

# Teaching Descriptive Writing via Google Classroom Stream: Perception Among Year 6 Primary Students

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**Abstract**—Technology is very much pervasive in today's world and the educational systems are rapidly adjusting to technology to the extent that it contributed to the advancement of education. Information, communication, and technology (ICT) are significant now by seeing it being introduced into a wide range of schooling activities like Google Classroom. Google Classroom is a technology that connects educators and students, allowing them to communicate with one another through a virtual online class with the various feature. This study intends to investigate students' perception toward Google Classroom Stream, one of the GC's features, as well as the difficulties they faced when utilising it in a writing class. The research involved 35 participants consisting of Year 6 primary students in SJK(C) Shih Chung Cawangan, a Chinese Primary school located in Penang Island, Malaysia. This research study used a descriptive qualitative method and the data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire is made up of nine questions divided into two themes: the first is about students' acceptance while the second is regarding their performance about Google Classroom Stream. Fifteen students were interviewed to seek more information about their challenges using the platform. The findings of this study demonstrated that students have positive opinions of learning through Google Classroom Stream, owing to the availability of feedback and quick access to learning materials. The main issues that arose were the lack of internet access, as well as the varying displays on different devices and preferences on a private chat section.

**Index Terms**—descriptive writing, Google classroom, Google classroom stream, information, communication, and technology (ICT), perception

## I. INTRODUCTION

The education system is no exception to the infusion of technology through computers, the Internet, cellphones, and other types of devices which has impacted everyone's lives. Online educational technologies which are a part of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 are thriving (Kelvin & Tan, 2020). Hence, teaching and learning are no longer limited to the chalk and talk approach in a physical classroom. Whereas, the digital technology that underpins Industrial Revolution 4.0 goes beyond computers and e-materials consisting of the learner-centered approach which is useful in improving students' learning experiences (Oke & Fernandes 2020). Due to the development of science and technology, teachers need to be more innovative and inventive with their teaching techniques. Afrianto (2018) emphasised that teachers in this 21st-century should be digitally literate, be willing to learn new things and be ready to leverage Industrial Revolution 4.0 potential for improved teaching. In the olden days, people used to buy books or go to the library to obtain information, but thanks to the Internet and online learning platforms or LMS (Learning Management System) like MOOCs, podcasts, Schoology, Google Classroom (GC), any information can be obtained with a click of a button. Teachers will only need to post relevant learning resources and assignments into virtual classrooms, where students can access the materials and submit their assignments. According to Kumar & Bervell (2019), one of the most widely used online learning platforms is GC. Google announced GC as a new tool in Google Apps for education in May 2014. Thus far, this platform has benefited teachers and students through paperless sharing, evaluation, and digital collaboration in classrooms. It is a very convenient tool as it allows both teachers and students to collaborate from the comfort of their own homes and engage in creative learning. Furthermore, GC is simple to set up and allows teachers to form courses, assign tasks, make announcements, offer comments, and upload course materials for students to read (Zhang, 2016). Teachers and students can also connect interactively through learning supported by a computer, the internet, or a mobile phone (Utami, 2019). All that is needed to make sure the teaching and learning process is conducted is a Gmail account. Effective online learning is only possible through a dynamic platform that engages both instructors and students. It should track student activities and behaviour systematically, especially when face-to-face interactions are limited. Having everything in one place not only makes it easier for students to access their homework and learning material but is also easier for the instructors to access their teaching material and reduces the need to publish or link to information

from other sources. The important features for a successful LMS are monitoring and analytics. Besides attendance, the well-established real-time features allow teachers to monitor those who have logged in for live classes, how often students re-login, and the students' engagement throughout the online lesson and other online activities. Since online learning has become the new normal, ensuring that the lessons are interesting and enjoyable for students is crucial.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. *Google Classroom*

Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT) has rapidly diffused into and pervaded educational systems all over the world through the development of several web-based educational systems for teaching and learning. Among the variety of web-based systems accessible, GC is the most popular web-based teaching and learning platform for higher education institutions. It is a free web-based learning platform created by Google which allows teachers to conduct online classroom teaching, make learning plans, and communicate with students without the use of paper. It also has a feature known as G Suite, which includes other apps like Google Docs, Google Meet, Google Calendar, Google Forms, and slides, to help simplify the collaboration between teachers and students. Moreover, these are free-to-use tools that are considered to be convenient for the teaching and learning processes because they can be accessed using any device with Google's resources, Internet connection, and a Gmail account. GC also comprises a lot of beneficial characteristics such as convenient setting, time-saving, paperless, and quick sharing of resources centralised data storage. This platform was introduced in the year 2014, and some higher institutions incorporated it in a blended learning platform to enable their educators to create assignments and grade students in a paperless environment. A majority of the educational institutions or schools began adopting it during the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### B. *Features of GC*

The four pages available in the GC include:

#### 1. *Stream*

The Stream is the first page upon entering GC where teachers can focus on announcements and posts. On the Stream page, the four options that will appear when the plus button at the bottom right corner is clicked are creating a new announcement, creating an assignment, creating questions or reusing a post. Furthermore, it is the only platform in GC where teachers and students can interact in public status. Every student can comment on the teacher's announcements or other topics of discussion. This characteristic successfully increases students' engagement and motivation (Melani, 2020).

#### 2. *Classwork*

The primary page on which teachers can organise assignments into modules and sections is called Classwork. Teachers use this section to generate questions, quizzes, assignments, and resources for their students. Teachers may also split sub-sections by subject to make it easier for students to locate their assignments. Students can use Google Docs or Word documents to complete their assignments. The assignments that are submitted allow teachers to amend and return after grading them. Classwork allows a paperless approach.

#### 3. *People*

Teachers can view a list of the students who have signed up for the class in this section. Teachers may also invite or remove participants here.

#### 4. *Grades*

As for grades, teachers could track pupils who have submitted work along with the grades they received. Students who did not complete their tasks will be marked as missing in the name list.

### C. *Benefits of GC*

Studies that were conducted on the use of GC revealed that GC's ease of use can significantly benefit or influence students' learning outcomes. According to Albashtawi & Al Bataineh (2020) and Muderredzwa & Chilumani (2017), learners viewed GC positively as a virtual classroom with simple and easy to comprehend features. Similarly, Mohd. Shaharane et al. (2016) reported that learners expressed their satisfaction while participating in the virtual classroom, in terms of usability and simplicity of use, with favoured comparable performance. Another study (Fonseca & Soto Peralta, 2019) explained that learners regarded GC as simple, practical, accessible, and beneficial. The Accounting educators also recognised the simplicity and utility of GC in their teaching process (Zakaria et al., 2021). Scholars (Nurbaidah, 2021; Syed Ahmad et al., 2020) affirmed that the learners perceived GC to be one of the simplest methods for learning as it was convenient.

On the other hand, accessibility and portability were also mentioned as key advantages of using GC. According to several studies (Abidin & Saputro, 2019; Albashtawi & Al Bataineh, 2020; Bhimani, 2021; Noah & Gbemisola, 2020; Ratnaningsih, 2019), learners felt the ease of learning in their own time and space using their preferred devices.

Ventayen et al. (2018) proved that the platform's usability evaluation is incredibly helpful to elucidate its understandability, attractiveness, and operability. The platform is also great for homework and collaborative learning in non-academic settings. Besides its simplicity, several studies revealed that GC encourages students to use and appreciate it (Albashtawi & Al Bataineh, 2020; Md. Saad & Alimin, 2021; Nurbaidah, 2021). Meanwhile, a few other studies manifested that the learners enjoyed using GC particularly due to its ease of uploading and submitting assignments (Adam & Khairuddin, 2021; Noah & Gbemisola, 2020; Ratnaningsih, 2019; Zakaria et al., 2021). Literature also proved that learners prefer using GC compared to the other platforms (Adam & Khairuddin, 2021; Mohd. Shahraneer et al., 2016).

On the other hand, several elements were identified to impact student uptake and experience with GC, including a paperless environment and means of communication. In a conventional class, not all students are equally competent in organising and filing documents to keep up with many classes. Students frequently misplace or forget the relevant papers and textbooks. GC, however, requires no paperwork which made the learners happier (Zakaria et al., 2021). Zakaria et al. (2021) also added that a group of accounting lecturers from Malaysia posited that the learning platform works better when they do not have to print students' work or tests while marking and grading can be done online. Ratnaningsih (2019) proved that it was convenient to use the platform since there was no risk of losing work because of the auto-save feature in the application, where everyone could resume their incomplete tasks at any moment.

In traditional classrooms, learners have numerous opportunities to connect with their instructors and their peers, as this engagement is perceived to be crucial for their performance. Whereas, in online learning, instruction delivery and social contact are also important to ensure the learners benefit during their learning process. In online learning, social interaction can boost student interest and motivation, as well as helping them to perform better. Effective online learning relies on long-term relationships between students and teachers. Interaction between students and teachers during class delivery keeps students engaged and allows them to assimilate new knowledge and practise new skills. According to Noah & Gbemisola (2020), teamwork and frequent evaluation with rapid feedback contributed to pupils' academic performance during the recent pandemic outbreak. Ratnaningsih (2019) further added that the comments section not only helped in social interaction but also in learning as the learners could refer to what their peers have written as guidance for their writing task. Hence, GC is effective in student-teacher interactions (Gurevych, 2020). Another recent study among the seventh-grade students in junior secondary school proved that the students participated more actively in the discussion forum hosted by the teacher using GC (Abidin & Saputro, 2019).

One of the most used and well-known methodologies for assessing technology uptake is The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Estriegana et al., 2019). TAM was created to anticipate and determine the perception of an individual on the use of technology (Venkatesh & Bala, 2008). Salloum et al. (2019) conducted a study to determine the acceptability of online learning and identified that computer playfulness, can substantially impact the perceived ease of use in online learning. Whereas, the quality of information, perceived enjoyment, and accessibility can substantially impact perceived ease of use and perceived accessibility.

According to Hussein (2017), the demand for online learning applications in universities is increasing in tandem with technological advancements but is not fully accepted by all. Students' attitude is most essential in influencing their willingness to participate in online learning. Several studies demonstrated that learners' motivation is higher when they consider GC's features which are simple and user-friendly. Hence, a positive attitude towards learning can help learners to become independent (Fonseca & Peralta, 2019; Noah & Gbemisola, 2019; Ratnaningsih, 2019; Syed Ahmad et al., 2020; Ventayen et al., 2017). Based on Haggag's (2019) review, there was a strong significant correlation between grammatical achievement and attitudes using GC application. Several studies (Janah & Yuniarti, 2019; Nor, 2018) postulated that students exhibited a good attitude and were eager to express their opinions while engaged in writing tests which helped to improve their learning process. Meanwhile, several other studies (Ari et al., 2021, Nurbaidah, 2021) uncovered a different level of motivation among learners using GC while reading comprehensions. Similarly, Wardani (2020) also established that learners' motivation levels from 65% in cycle I to 84% in cycle II and 95% in cycle III during the recent pandemic. In short, it can be deduced that introvert learners were not afraid to ask questions and were more engaged in GC by sharing opinions.

#### *D. Challenges of GC*

Despite the benefits and efficacy indicated in the reviewed studies, some other studies did mention the challenges faced by educators and learners while adopting GC in teaching and learning processes. The barriers cited are arranged according to their ranking.

##### *1. Unstable or Lacking Internet Connection*

The lack of internet connectivity was identified as the primary obstacle to instructors and students using GC in urban or suburban settings (Dewi & Abadi, 2021; Hussaini et al., 2020; Islam, 2019; Laili & Muflihah, 2020; Md. Saad & Alimin, 2021; Mualim et al., 2019; Zakaria et al., 2020; Zakaria et al., 2021; Ventayen et al., 2018). Location and circumstances with bad signals can certainly impact classroom connectivity when using GC, an online-based platform. Most of the students and educators depended heavily on free internet access, which was notoriously slow.

##### *2. Lacking ICT Knowledge or Familiar with GC*

Educators who lack knowledge in handling GC should be a major concern because they are not familiar with teaching using an online platform. Some educators stated that they need time to prepare themselves for it (Zakaria et al., 2021), whereas learners claimed that they need guidance from their educators and needed time to get acclimatised with the platform to become independent in handling the user-friendly features of the platform (Abidin & Saputro, 2019; Islam, 2019; Muderedzwa & Chilumani, 2017; Zakaria et al., 2020). Mualim et al. (2019) and Dewi & Abadi (2021) also reported that the learners struggled to comprehend the information since the teachers gave the materials and activities with little guidance. Meanwhile, Ventayen et al. (2018) revealed that 27.3% of the undergraduate students faced problems with little knowledge on the internet or computer in a study targeted at understanding the usability and satisfaction level. This finding eventually led to users' preference to learn using other platforms like Telegram or Whatsapp for their user-friendly features (Azhar & Iqbal, 2018; Zakaria et al., 2021).

### 3. *Lack of Affordability*

Based on a few studies (Zakaria et al., 2021; Zakaria et al., 2020), educators and learners expressed their unaffordability to buy a computer, a laptop, or a broadband internet connection. Since higher education institutions did not increase their network capacity and coverage, buying internet bandwidth with an unlimited network was expensive for the students (Abidin & Saputro, 2019; Laili & Muflihah, 2020). According to 42 students (n=128), although GC was interesting to adopt with a high level of satisfaction, the internet cost was the biggest challenge they faced (Md. Saad & Alimin, 2021).

### 4. *Lack of Interaction*

Several other studies focused on the barriers which disabled students' interactivity and difficulty in engaging learners with the lesson through the online platform, where the learners were only able to leave comments rather than communicate instantaneously with their teachers (Azhar & Iqbal, 2018; Islam, 2019; Ratnaningsih, 2019; Zakaria et al. 2021; Zakaria et al., 2020). Some learners are also irresponsive could find the lesson dull.

### 5. *Lack of Self-efficacy among Learners*

Although most of the studies highlighted that GC can improve learners' self-motivation and increase their learning autonomously, several studies did not corroborate these results (Abidin & Saputro, 2019; Laili & Muflihah, 2020; Zakaria et al., 2021). They revealed that the learners were submitting their tasks late or after the given deadline.

### 6. *Distrust in Usage*

One of the challenges was mentioned by the educators is distrusting their students in using their devices whether for educational purposes when they carried out online learning in the classroom (Azhar & Iqbal, 2018; Islam, 2019; Zakaria et al., 2021).

### E. *Descriptive Writing in Educational Setting*

In a descriptive text, the writer is expected to provide readers with a detailed vivid image of a person, location, scene, item, or any detail (Wishon & Burks, 1980). A description is a written representation of the artwork which involves the five senses: sight, hear, think, touch, and smell. The purpose of the description is to assist the readers in "seeing" the objects, people, and experiences conveyed. The objective of descriptive writing is to express an impression to a reader by combining attentive observation with descriptive techniques that help us pick the most effective words.

Writing is a skill that should be mastered by everyone. According to Nor (2018), writing is a process in which a writer uses several writing variables at the same time, such as content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, and letter formation to demonstrate knowledge and express ideas, feelings, and thoughts in a written form for others to understand the message. Stalin & Tan (2020) also added that writing is the most difficult skill for Malaysian ESL students to master out of the four learning skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Furthermore, Zhang (2014) added that writing using a second language is complicated and tough to master. English language mastery requires grammatical patterns, a high degree of organisation in the development of ideas and information, along the selection of acceptable vocabulary and sentence structure to produce an appropriate style. As such, Nunan (2001) claimed that learning to write smoothly and expressively is "the most challenging talent to acquire among any language users."

Descriptive essay writing is a very important skill for Malaysian ESL learners especially primary school learners as it is an important component for their Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah (KSSR) examination. They are required to answer a question based on a single picture or a series of three pictures to form a story. Thevadas & Hashim (2020) stated that the most typical issue faced by students in Malaysian ESL classrooms is that they are often affected by their mother tongue (Bahasa Malaysia, Tamil or Mandarin), especially in locating or translating the words into English, although they can conceive what they want to say. Thus, the essay would often be in a mixed-language dialogical form written down based on what the students think with a lot of errors in terms of grammar aspects. This scenario is quite common among low achievers.

Most of the past studies which shed light on Google Application mainly focused only on the perceptions of using GC and Google docs for writing (Deiniatur, 2021; Hidayat, 2020; Islam, 2019; Khalil, 2018; Nor, 2018; Sartika, 2021).

Limited studies looked into the features in GC by studying the perceptions of kids in primary schools. Hence, this study intends to investigate the use of Google Classroom Stream to improve the writing skills of primary school students in writing descriptive essays.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The study employs a descriptive qualitative research approach. The qualitative technique is appropriate for this study since it involved the collection of perceptions from primary school pupils on the utilisation of Google Classroom Stream for writing tasks. Data collection was based on multiple sources (questionnaire, interview and document analysis). This triangulation allowed an in-depth understanding of the results through more valid findings. In this study, data was collected from a Government Chinese primary school (SJK(C) Shih Chung Cawangan) located in Penang with a student population of 1008. It is a multiracial school which has high performance for their academic as well as their co-curriculum activities. The study was collected via online due to the covid-19 pandemic restriction.

#### A. *Setting*

In this study, data was collected from a Government Chinese primary school (SJK(C) Shih Chung Cawangan) located in Penang with a student population of 1008. It is a multiracial school which has high performance for their academic as well as their co-curriculum activities.

#### B. *Participants*

The participants consisted of 35 Year 6 primary students, of which 10 were males and 25 were females. Only advanced students were selected for the study to get a better understanding of the study objectives.

#### C. *Data Collection Tools*

The researcher utilised three types of data collection procedures in this study namely questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and participants' writing assignments to crosscheck the outcomes. The Google form questionnaire consisted of 10 questions adapted from Pratiwi (2020) with a 5-point Likert scale response designed to gain the perception of students in using GC in Language Learning. The 5-point Likert scale ranged from 1 (Strongly agree) to 5 (Strongly disagree). In this study, the interview consisting of 6 questions was conducted individually on 15 participants (10 males and 5 females). The interview questions' guideline was adapted from Hidayat (2020), intended to gain a deeper understanding of the usage of Google docs in writing. The third approach was to evaluate whether Google Classroom Stream influenced their written assignments. Data collected from the questionnaire and students' interview data were analysed. The first analysis included the data from the questionnaire on how the students' perceptions of using Google Classroom Stream as a writing environment. The second analysis involved the students' interview data and their views on the effectiveness of Google Classroom Stream along with the challenges.

#### D. *Data Collection Procedures*

##### 1. *Phase 1 (Writing Task-descriptive Writing)*

Materials were posted by teachers on the GC Stream page. Some models of text were provided to help the students understand the standard, targeted linguistic forms, and structures they had to achieve in the writing class. Students were then are required to write a descriptive essay in a paragraph. Alternatively, students are also allowed to write in sentence form. A video is posted by the teacher, where the students are instructed to write a draft based on the story in the video. The students then post their draft in the comment section on the Stream page after watching the video. The teacher can then provide his/her feedback on the students' drafts. In addition, students also comment or provide feedback on their classmates' drafts. Based on the feedback, students revised and completed their task on Google assignment before final submission.

##### 2. *Phase 2 (Questionnaire)*

The teacher distributed questionnaires via Google Form to collect the students' responses after using Google Classroom Stream. The students were given 10 minutes to complete it.

##### 3. *Phase 3 (Semi-structured Interview)*

The teacher conducted one-to-one interviews using WhatsApp video call with the students to gain more insights on their thought on the efficacy of Google Classroom Stream in helping them to complete their writing task.

### IV. FINDINGS

This chapter examines and evaluates the results obtained from a Penang Chinese elementary school (SJK(C) Shih Chung Cawangan). The findings were divided into two sections. The first section summarises the findings of the questionnaire into two sub-themes: (1) Students' perception of the ease in using Google Classroom Stream, (2) Students' perception of the performance of Google Classroom Stream. The second section comprised of results of the

post-research interview which focused on the advantages and disadvantages of Google Classroom Stream. The findings were divided into two categories to easily answer the research questions, which are:

- 1) What is the students' perception of Google Classroom Stream in a descriptive writing class?
- 2) What are the main challenges faced by the students while using Google Classroom Stream as an online learning environment?

#### A. Questionnaire

The 9 statements were split into two themes namely the acceptance and the students' performance. The questionnaire was validated, where the internal consistency was high (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .95$ ). The transcript percentage results are represented in Table 1 below according to each item:

TABLE 1  
PARTICIPANTS' PERCEPTION ON THEIR ACCEPTANCE ON GOOGLE CLASSROOM STREAM

No.	Item	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Total
1	Google Stream makes it easy for me to upload my documents, learning material and assignments.	0	0	7	19	9	35
		0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	54.00%	26.00%	100.00%
2	Using Google Stream allows me to complete tasks faster.	0	0	3	16	16	35
		0.00%	0.00%	8.58%	45.71%	45.71%	100%
3	Google Stream makes it easy for me to get announcements or information quickly.	0	0	6	12	17	35
		0.00%	0.00%	17.15%	34.28%	48.57%	100.00%
4	Google Stream's display is very clear and easy to understand.	0	0	1	16	18	35
		0.00%	0.00%	2.86%	45.71%	51.43%	100.00%
5	Use Google Stream getting learning material, and submit tasks become more flexible.	0	0	4	18	13	35
		0.00%	0.00%	11.43%	51.43%	37.14%	100.00%

Five items in the questionnaire gauged respondents' views with Google Classroom Stream's acceptance. Examining the platform's flexibility in learning and retrieving information were two of the components. Based on the analysed data, most of the participants agreed with the ease of Google Classroom Stream in writing class.

A total of 19 participants (54%) agreed that Google Classroom Stream allows them to easily upload their assignments, while 9 participants (26%) strongly agreed with the notion as the remaining 7 participants (20%) had a neutral opinion. Similarly, 45.71% of participants believed that Google Classroom Stream helped them to finish their work faster, while 3 participants (8.58%) responded with a neutral opinion. Whereas 17 participants (48.57%) strongly agreed that Google Classroom Stream enabled them to get their teachers' announcements and access information fast, with 12 participants (34.28%) agreeing to the notion, and 6 others (17.15%) with a neutral answer. On the other hand, 18 (51.43%) and 16 (34.28%) participants strongly agreed and agreed that the Google Classroom Stream display is extremely easy to understand, respectively. Only one participant (2.86%) remained neutral. As for the fifth statement, 13 participants (37.14%) strongly agreed and 18 participants (51.43%) agreed that Google Classroom Stream positively influenced their flexibility when working on their tasks. The remaining 4 participants (11.43%) responded with a neutral opinion.

TABLE 2  
PARTICIPANTS' PERCEPTION ON STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE

No.	Item	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Total
6	Google Stream improves my learning performance.	0	0	14	14	7	35
		0.00%	0.00%	40.00%	40.00%	20.00%	100.00%
7	Use Google Stream efficiently in learning process.	0	0	7	21	7	35
		0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	60.00%	20.00%	100.00%
8	I would use Google Stream for my studies in future	0	0	9	16	10	35
		0.00%	0.00%	25.72%	45.71%	28.57%	100.00%
9	I feel that teacher and peers written feedback via Google Stream helped me understand the lesson more.	0	0	5	19	11	35
		0.00%	0.00%	14.29%	54.28%	31.43%	100.00%

Based on Table 2, 4 statements measured the satisfaction of the participants in regards to their performance in using Google Classroom Stream when performing the writing task.

A total of 7 participants (20%) and 14 participants (40%) strongly agreed and agreed that Google Classroom Stream improves their learning performance during the writing task, respectively. Whereas, 14 participants (40%) were neutral. Next, 7 participants (20%) strongly agreed that Google Classroom Stream helped them to learn more effectively with 6 others responding neutrally. The remaining 21 participants (60%) agreed with the efficacy of Google Classroom Stream in learning. Contrarily, 1 participant (2.86%) disagreed with the statement. On the other hand, 10 participants (28.5%) strongly agreed to use Google Classroom Stream for their future studies. Whereby, 16 participants (45.71%) agreed to use Google Classroom Stream, while 8 (22.86%) remained neutral and one participant disagreed. As for the last statement, a total of 11 participants (31.43%) strongly agreed that the written feedback, a feature in Google Classroom

Stream, was useful in helping them to comprehend the lesson, while 19 (54.28%) participants agreed and the remaining 5 (14.29%) were unsure.

### B. *Semi-structured Interview*

A focus group interview with 15 students was conducted to learn more about their perspectives, particularly on the benefits and challenges of using the platform, Google Classroom Stream. Based on the interview, more insights into the ease of use and what motivates the students to use the feature in GC were revealed. The students were overwhelmingly in favour of the benefits of using the platform to study descriptive writing.

For the first question, 14 participants replied with identical responses as they chose to write using Google Classroom Stream than on paper due to the easy editing of their work. Surprisingly, 1 participant still preferred the traditional method and stated that:

“I prefer to write on paper because I am using an iPad and the display is hard to comprehend and to work on with. I have three siblings in the house and there is only one laptop to share with.”

According to this participant, his preference to work with papers was due to the different displays in the devices he engaged with. He further explained that:

“I have three other younger siblings and all of us have only one laptop to share with...”

“My younger brothers refuse to use the iPad since it is difficult to text on it, so as the eldest, I must be tolerant and allow them to use the only laptop my parents have provided.”

The second question focuses on the functionality in Google Classroom Stream in assisting them to stay focused. Of which, 7 students stated that the learning platform helped them stay focused as it was simple to use and allowed them to finish their assignments faster.

“I finished my task on time, even faster than usual. It is very easy to operate.” (Participant K)

“It keeps me focused all the time especially the reminder which allowed me to submit my homework on time.” (Participant E)

However, 2 students found it difficult to remain focused when there were too many individuals posting things and to go through their classmates' work. Both the students agreed that the advantages outweighed the disadvantages.

Concerning the benefits gained from using Google Classroom Stream throughout their writing process, all of the participants agreed that the platform was beneficial in their learning process. Their responses were:

“I can learn a lot of new vocabularies from my peers' answers”.

“I can get a handful of information from my teachers and classmates just at the tip of my fingers.”

“I can read easily and help me get ideas from things posted by my teachers and classmates.”

“I am able to find materials without much effort.”

“I can learn in a more detailed way, I find that my essay has improved a lot because when I try to follow what my classmates wrote, I learnt from their sentences.”

“The comment section really helps me to write confidently because I don't worry about making mistakes with the auto-correct option.”

On the contrary, 1 respondent was neutral because she learns well with any method and adapts well to varied approaches.

In response to the fourth question on the frequency of participants commenting and communicating with their teachers using the platform mentioned, 3 participants were active. Meanwhile, 10 participants 'seldom' respond and 2 others 'rarely' comment or communicate with their teachers. Participants who seldom or rarely commented were introverts and would not engage if there is nothing to say unless they were seeking help from their teachers. So, in general, some like to talk during the Google meet sessions, while others chose to comment privately.

The fifth interview question focused on the forms of feedback they preferred from their teachers or peers. All the participants positively viewed the feedbacks. Among the participants who were in favour of their teachers' feedbacks stated that the teachers clarified the misunderstandings and grammatical errors. They can review and track the errors easily before making any corrections. Meanwhile, 5 participants stated that their peers' feedbacks encouraged them to write with more confidence. Their responses were:

“Peer feedback allows us to have our opinions heard as well as listen to one another. It is generally simpler for us to grasp information from individuals of our own age.”

“Giving feedback to others also helped me to become a critical reader, it is very useful for me especially in reviewing my own work too.”

“I am eager to receive feedback from my classmates after I posted something, and I feel like I am in a study group with my friends. I enjoy the moment.”

Some participants stated that they were unable to communicate with their peers daily because they were shy learners. However, 3 participants disagreed with the favourable influence. They stated that:

“I prefer teachers' feedback because the teachers are more experienced and professional.”

“I don't feel good to see my classmates' commenting on my errors. I don't like to be judged in front of my other classmates.”

“I don't have confidence on my classmates reviewing my work. They tend to make mistakes all the time too.”

Finally, the last question focused on the difficulties encountered by them when using Google Classroom Stream in their writing class. The students mentioned that the unstable internet connection and the hassle of scrolling up and down to find the most recent information were the two major issues. Meanwhile, participants also had concerns with the devices used as each had varying displays and a private space for students to have group discussions with their peers. The students prefer to have a feature for a group chat.

Eight of the 15 participants claimed that one of the main barriers in using Google Classroom Stream was the poor internet connection. It is extremely aggravating when they are required to re-upload a material several times before it gets through. The issue gets worse during rainy days. Meanwhile, 3 participants stated that scrolling up and down for recent updates is inconvenient because the latest information gets pushed down when too much new information gets posted. Four participants added that a private comments area or a group chatroom amongst their peers would be beneficial because they had to utilise other platforms to communicate to complete a group task and is time-consuming.

## V. DISCUSSION

### A. *Research Question 1: What Is the Students' Perception of Google Classroom Stream in a Descriptive Writing Class?*

Based on the findings, 90% of the students were mostly in favour of the benefits of using Google Classroom Stream in learning descriptive writing because of its convenience and simplicity. Students can easily upload or receive learning materials from their teachers via the platform. It is dependable, effective, and efficient in increasing students' access and attention to the learning activities. Students can also quickly track their progress as the display is clear to understand. These results corroborated with previous findings (Albashtawi & Al Bataineh, 2020; Fonseca & Soto Peralta, 2019; Mohd. Shaharane et al., 2016; Muderredzwa & Chilumani, 2017; Nurbaidah, 2021; Syed Ahmad et al., 2020). Furthermore, the findings from the current study are also consistent with that of Khalil's (2018), who claimed that students valued the simplicity and manageability of Google applications. In terms of convenience, the students stated that Google Classroom Stream can be accessed at any time and from any location using a mobile device, a laptop, or other electronic devices as long as there is an Internet connection because GC is very straightforward (Dash, 2019). Students felt more at ease using their gadgets in their own time and place (Abidin & Saputro, 2019; Bhimani, 2021; Noah & Gbemisola, 2020; Ratnasingsih, 2019).

On the other hand, the comments section was helpful since teachers and peers could share their feedback (Mohd Shaharane et al., 2016; Ratnasingsih, 2019). Furthermore, it could help boost the students' motivation. Participants' preferences in using Google Classroom Stream to get or offer feedback and converse, mirrored their preference to improve their writing skills. According to Emily & Mohammad (2021), the participants who used GC as an online learning tool loved sharing their spelling skills with their peers and aiding one another through the comments area. As a result of the feedback provided, students were more driven to complete their assignments and were prepared for independent learning, necessitating their commitment to self-improvement (Afrilyasanti et al., 2017; Ansori & Nafi, 2019; Fauzan & Ngabut, 2018; Fonseca & Soto Peralta, 2019; Howlett & Zainee, 2019; Noah & Gbemisola, 2019; Ratnasingsih, 2019; Syed Ahmad et al., 2020; Ventayen et al., 2017). Overall, the platform improved students' writing skills and foster autonomous learning, although a few participants preferred their teachers' feedback above their peers' or vice versa.

### B. *Research Question 2: What Are the Main Challenges Faced by Students When Using Google Classroom Stream as an Online Learning Environment?*

The interview data revealed that a majority of the participants had issues mainly due to the unstable internet connection. Previous studies have also discovered the technical drawbacks encountered by students (Dewi & Abadi, 2021; Hussaini et al., 2020; Islam, 2019; Laili & Muflihah, 2020; Md. Saad & Alimin, 2021; Mualim et al., 2019; Zakaria et al., 2020; Zakaria et al., 2021; Ventayen et al., 2018). Nadziroh (2017) noted that while a variety of e-learning systems allow students to become more independent and creative, the process requires a reliable internet connection. Meanwhile, the different GC interfaces on different electronic devices were also highlighted by the students as a constraint in utilising the platform. As such, El fauziah et al. (2019) emphasised that a stable Internet connection and an appropriate device are fundamental for a virtual class using GC.

Students also found it inconvenient to scroll up and down to view their friends' responses. It can be confusing and time-consuming at times since the interface only allows the most recent information to appear on top, where the previous messages are pushed further down when the stream or timeline is automatically updated. Besides that, students also stated that having a group chatroom with their classmates would be preferable for group tasks. Although public comments are beneficial as everyone can learn from a mistake, it would be troublesome while communicating personally with other students. Creating a public post via GC sometimes jeopardises privacy (Islam, 2019).

## VI. CONCLUSION

Overall, the findings indicated a few key aspects that could contribute to Google Classroom Stream's effectiveness in terms of improving students' knowledge, abilities, and attitude toward learning in an online learning environment. The features mentioned include the ease of use and the public chat section, both of which encourage children to be



autonomous learners and therefore achieve the desired objectives. The effectiveness can be verified based on the positive opinions from the students during the questionnaire and interview sessions. Most of the students were pleased with the comments or feedback from their teachers and peers. The constructive and positive comments were able to help with their writing tasks. Albeit, there are still many GC users, educators and their students, who continue to struggle to procure appropriate equipment and an adequate Internet connection to utilise the platform. Based on the survey, the one significant factor which cannot be ignored was the Internet coverage. The telecommunication providers must improve Internet coverage in rural and suburban areas. This step requires the support of the government in developing the necessary infrastructure. Nonetheless, it is a critical problem that must be addressed to fully realise the promise of GC and other online learning tools in improving teaching and learning.

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