IMPROVING THE WRITING SKILLS OF UNIVERSITY EFL STUDENTS THROUGH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TOOLS

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Abstract: This article investigates the effectiveness of using artificial intelligence tools to improve the writing skills of university students who study English as a Foreign Language (EFL). It examines the possibilities of using artificial intelligence technologies to improve grammar, expand vocabulary, correct spelling and punctuation errors, and develop independent writing skills. Special attention is given to the use of tools such as Grammarly in the process of teaching writing. The article analyzes their role in providing feedback, identifying errors, and improving the quality of students' written work. The findings highlight the potential of artificial intelligence tools to develop writing skills, increase learning motivation, and promote student autonomy in English language learning.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, writing skills, written communication, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), university students, Grammarly.

Introduction

In the modern world, English has become one of the most important languages for international communication, education, and scientific research. Therefore, developing English language skills is essential for university students, especially those who study English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Among the four main language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—writing plays an important role in academic success. It enables students to express their ideas clearly, organize information logically, and communicate effectively in academic and professional contexts.

However, many university EFL students face difficulties in developing their writing skills. These challenges may include grammatical errors, limited vocabulary, spelling and punctuation mistakes, and difficulties in organizing ideas into coherent paragraphs. Traditional teaching methods do not always provide students with sufficient opportunities for individual practice and

immediate feedback. As a result, there is a growing need for innovative approaches that can support students in improving their writing abilities.

The development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has introduced new opportunities for English language teaching and learning. AI-powered tools such as ChatGPT and Grammarly can help students identify mistakes, improve sentence structure, expand their vocabulary, and develop more effective writing strategies. These tools can also provide immediate feedback and encourage students to revise and improve their written work independently. The use of AI tools in education has attracted increasing attention because of their potential to make learning more interactive, flexible, and personalized. When used appropriately, these technologies can support teachers and students throughout the writing process, from generating initial ideas to editing and proofreading final texts. However, students should use AI tools responsibly and critically to ensure that their work reflects their own understanding and abilities.

Therefore, this article aims to examine how artificial intelligence tools can contribute to improving the writing skills of university EFL students. It focuses on the potential benefits of AI-assisted writing, including error correction, vocabulary development, feedback, and independent learning. The article also emphasizes the importance of integrating AI tools into English language education in a responsible and effective way.

Main Body

1. The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Writing Development. Writing is an essential skill for university students who study English as a Foreign Language (EFL). It requires knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and text organization. However, many students experience difficulties when writing academic texts in English. Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools can help address these challenges by providing additional support throughout the writing process. AI-powered applications offer students opportunities to practice writing, identify mistakes, and improve their texts. Unlike traditional methods, some AI tools can provide immediate feedback, allowing students to recognize and correct errors without waiting for a teacher's response. This can make writing practice more flexible and accessible. Furthermore, AI tools can support different levels of language proficiency. Students with limited English skills can use them to understand basic grammatical structures, while more advanced learners can explore academic vocabulary, sentence variety, and the organization of complex texts.

2. Using ChatGPT to Improve Writing Skills. ChatGPT is an AI-powered tool that can support students in various stages of the writing process. It can help learners generate ideas, create outlines, organize paragraphs, and improve sentence structure. For example, when students have difficulty starting an essay,

they can ask ChatGPT for possible ideas or a simple outline. Another important function of ChatGPT is explaining grammatical rules and vocabulary. If students make mistakes in sentence construction, they can request explanations and examples to understand the problem. This approach may help them develop their writing skills and become more confident in expressing their ideas in English. ChatGPT can also help students revise their drafts. Students can ask for suggestions to make their sentences clearer, improve the connections between paragraphs, or identify repetitive vocabulary. However, they should carefully evaluate the suggestions and make their own decisions about which changes are appropriate. It is important to remember that ChatGPT may sometimes provide inaccurate information or produce language that does not match the student's intended meaning. Therefore, students should use it as a learning assistant rather than allowing it to write their entire assignments.

3. The Contribution of Grammarly to Writing Accuracy. Grammarly is another useful AI-powered tool that helps students improve the accuracy and clarity of their written work. It can identify many grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors and provide suggestions for correcting them. For university EFL students, these features are particularly valuable because small language mistakes can affect the clarity and quality of academic writing. By reviewing Grammarly's suggestions, students can identify common errors and become more aware of their language difficulties. Grammarly can also offer suggestions related to word choice, sentence clarity, and writing style. These features may help students produce more understandable and appropriate academic texts. In addition, reviewing corrections regularly can help learners recognize recurring mistakes and pay greater attention to them in future writing tasks. Nevertheless, Grammarly cannot always understand the complete meaning or context of a text. Some suggestions may be unsuitable for the writer's purpose. For this reason, students should review each correction carefully instead of accepting every suggestion automatically.

4. AI Tools and the Development of Independent Learning. One of the important advantages of AI-assisted writing is its potential to encourage independent learning. Students can use AI tools whenever they need additional practice, explanations, or feedback. This flexibility allows them to study at their own pace and focus on their individual weaknesses. For example, a student who frequently makes grammatical mistakes can practice sentence construction and review corrections. Another student who has difficulty organizing ideas can use AI suggestions to develop an essay outline. In this way, learners can concentrate on the areas that require the most improvement. AI tools may also increase students' motivation by making writing practice more interactive. Immediate feedback helps learners understand their progress

and identify areas for further development. However, genuine improvement requires regular practice and active participation. Teachers should encourage students to use AI tools to learn from their mistakes rather than simply obtain finished answers. This approach can help students develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and independent writing skills.

5. Challenges and Responsible Use of AI in Writing. Although AI tools provide several educational benefits, their use also presents certain challenges. One major concern is students' excessive dependence on AI-generated content. If learners rely on these tools to complete every writing task, they may have fewer opportunities to develop their own ideas and language skills. Another challenge is the possibility of inaccurate corrections or inappropriate suggestions. AI tools do not always recognize the writer's intentions, the context of a text, or the specific requirements of an academic assignment. Therefore, students need to develop the ability to evaluate AI-generated feedback critically.

Academic integrity is also an important consideration. Students should not present AI-generated work as entirely their own without following their institution's academic rules. Instead, they should use AI to support brainstorming, revision, grammar practice, and vocabulary development while maintaining responsibility for their final work. Teachers have an important role in guiding students toward responsible AI use. They can design writing activities that require students to explain their ideas, compare original and revised drafts, and reflect on the corrections they have made. Such activities can help ensure that AI supports learning rather than replaces it. In conclusion, the effective integration of AI tools into university writing instruction requires a balance between technological assistance, teacher guidance, and students' independent efforts. When used responsibly, tools such as ChatGPT and Grammarly can provide valuable support for improving the writing skills of university EFL students.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is based on theories of second language acquisition, writing development, and technology-assisted language learning. These theories help explain how Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools can support university students in improving their writing skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

1. The Process Approach to Writing. The process approach considers writing as a series of stages rather than a single activity. These stages generally include pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. During this process, students develop their ideas, organize information, correct mistakes, and improve the quality of their texts. AI tools such as ChatGPT and

Grammarly can support different stages of writing by helping students generate ideas, identify grammatical errors, improve sentence structure, and revise their drafts. Therefore, AI-assisted writing can make the writing process more effective and encourage students to become more independent writers.

2. Constructivist Learning Theory. Constructivist learning theory emphasizes that students actively construct knowledge through experience, practice, and interaction. In writing lessons, students develop their skills by creating texts, receiving feedback, and revising their work. AI tools can support this process by providing examples, suggestions, and explanations that help students understand their mistakes. However, students should not simply copy AI-generated texts. Instead, they should evaluate the suggestions critically and use them to improve their own writing abilities.

3. Sociocultural Theory and Feedback. According to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, learning can be supported through guidance and interaction with more knowledgeable individuals or resources. The concept of scaffolding is particularly relevant to writing development because students often need support when learning new writing strategies. AI tools can provide additional guidance by explaining grammatical rules, suggesting vocabulary, and identifying weaknesses in written texts [3, 112]. Immediate feedback can help students recognize their errors and gradually develop greater independence. Nevertheless, AI feedback should be combined with teacher guidance because automated tools may sometimes provide inaccurate or unsuitable suggestions.

4. Technology-Assisted Language Learning. Technology-assisted language learning explores how digital technologies can improve language teaching and learning. AI-powered applications offer opportunities for personalized practice, immediate feedback, and flexible learning. For example, ChatGPT can help students brainstorm ideas, organize paragraphs, and understand different writing styles, while Grammarly can identify grammatical, spelling, punctuation, and some clarity-related problems. These tools can make writing practice more accessible and allow students to work at their own pace. The theoretical framework suggests that AI tools can contribute to the development of university EFL students' writing skills by supporting the writing process, providing learning assistance, and offering immediate feedback [2, 210]. However, their effectiveness depends on how students use them and how teachers integrate them into the learning process. AI should be considered a supportive educational resource rather than a replacement for teachers or students' own efforts.

Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative research approach to examine how Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools can improve the writing skills of university students who study English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The research focuses on the use of AI-powered tools, particularly ChatGPT and Grammarly, in the process of teaching and learning English writing.

The study applies several research methods, including a literature review, observation, and comparative analysis. First, relevant academic literature on AI-assisted language learning and writing development is reviewed to understand the role of artificial intelligence in English language education. Second, the functions of ChatGPT and Grammarly are examined to identify how these tools support students in improving grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and text organization. Finally, a comparative analysis is used to explore the potential differences between traditional writing practice and AI-assisted writing.

The research also considers how AI-generated feedback can help students recognize errors, revise their texts, and develop independent writing skills. Particular attention is given to the advantages and limitations of AI tools in educational settings. While these technologies can provide immediate feedback and personalized support, their suggestions may not always be accurate or appropriate for every context. Ethical considerations are also important in this study. Students should use AI tools responsibly, avoid plagiarism, and ensure that their written work reflects their own understanding and ideas. Teachers should guide students in evaluating AI-generated suggestions critically. Overall, these research methods provide a basis for examining the potential of artificial intelligence tools to support the development of writing skills among university EFL students. The study aims to identify practical ways of integrating AI into English writing instruction while maintaining students' active participation and academic integrity.

Results

The analysis highlights the potential benefits of using Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to improve the writing skills of university students studying English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Tools such as ChatGPT and Grammarly can support students in different aspects of the writing process, including grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and text organization.

One of the main benefits of AI tools is their ability to provide immediate feedback. Students can identify mistakes in their written work and receive suggestions for improvement. This can help them understand grammatical rules, correct errors, and produce clearer and more organized texts. Another important finding is the potential of AI tools to support vocabulary development. ChatGPT can suggest alternative words, explain expressions, and

provide examples of academic language. Grammarly can help students improve word choice and sentence clarity. These functions may contribute to the development of more accurate and effective writing [4, 84]. Furthermore, AI tools can encourage independent learning. Students can practice writing outside the classroom, revise their texts, and work at their own pace. Immediate feedback may also increase their confidence and motivation to improve their writing skills.

However, the analysis also highlights several limitations. AI tools may sometimes provide incorrect suggestions or fail to understand the full context of a text. In addition, excessive dependence on AI may reduce students' opportunities to develop their own writing abilities. Therefore, AI tools should be used as supplementary learning resources alongside teacher feedback and independent practice. Overall, the results suggest that AI tools have considerable potential to support the development of writing skills among university EFL students when they are used critically and responsibly.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Artificial Intelligence tools offer new opportunities for improving the writing skills of university students who study English as a Foreign Language. Applications such as ChatGPT and Grammarly can help students correct errors, expand their vocabulary, improve sentence structure, and organize their ideas more effectively.

The use of AI tools can also promote independent learning by providing immediate feedback and allowing students to practice writing at their own pace. These benefits may contribute to greater confidence, motivation, and improvement in written communication. Nevertheless, AI should not replace teachers or students' own efforts. Teachers continue to play an essential role in explaining writing principles, evaluating students' progress, and providing guidance. Students should also learn to evaluate AI-generated suggestions critically and avoid relying entirely on automated assistance. It is recommended that universities integrate AI tools into English writing lessons through carefully designed activities and clear guidelines for responsible use. Further research involving classroom observations, student questionnaires, and comparisons of writing performance before and after AI-assisted instruction would help establish the effectiveness of these tools.

Ultimately, the successful integration of AI into English language education depends on balancing technological support with teacher guidance, independent thinking, and active student participation.

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