofreading website that can be used to scan documents and reduce writing errors in terms of vocabulary usage, grammar, and mechanics" (p.396). So, it detects writing errors such as grammatical errors, word choice, spelling errors, and punctuation errors automatically.

Grammarly software is useful for both teachers and students when it comes to correcting EFL writing. It is because Grammarly can not only identify punctuation (such as missing spaces after periods) and spelling mistakes, including proper nouns and providing several alternative possibilities for misspelled words, but also identify fragments and offer advice on verb form, though no suggested corrections are often presented, and explanations were complex (Daniels & Leslie, 2013, p.393). Furthermore, Grammarly provides a big range of great content to support students improving their writing abilities. It can boost students' motivation, confidence, and engagement in learning. This tool will help them develop independence so that they are not afraid to write even if they make mistakes. As a result, students should not be afraid to write because they can recognize and correct their writing errors by using the Grammarly tool (Jayavalan & Razali, 2018, p.5). Grammarly also helps students in meeting academic objectives and improving their essay writing skills.

Japos (2013) examined undergraduate research students and discovered that Grammarly improved their written accuracy. Grammarly outperformed traditional teacher intervention in terms of long-term retention of passive voice rules. In a study conducted by Reis and Huijser (2016), students preferred Grammarly over the alternative feedback system Marking Mate. Caveleri and Dianati's (2016) study of students' perceptions of Grammarly in an Australian higher education setting yielded largely positive results, with students stating that Grammarly was useful and simple to use. They also claimed that it enhanced their written work and greatly helped in the development of their understanding of grammatical rules.

In summary, Grammarly is an automated internet software that provides many features to help students minimize the writing errors and also supply correction and explanations.

6. Types of Grammarly

Grammarly has two versions that are commonly used to check for writing errors which are:

6.1. Grammarly's Free Edition: It does not imply a subpar or severely limited version. It provides the fundamental elements that must be accounted for, such as a spelling, grammar, and punctuation checker. Furthermore, this free version is effective at detecting minor writing errors such as comma errors and incorrect articles. Grammarly's free version allows you to check your grammar on 500 words. When the tool detects the writing errors, they are automatically highlighted in red and an appropriate correction is provided. Another useful feature of the free version is its ability to set goals for your writing, such as the level of emotion, domain, and audience, which will provide more comprehensive written feedback.

6.2. Grammarly's Premium Edition: Unlike the free version of Grammarly, which only provides basic writing elements, the premium version can do more. Grammarly's premium or paid edition is consisted of at least nine features, including writing inconsistencies, unclear structure, overuse of words, wordiness, inappropriate tone, intensive language, and plagiarism detection. Instead of having a limit of 500 words for document correction in the free version, the premium one can correct the entire document. Furthermore, both a short and a long explanation of each grammar error is given, along with the appropriate correction.

The following table compares Grammarly's free and premium versions. Thus, Grammarly's free version is ideal for those who want to check their punctuation and spelling. Meanwhile, for those looking for advanced grammar, sentence structure, and writing style, the premium version is the way to go because it offers more comprehensive writing features that improve the writing ability.

Table 1. Grammarly Free Version and Premium Version Differences

N	Grammarly Writing Features	Free	Premium
01	Grammar and spelling checks are essential.	YES	YES
02	Ineffective vocabulary	Yes	YES
03	Unpredictability in writing style	NO	YES
04	Uncertain words	NO	YES
05	Vocabulary-Improvement Suggestions	NO	YES
06	Checks for advanced punctuation in compound / complex sentences	No	YES
07	Wordiness	NO	YES
08	The overuse of Words	NO	YES
09	Plagiarism detection software	NO	YES

7. Steps of Using Grammarly Software

Grammar software is a chance for students to reduce their writing errors in order to produce a high-quality in the writing product. Before students can use Grammarly tool, they first need to learn and follow several steps for setting up an account and getting started with successful writing. The steps are as follows:
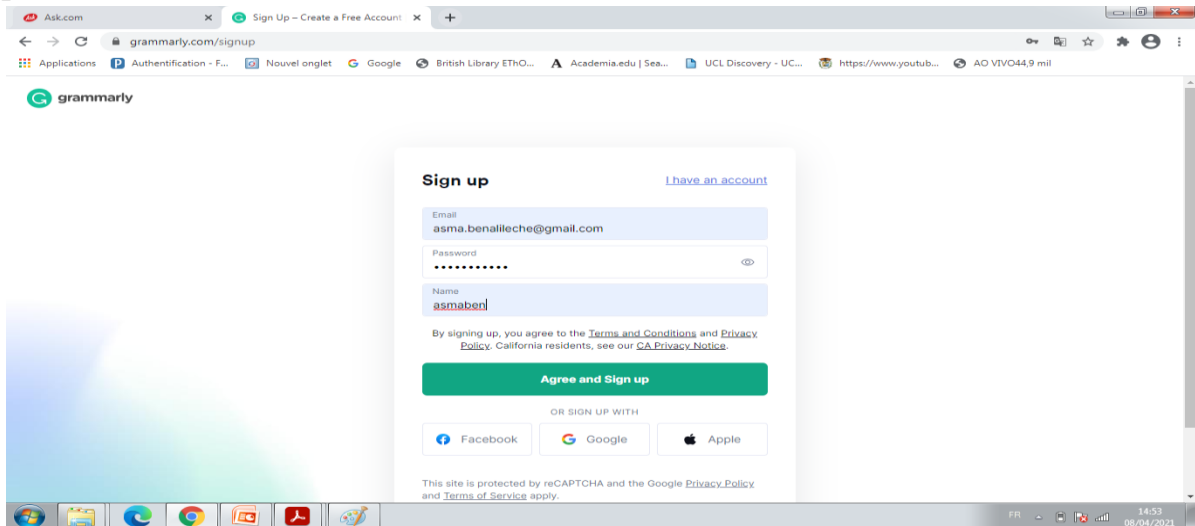
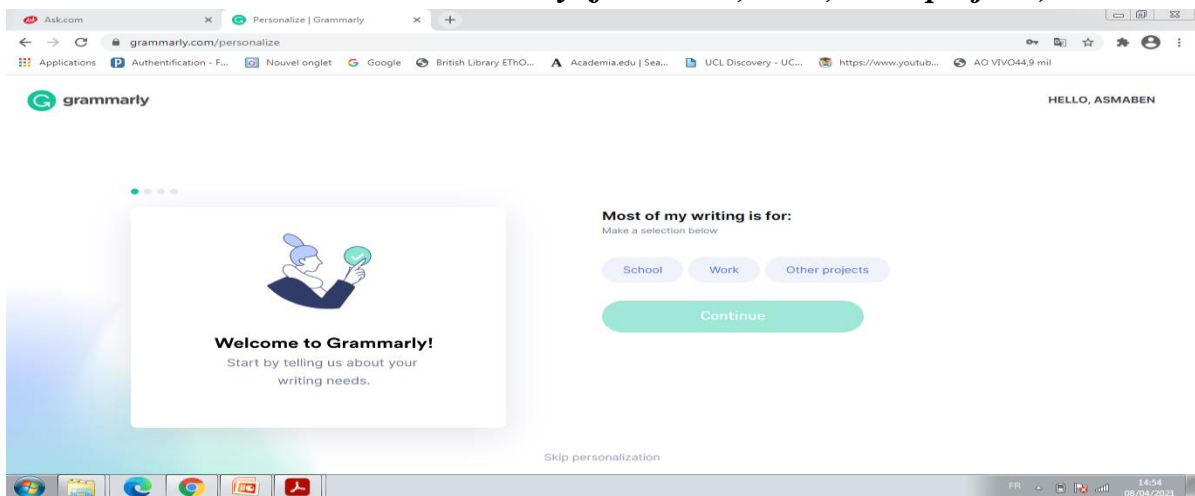### a. Go to the website and sign up for Grammarly
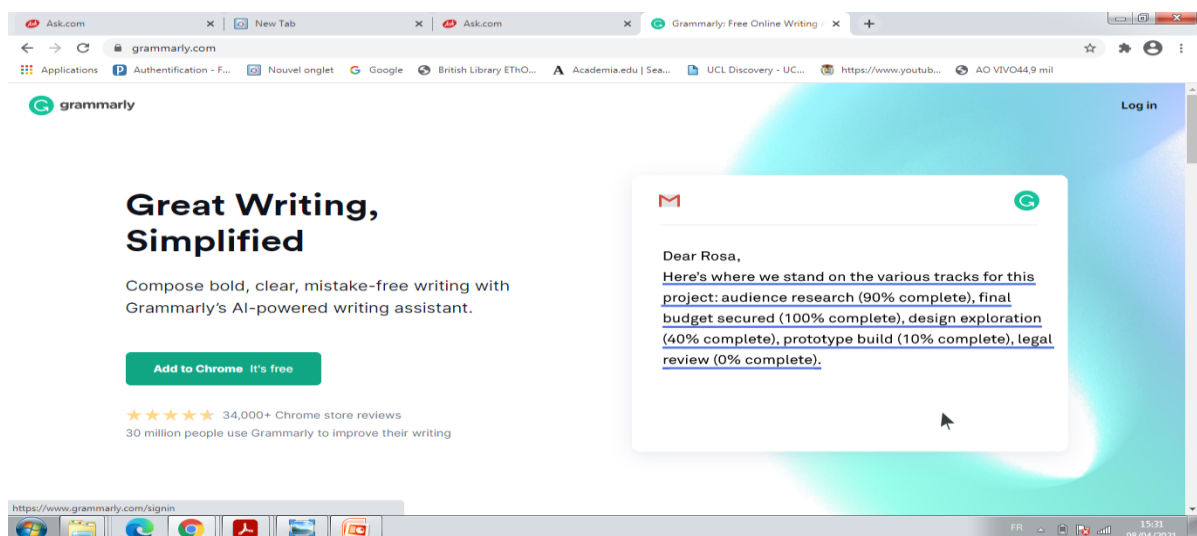
B. Fill out the form to join the page: choose whether to sign in with Facebook or Google
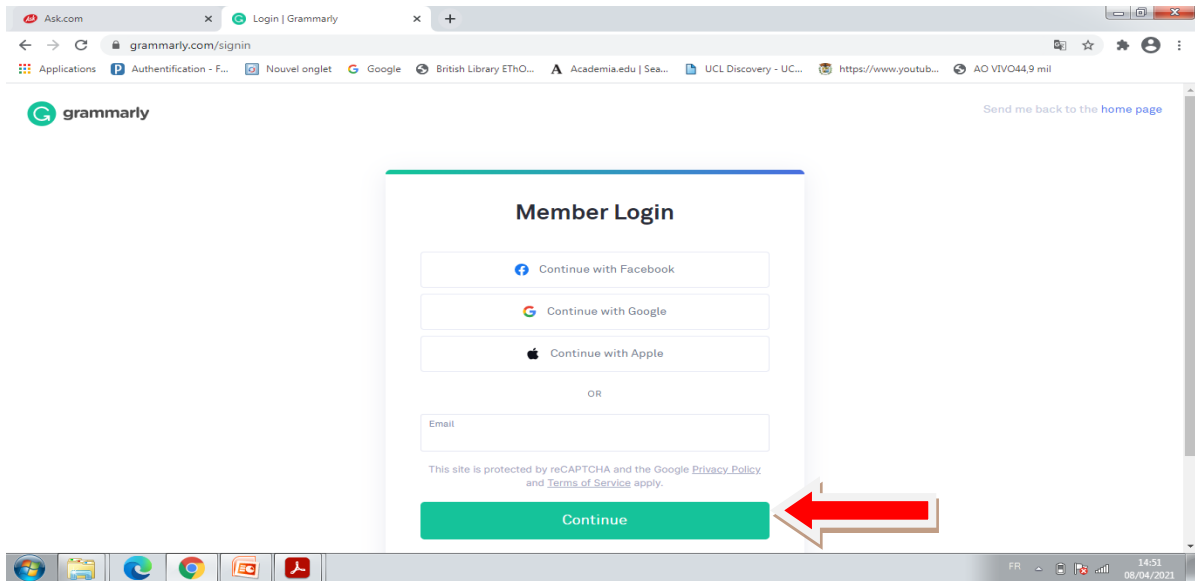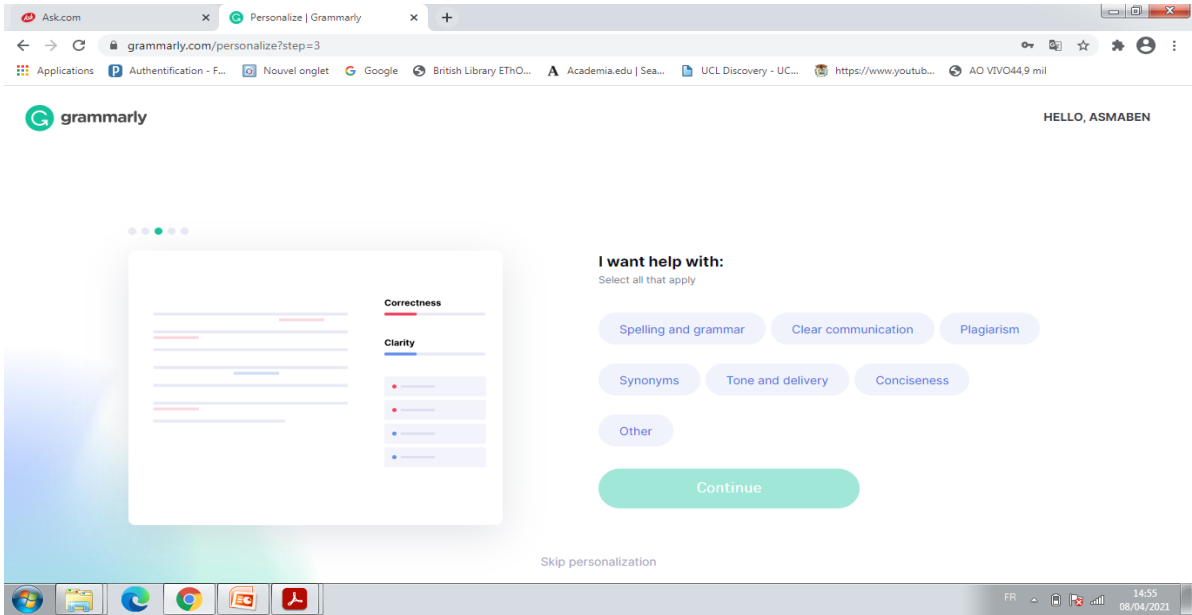
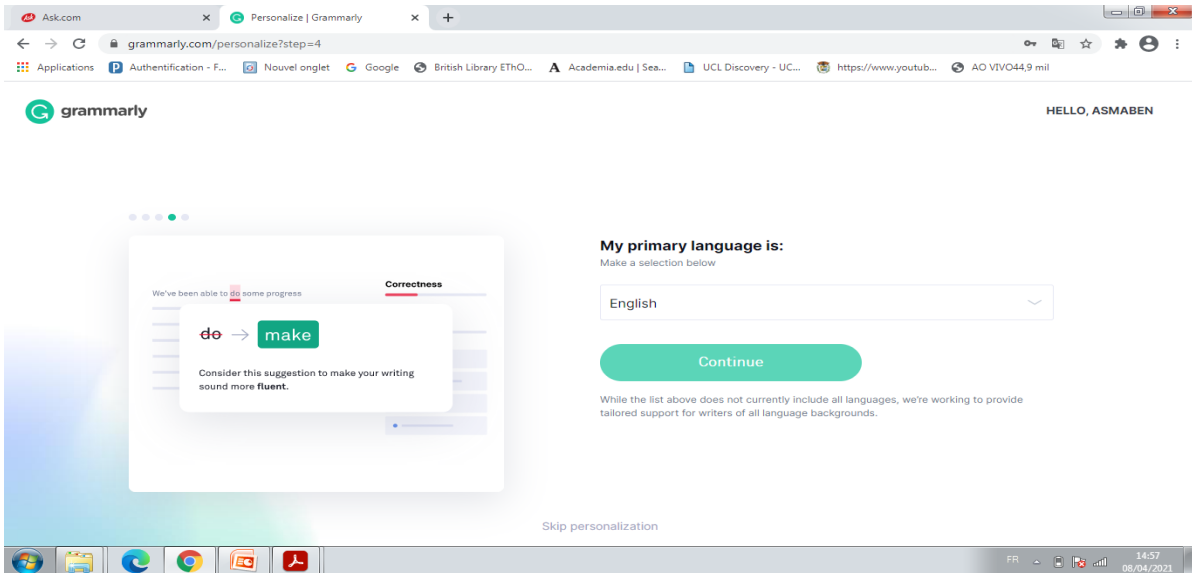*C. Sign up for the account with the email address and an appropriate password*

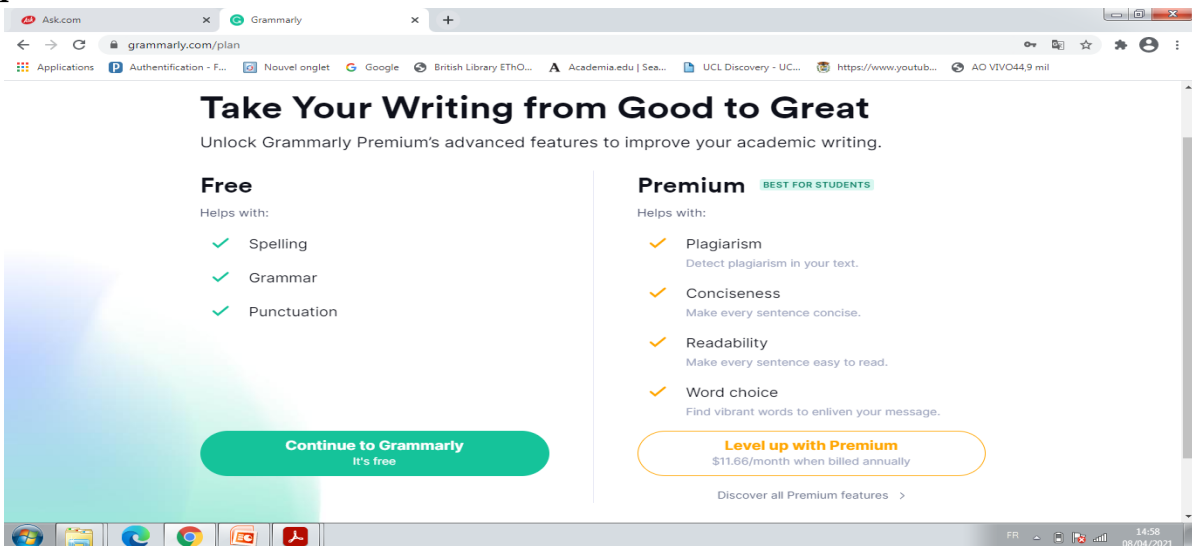*D. Select Personalize Grammarly (for school, work, other projects)*
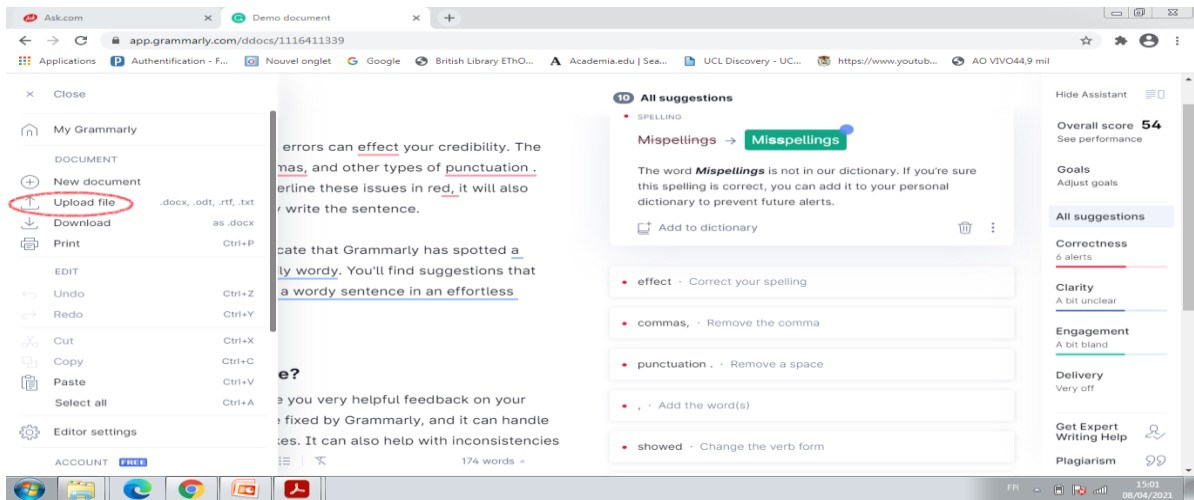

E :Choose your interests
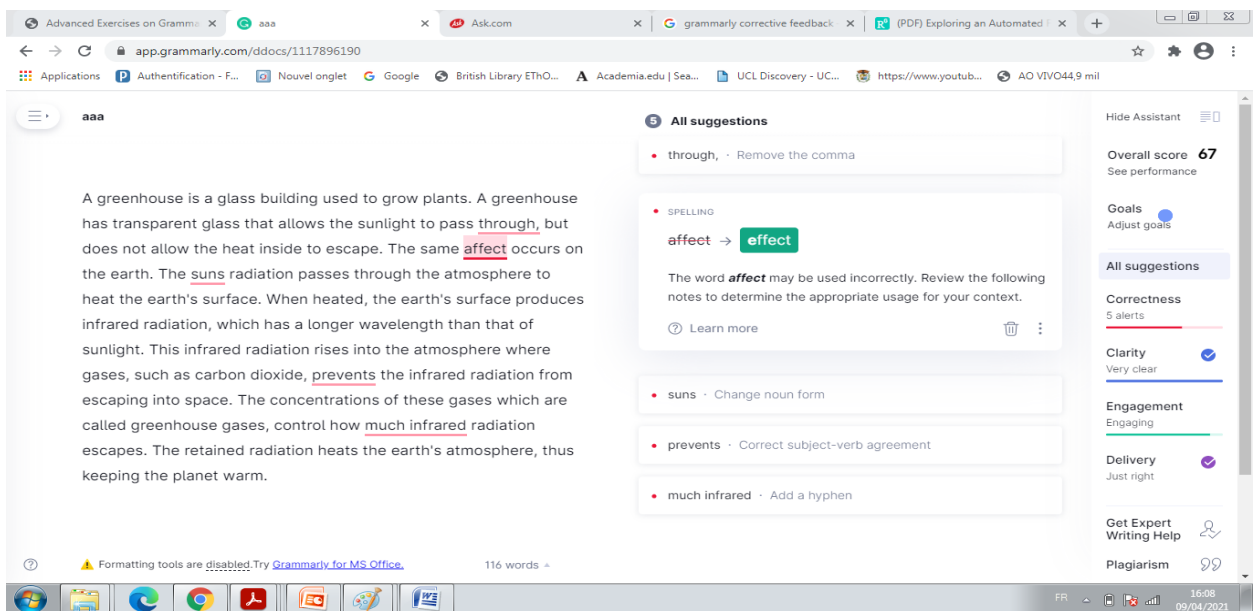
F. Select the languge in use

G. Set the accounts, whether for a free Grammarly account or for the premium version

- *Now you can upload your document to get your feedback*

⊙ *An example of a Grammarly corrective feedback paper*

8. Advantages and Disavantages of Grammarly Software

Grammarly has some advantages for EFL learners. According to Lailika (2019), there are three advantages to using Grammarly. It provides both direct and indirect feedback. When students make a mistake after joining the text, Grammarly can detect it directly by underlining it in red. It can also detect errors in an indirect manner. Second, Grammarly quickly revises the errors. For instance, people do not have to spend more time using this tool to find errors in their text. Grammarly can encourage people not to be shy or afraid of writing because it can check the errors. On the other hand, this tool is less effective in terms of two writing factors, content and organization, as the system is unable to determine whether or not the content of students' writing is relevant to the subject.

In each paragraph, there is a low detection of sentence movement, whether or not the paragraph is coherent.

The following table briefly summarizes the advantages and disadvantages of Grammarly Software:

Table 02: Grammarly Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
• The software offers useful feedback for increased learning. • Because of the ease of access in downloading, students can do self-revision and learn to work on their mistakes for the next writing. • Learners have no difficulty downloading the assessment results due to the high rate of evaluation speed. • The checking process is quick. It saves both students' and teachers' time and effort in assessing and revising academic writing. • Grammarly is a completely free service. being extremely approachable to students • superior to any other free automated writing assessment	• Grammarly has a tendency to change the intended meaning of a paragraph, and its feedback generates different ideas based on the user's intention. • In reference lists, such as the name, title, and article, the software over-evaluates. • The application is unable to validate the writing's content and context. • Grammarly focuses solely on the grammatical and mechanical aspects of writing. However, it has no effect on the coherence and cohesiveness of the writing.

Conclusion

The implementation of computer programs in the Algerian EFL learning system is an obligation to achieve the desirable outcomes in the development of all language skills. Teachers are expected to be more creative and innovative in teaching writing. Thus, using the internet in the teaching process can encourage students to become autonomous learners and teachers become promoters. They should introduce the software of Grammarly tool to the students. It is generally believed that instant feedback helps students to improve their writing quality. For instance, students' perceptions of using Grammarly have become an important issue for teachers to consider. They are expected to keep practicing writing regularly by using Grammarly tool which can help them identify and correct

language errors in their writing and encourage them to learn grammar, spelling, and punctuation to write their dissertations successfully.

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