

The Benefits and Risks of AI-Assisted Academic Writing: Insights from Current Research

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the transformative role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, specifically ChatGPT, in the acquisition of English as a foreign language. With the rapid evolution of educational technology, AI-driven chatbots like ChatGPT offer innovative methodologies to augment language teaching and learning. This study examines the potential of ChatGPT to improve English language students' writing abilities by providing suggestions, corrections and automated assistance. Through a review of existing literature and a discussion of the findings of recent studies, the paper seeks to highlight the benefits and risks of integrating AI tools into language education, especially, in the context of writing. Insights gained from multiple studies suggest that while ChatGPT has the potential to significantly enhance language students' writing skills in all phases of writing, by promoting engagement, motivation, and autonomy among learners, it also necessitates cautious use to ensure academic integrity and to prevent over-reliance, which in turn, can stifle students' learning capacities.

Keywords: writing, EFL, AI, ChatGPT, benefits, risks

Prednosti in tveganja pri znanstvenem pisanju s pomočjo umetne inteligence: spoznanja iz aktualnih raziskav

IZVLEČEK

Prispevek raziskuje, kako so orodja umetne inteligence (UI), zlasti ChatGPT, preoblikovala učenje angleščine kot tujega jezika. S hitrim razvojem izobraževalne tehnologije pogovorni sistemi, kot je ChatGPT, ponujajo inovativne pristope za nadgradnjo poučevanja in učenja jezikov. Študija preučuje potencial orodja ChatGPT za izboljšanje pisnih spretnosti študentov in študentk angleščine s pomočjo predlogov, popravkov in samodejne pomoči. Na podlagi pregleda obstoječe literature in analize ugotovitev nedavnih raziskav prispevek osvetljuje prednosti in tveganja pri vključevanju orodij umetne inteligence v učenje jezikov, še posebej na področju pisanja. Ugotovitve številnih študij kažejo, da lahko ChatGPT bistveno izboljša pisne zmožnosti študentov in študentk v vseh fazah procesa pisanja, saj spodbuja njihovo vključenost, motivacijo in samostojnost. Kljub temu pa njegova uporaba zahteva premišljeno rabo, saj je treba zagotoviti spoštovanje akademske integritete in preprečiti pretirano zanašanje na tehnologijo, kar bi lahko zavrlo razvoj učnih sposobnosti.

Ključne besede: pisanje, angleščina kot tuji jezik, umetna inteligenca, ChatGPT, prednosti, tveganja

1 Introduction

Writing is a fundamental language skill that foreign language learners must acquire, yet it remains one of the most challenging aspects of language acquisition. This is particularly true for academic writing, a critical skill that students must master at the university level (Yang 2024; Özçelik and Ekşi 2024; Malá, Brůhová, and Vašků 2022).

With the advent of artificial intelligence (AI), foreign language acquisition is undergoing a profound transformation. There is an ample body of literature showing that teaching and learning practices are being fundamentally reshaped, and this shift extends to the domain of writing as well. AI, particularly through chatbots like ChatGPT, has introduced a new dimension to the development of writing skills. On the one hand, it offers significant opportunities for enhancing students' writing proficiency; on the other hand, it presents risks and challenges that may disorient students and seriously undermine their academic growth and performance (Nguyen, Ngoc, and Dan 2024; Imran and Almusharraf 2023; Masoudi 2024; Briggs 2018; Mun 2024, etc.). Many of the studies apart from emphasizing the advantages of AI in language learning (Jazbec 2024), also throw light on student perceptions of and experiences with the use of AI in this context (Mahapatra 2024; Rahmi et al. 2024; Artiana and Fakhurriana 2024; Mun 2024; Özçelik and Ekşi 2024; Nguyen, Ngoc, and Dan 2024; Song and Song 2023; Tica and Krsmanović 2024; Khampusaen 2025, etc.).

Drawing on recent studies conducted in various parts of the world, this paper aims to highlight the practical implications of using a specific AI-driven tool, ChatGPT, in foreign language classrooms. More precisely, by reviewing existing literature on AI-assisted academic writing, this study explores the potential strategies for effectively utilizing ChatGPT in completing academic writing assignments. It examines how language students can leverage such technologies to enhance their writing skills, improve efficiency, and receive personalized support. At the same time, the study considers the risks and implications that the incorporation of such technologies might have on students' academic well-being. Lastly, by reviewing the findings obtained from recent research, this study attempts to shed some light on student perceptions on the use of ChatGPT in academic writing.

2 Theoretical Background

2.1 Academic Writing in the Context of EFL

Writing is often characterised as the most challenging of the four language skills for second-language learners (Richards and Renandya 2002; Hyland 2003; Tica and Krsmanović 2024). This view is widely supported by researchers, teachers (Hyland 2003) and language students (Byrne 1993, in Tran 2024). Writing proficiency is often seen as a key factor for success in exams, recruitment tests, and general social standing (Dastgeer, Afzal, and Atta 2021, in Nguyen, Ngoc, and Dan 2024, 171). More specifically, writing serves as a crucial prerequisite not only in education but also in personal and professional endeavours (Yang 2024; Özçelik and Ekşi 2024) because it promotes communication, enhances thinking skills and encourages reflection among students (Klimova 2012, in Özçelik and Ekşi 2024).

However, viewed from another perspective, the complex cognitive processes that underlie writing make this process extremely challenging for foreign language learners. Students are required to produce, arrange, and transform their thoughts, opinions, attitudes, and feelings clearly and coherently in written form (Richards and Renandya 2002). According to Nunan (2003, 88), writing is “the mental work of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express them, and organising them into sentences and paragraphs that will be clear to a reader.” Thus, proficient English writing abilities necessitate not only a comprehensive understanding of a language – an extensive lexicon, appropriate word selection, grammatical principles, punctuation and spelling rules, but also knowledge of layout conventions, sentence and paragraph organisation, and appropriate register and style use (Nguyen, Ngoc, and Dan 2024; Özçelik and Ekşi 2024; Sari and Agustina 2022). Similarly, Ferris (2018) emphasises that effective academic writing involves both an advanced grasp of linguistic aspects (e.g., vocabulary, spelling, grammar, cohesive devices, punctuation, capitalization, and formatting), and sufficient knowledge of extra-linguistic features (e.g., the content and the context of writing, the purpose of writing and the audience). According to Mun (2024), an additional factor that complicates matters further is the time limitation that normally accompanies academic writing assignments. Because of time constraints, students lose the motivation to fully invest themselves in the writing process, which, in turn, seriously hinders the development of their writing abilities.

Clearly, academic writing (irrespective of its format – essays, reports, studies, etc.) is not just a matter of linguistic competence; it requires broader socio-cultural and world knowledge. Taking all of this into consideration, it is unsurprising that many tertiary-level students find writing assignments daunting (Artiana and Fakhurriana 2024; Khatter 2019; Rahmat et al. 2017). As Campbell (2019) (in Rahmi et al. 2024) rightfully points out, academic writing in English is a complex and integrative task, not only for international students but for native speakers, as well.

2.2 AI in Education, Foreign Language Acquisition and Writing

Recent years have seen a visible surge in AI-powered tools, which have left an indelible mark on several sectors, including education. These novel versatile tools can perform multiple functions, and, consequently, are seen as promising resources that can enhance student learning (Nazari et al. 2021, in Rahmi et al. 2024). Their capacity to exhibit human-like behaviour and cognitive abilities, including learning, self-correction, adaptation, reasoning, problem-solving, decision-making, and language comprehension, make them especially beneficial in educational environments (Shidiq 2023, in Artiana and Fakhurriana 2024; Popenici and Kerr 2017, in Rahmi et al. 2024).

Chatbots are a special type of AI-driven tool that is particularly advantageous in foreign language acquisition (Nguyen, Ngoc, and Dan 2024; Batanero et al. 2021 in Tran 2024). Researchers outline a long list of distinct benefits to using chatbots in language learning contexts: the creation of a relaxed learning environment; heightened student motivation; enhanced student enjoyment; reduced language anxiety; access to diverse learning resources; immediate and effective feedback on spelling and grammar; facilitation of reading and listening practice, and the provision of patient conversation partners (Fryer and Carpenter 2006, 9–10). Also, these AI tools are credited with reinforcing students’ sense of autonomy and engagement (Yang 2024); their creative and critical thinking; problem-solving capabilities

(Karataş et al. 2024; Kasneci et al. 2023), and for enlarging students' vocabulary (Kohnke, Moorhouse, and Zou 2023). Writing skills have also been significantly impacted by the application of these technological advances in the foreign language classroom (Kasneci et al. 2023). Purcell et al. (2013) (in Rahmi et al. 2024), in that respect, purport that the positive influence of these digital technologies on students' writing production extends to both non-native and native English users.

Among the AI-driven tools, ChatGPT holds the place of honour. Released in November 2022¹, ChatGPT is a type of Large Language Model (LLM) that has changed the education scene immensely (Nguyen 2023). This text generation tool rapidly reached over 100 million users and attained a market-leading position (van Dis et al. 2023; Peachey 2023; Hu 2023; Dobrin 2023). Although ChatGPT is not the first nor the only AI-driven chatbot, still, what sets it apart from other chatbots is that it was pre-trained based on a vast corpus of human-generated texts, because of which it is excellent at using natural language and generating highly human-like texts (Yang 2024; Anderson 2023, in Jen and Salam 2024). In fact, because of all the texts to which it was exposed during training, it generates immediate responses to text-based instructions provided by the user ("prompts") (Hellstrom 2024). Depending on the prompts it receives, it can provide answers to questions and can generate different kinds of text (Farina and Lavazza 2023, 2), ranging from social media posts, to emails, blog articles, and overviews of research studies; it can also produce summaries, inferences, comparisons, sentiment analysis, and translations to other languages (Hellstrom 2024, 2). It handles with ease follow-up questions, acknowledges mistakes, challenges incorrect assumptions, refuses inappropriate requests, and, most importantly, with ongoing human input, it continuously improves its performance (Masoudi 2024, 64). Research shows that this AI tool, through its advanced algorithms and natural language use, has significant potential to improve students' writing ability by offering grammar corrections, suggestions, and comprehensive feedback (Osorio 2023, in Masoudi 2024, 65), i.e. by procuring ideas as well as final proofreading and editing of written material (Imran and Almusharraf 2023, 2). A crucial factor contributing to its widespread use in education is that today's students, as digital natives, are accustomed to technology in their daily lives (Briggs 2018; Mun 2024), and they find the use of this tool to be uncomplicated and straightforward.

In the following sections, we will explore the benefits and risks of incorporating ChatGPT in academic writing as well as students' perceptions related to this issue by discussing the findings and insights gained from several recent studies that have undertaken the exploration of this issue in diverse academic backgrounds.

3 Review of Recent Research

3.1 The Benefits and Risks of Incorporating ChatGPT in Academic Writing

Although some researchers claim that there is a serious lack of comprehensive empirical research confirming ChatGPT's immense potential in augmenting language learners' skills

¹ ChatGPT was initially released by OpenAI in 2018. The significant advances in the model, however, led to the release of the ChatGPT-3.5 model in November 2022, and the ChatGPT-4 model in March 2023.

(Barrot 2023, in Mun 2024; Nguyen, Ngoc, and Dan 2024; Artiana and Fakhurriana 2024; Yang 2024, Özçelik and Ekşi 2024; Su et al. 2023, in Mahapatra 2024), there is still no denying that the number of studies dealing with this issue and contributing to this discussion has been growing exponentially in recent years.

The findings of a vast pool of recent studies point to the fact that, if used appropriately, this large generative language model can immensely and genuinely improve students' writing capabilities (Sawangwan 2024; Mun 2024; Khampusaen 2025). This AI-driven tool has been labelled a real game-changer in language education, primarily because it is very student-friendly and can provide more need-based or personalised assistance than similar tools (Rudolph, Tan, and Tan 2023, 350). More specifically, its real expertise in the context of writing lies in its ability to respond to user queries regarding various aspects of writing by offering suggestions, functioning as a support-on-demand tool, admitting mistakes and rectifying itself (Mahapatra 2024, 3). In essence, its main advantage is that it supports student writing by providing directions related to both the content and organisation of the writing assignment at all phases of writing (Chan and Hu 2023).

In the pre-writing phase, ChatGPT alleviates the process of writing (Stokel-Walker 2022, in Mahapatra 2024, 3), primarily by generating ideas (Lingard 2023, in Mahapatra 2024, 3). In fact, ChatGPT serves as “an invaluable writing assistant which offers prompt responses and assists in brainstorming sessions” (Nguyen, Ngoc, and Dan 2024, 182) by generating new ideas for writing assignments, suggesting “topics, themes, and perspectives that they might not have considered otherwise” (Kasneci et al. 2023; Taucharungroj 2023, in Imran and Almusharraf 2023, 3), or by expanding upon users' topics, presenting new aspects of their ideas, or providing contextually relevant suggestions (Bhatia 2023, in Nguyen, Ngoc, and Dan 2024, 182). All of these ‘interventions’ aid students “in overcoming their initial writer's block, and in fostering their creativity, during the initial stages of writing” (Nguyen, Ngoc, and Dan 2024, 182).

After the completion of the pre-writing stage, ChatGPT can be employed to provide corrective feedback (Dai et al. 2023, in Mahapatra 2024) on text organisation, especially on the logical organisation of content and thoughts, the addition of appropriate supporting details, the inclusion of suitable concluding remarks (Fitria 2023), the provision of logical connections between paragraphs (Nugroho, Putro, and Syamsi 2023), and the enhancement of writing mechanics (spelling errors, capitalization, or punctuation) (Zirar 2023). During the actual process of writing, ChatGPT's corrective feedback can also target language use and grammar (Nguyen 2023) as well as vocabulary (Wang and Guo 2023). In other words, ChatGPT can provide access to grammar materials on various topics such as tenses, active and passive sentences, gerunds, infinitives, syntactic structure of sentences etc. It can also suggest appropriate vocabulary choices by providing synonyms and alternatives for words and phrases. This can be extremely helpful for non-native English speakers in their quest to express their ideas (Huang and Tan 2023, 1150–51). ChatGPT can work as “an alternative to dictionaries and model more advanced use of foreign learning” in the context of writing (Mun 2024, 27). Furthermore, during the writing phase, this chatbot can also be used to ensure that students are using the appropriate style and tone for their specific writing assignment

(Hellstrom 2024). Namely, ChatGPT can improve “the formality and clarity of their writing, ensuring a more accurate presentation of their ideas” (Nguyen, Ngoc, and Dan 2024, 184).

In the revision phase, language students can utilize ChatGPT for editing and proofreading purposes. While editing is mostly concerned with clarity and concision, and correcting wordiness of text, proofreading targets final polishing of verb constructions, punctuation, grammar, and spelling (Diamond and Allen 2024; Dobrin 2023).

In addition to these features – generation of ideas, assistance in content and structure organisation and language editing and proofreading, ChatGPT can help detect plagiarism by comparing a given text to existing published sources, thereby verifying its originality and determining whether it has been copied from other works (Huang and Tan 2023). Additionally, ChatGPT can provide “guidance on proper citation formats” and generate “reference entries for various citation styles” (Jarrah, Wardat, and Fidalgo 2023, in Nguyen, Ngoc, and Dan 2024, 184).

The only prerequisite for obtaining adequate assistance from ChatGPT is for students to be trained in proper “prompt engineering”, which, basically, stands for putting precise and concise instructions into ChatGPT’s search box (Diamond and Allen 2024; Dobrin 2023). Effective “prompt engineering” is vital at all stages of the writing process (Diamond and Allen 2024; Hellstrom 2024). Well-crafted prompts help in avoiding vague or generic responses, ensure accuracy, and prevent ChatGPT from generating offensive or misleading content. Diamond and Allen (2024), Dobrin (2023), and Skrabut (2023) call for continuous refinement of prompts based on the feedback received. To save time and to enhance the efficiency of all writing phases, students are advised to build a library of specialized prompts to which they constantly refer (Diamond and Allen 2024; Peachey 2023).

Given all the abovementioned insights from previous studies, it is safe to conclude that ChatGPT constitutes an invaluable tool capable of providing users with a solid foundation for their writing assignments. When employed effectively, it holds the potential to significantly enhance the academic writing experience of students, by offering both useful guidance and feedback (Raheem et al. 2023, in Nguyen, Ngoc, and Dan 2024, 179). Despite these considerable benefits, students must be consistently reminded that ChatGPT should serve as a supplemental tool – specifically, as a writing assistant – rather than a content creator that diminishes their role or, even worse, entirely replaces their input (Mun 2024; Barrot 2023; Tran Ngan, and Uyen 2025; Nguyen, Ti, and Hoa 2025). Put differently, students should embrace the idea that while machines can help construct good writing, humans are still the main actors controlling the flow in the writing process (Sumakul, Hamied, and Sukyadi 2021).

Current research constantly draws attention to the plausible dangers that ChatGPT’s use can pose in the context of academic writing if it is not treated solely as an assistant. Thus, the most obvious negative ramifications of student overreliance on ChatGPT can be reflected in their ability to learn and develop their writing skills, since they could get used to obtaining ready-made texts (Mun 2024). The same goes for their ability to detect and correct their mistakes and to develop their creative and critical thinking skills (Kornfeld and Roy 2021, in

Tran 2024; Nguyen, Ti, and Hoa 2025). Chatbot's limitations in interpretative and nuanced tasks have also been well-documented. For instance, Hazemali et al. (2024) demonstrated that chatbots often falter when tasked with complex contextual analyses, such as drawing cause-and-effect relationships in historical document reviews. This highlights the need for human oversight to ensure accuracy and depth in academic writing. These genuine threats to learners' development of critical thinking and writing abilities have impelled a number of teachers and school administrators to perceive ChatGPT as the opening of Pandora's box (Hong 2023, in Sawangwan 2024, 1). This, in turn, has culminated with some education institutes, in some countries announcing bans on the use of this chatbot altogether (Reuters 2023, in Sawangwan 2024, 1).

ChatGPT's potential to threaten academic honesty and ethical conduct (Yan 2023, in Mahapatra 2024) can be observed in the fact that the factual content generated by ChatGPT is sometimes incorrect, and human control and intervention are required (Hellstrom 2024). In fact, ChatGPT, like the rest of GenAIs, is susceptible to responses that are known as 'hallucinations', which, in essence, are false outputs despite appearing correct. These kinds of responses may occur because of a lack of sufficient information, vague or unclear prompts, limited or overly specific data within a language model, or biased datasets. As a result, they might contain incorrect citations, non-existent sources, or entirely fabricated information (Dobrin 2023). Hence, students are advised to always double-check ChatGPT-generated content for accuracy and relevance by consulting reliable resources (Dobrin 2023; Diamond and Allen 2024; Hellstrom 2024; Hazemali et al. 2024; Nguyen, Ti, and Hoa 2025).

Lastly, ChatGPT can encourage cheating and plagiarism in some students, especially, those who struggle with writing assignments (Jen and Salam 2024). In the most apocalyptic scenario, its continuous and nonselective use can lead to drastically reduced and changed need for, ability at, and valuation of human writing, or, in other words, can drastically decrease trust in the written word, as it would be difficult to prove whether a text was produced by a human being or a machine (Hellstrom 2024).

3.2 Insights from Previous Studies Regarding Student Perceptions on the use of ChatGPT in Academic Writing

In this section, we discuss the findings of a selection of recent studies dealing with the role of ChatGPT in enhancing various aspects of language students' writing skills as well as students' perception of ChatGPT's 'interference' with their writing.

Nguyen, Ngoc and Dan (2024) investigated Vietnamese students' perceptions of ChatGPT's usefulness by conducting a questionnaire and interviews, focusing on eight aspects of writing development: vocabulary, grammar, idea generation, organisation, translation, writing style, plagiarism management, and the mechanics of writing. Student responses revealed a moderately positive attitude towards ChatGPT's use for writing purposes, with the highest ratings given to idea generation, and then to vocabulary, grammar, organisation, writing style and idea generation, and notably less pronounced interest in using ChatGPT for plagiarism management, translation, and the mechanics of writing. As to the limitations of using

ChatGPT, students voiced concerns about its tendency to produce nonspecific or irrelevant responses, the risk of over-reliance on the tool, and its inability to provide reliable references. Based on these findings, Nguyen, Ngoc and Dan (2024) concluded that ChatGPT both streamlines the writing process by allowing students to upgrade their argumentative writing skills at a fast pace and promotes a more engaging and dynamic approach to language acquisition and composition in general.

Similarly, Song and Song (2023) assessed the influence of ChatGPT on the writing abilities and motivation of Chinese EFL students. Using a pre-test and post-test design, they compared the writing skills of 50 students, who were randomly assigned to control and experimental groups. In addition to the tests, semi-structured interviews explored the students' motivation for and experiences with AI-assisted learning. The results indicated that ChatGPT helped improve vocabulary, grammar, organization, and idea generation in the experimental group in comparison to those receiving traditional instruction. Students also expressed concerns about AI's accuracy in certain contexts and the dangers of becoming overly dependent on it.

Yang's (2024) empirical study explored the impact of ChatGPT on writing proficiency among Chinese EFL learners. Using a qualitative case study approach, the study included Chinese undergraduate students who participated in semi-structured interviews intended to provide in-depth insight into their experiences with ChatGPT. This study investigated ChatGPT's impact on students' writing proficiency, focusing on the planning and revision phase of the writing process, and showed that ChatGPT "aids in planning by helping students think deeply, generate ideas, and organize them coherently" (Yang 2024, 176). Furthermore, the study highlights that "during revision, it provides feedback on grammar, spelling, and structure, refining expressions and producing polished writing" and that "students reported enhanced creative thinking and improved essay coherence and readability" (Yang 2024, 176). Given these results, Yang's (2024) conclusion is that integrating ChatGPT into writing instruction can effectively enhance students' writing outcome.

ChatGPT's impact on the acquisition of register knowledge across various writing tasks among undergraduate students in Turkey was explored by Özçelik and Ekşi (2024). The students were asked to complete writing assignments, which were then checked by ChatGPT for corrections and suggestions. The researchers trained students in prompt engineering to help them achieve better results from ChatGPT. The study found that ChatGPT helped students to overcome their initial reluctance to engage in writing tasks. It was particularly useful for acquiring formal register knowledge but less effective for teaching neutral register or informal writing.

In Mahapatra's (2024) study, ChatGPT was examined as a feedback tool for the academic writing skills of undergraduate ESL students in a large Indian university classroom. His mixed-methods intervention involved pre-tests, post-tests, and delayed tests, and Mahapatra established that the employment of ChatGPT as a feedback tool had a substantially positive impact on students' academic writing proficiency. The students expressed overwhelmingly favourable opinions about the tool, upon which Mahapatra (2024) concluded that ChatGPT can serve as a dependable feedback tool for academic writing assignments.

Mun (2024), on the other hand, conducted a study among Korean EFL college students to understand how they used ChatGPT in essay writing and what their perceptions of its usefulness were. The students were organised into an experimental group and a control group. They were given instructions by the same instructor, used the same course materials and syllabus, and underwent the same examinations. The participants had a pre-test and a post-test, during which they wrote an essay expressing their viewpoints on a selected topic. The participants in the experimental group received instructions for writing adequate prompts and were told to use ChatGPT to individually proofread and revise their drafts. They submitted their second drafts after they had received feedback from ChatGPT, whereas the students from the control group submitted their drafts after receiving peer feedback in class. The findings of this study revealed a highly positive sentiment towards ChatGPT overall, with students perceiving it as a valuable and effective tool for English writing and language learning. They particularly pointed out its ease of use, convenience, and positive impact on grammar, vocabulary, and content organisation. Furthermore, these results indicated significantly improved writing performance among the experimental group of students compared to the control group. More precisely, according to Mun (2024, 36), the students in the experimental group exhibited “enhanced post-test writing quality in both structural and linguistic aspects, which surpassed considerably their pre-test scores”.

The perspectives of Indonesian EFL undergraduate students on using ChatGPT in academic writing were explored by Artiana and Fakhurriana (2024) through a study that included a qualitative approach. This study involved participants who used ChatGPT in their writing assignments, and the data was collected through observation, in-depth interviews and an analysis of academic writing tasks produced by the students. The researchers endeavoured to assess the writing quality, language use, and developmental progress in academic writing among students using ChatGPT as a writing aid. The study revealed that ChatGPT accelerated the writing process, alleviated pressure, and helped students produce more fluent and better structured texts. Students appreciated its assistance with idea organisation and argument construction, as well as its ability to offer alternative suggestions and phrasing options.

The integration of ChatGPT into the English language writing curriculum in Thai EFL universities was investigated by Sawangwan (2024). This study found that ChatGPT contributed to making significant improvements in students’ proficiency, which moved from the B1 level to C1, according to the CEFR. Sawangwan (2024) in this study also emphasized the evolving role of teachers as facilitators who guide students in the use of AI tools, by providing technical support, establishing writing criteria, and offering ethical guidance. This shift in the role of teachers from “being completely in charge” to “being mere facilitators,” allows them to focus more on curriculum development and personalized support, ultimately enhancing students’ writing performance (Sawangwan 2024, 14).

Rahmi et al. (2024) reported in their study that while Indonesian students generally viewed AI tools like ChatGPT quite favourably, they did note some drawbacks, including the tool’s lack of intentionality and its failure to replicate the nuances of human thought. Students felt that AI-generated text often lacked a “human touch” and could produce content that was predictable, stylistically inconsistent, or irrelevant to the topic.

Another study that underlines serious drawbacks that stem from using AI tools in the context of academic writing is Tran, Ngan and Uyen's (2025). This study focused on a group of postgraduate students majoring in English in Vietnam and their experiences with AI. Interestingly, these students, in addition to the benefits, which mostly take the form of improved writing skills and immediate support, also underlined serious drawbacks such as experiencing difficulty logging in and signing up for accounts when using AI tools; costly subscriptions and unstable Internet connection; the real danger of becoming overly reliant on AI-generated content, losing one's thinking and writing skills, and, finally, the challenge of integrating AI-generated texts into one's own writing while preserving one's academic voice (Tran, Ngan, and Uyen 2025, 87).

Although this section does not provide a comprehensive overview of all current studies on AI-assisted writing, the available findings indicate that EFL students from diverse academic backgrounds around the world generally express positive attitudes towards the integration of AI tools – particularly ChatGPT – into their academic writing processes. The benefits that are stressed throughout the studies, generally encompass grammar, vocabulary, idea generation, immediate and personalized feedback, register, motivation, proofreading, and editing. A common feature of the analysed studies is their reliance on similar research methodologies, which typically include interviews, questionnaires, analyses of students' writing assignments, and pre- and post-tests. Moreover, most of these studies capture students' perceptions over a short period and do not engage in longitudinal research that would track the evolution of students' experiences and attitudes toward the use of AI tools in academic writing contexts. While the primary focus of the reviewed studies is on the benefits related to the content and structure of student writing, many also address notable drawbacks such as the potential for over-reliance on AI, the production of vague or irrelevant responses, and the inability of AI to replicate the nuances of human thought. Nonetheless, the consensus across the studies is that the benefits outweigh the risks, and that the topic warrants further scholarly attention.

4 Conclusion

On the basis of the discussion above, it can be inferred that researchers have paid considerable attention to the application of ChatGPT in academic writing, despite the relative novelty of this AI tool. Given the complexity and high relevance of writing as one of the main language skills, this focus is unsurprising.

The review of recent literature reveals that ChatGPT indeed holds significant promise as a tool for enhancing academic writing, particularly in the context of English language learning. Studies disclose that, when used effectively and ethically (with proper student training), ChatGPT has many benefits. It can support students in various stages of the writing process, from idea generation to revision, providing guidance on content, structure, grammar, and vocabulary, all while improving motivation. The advantages to using it include its role in facilitating brainstorming, improving writing mechanics, and providing corrective feedback. These advantages apply to both non-native and native speakers of English.

However, the integration of ChatGPT into academic writing is not without risks. Recent studies highlight that overreliance on the tool may hinder the development of students'

critical thinking, creativity, and self-editing skills. Additionally, there is a potential for academic dishonesty, as students might use it as a shortcut to complete writing assignments or to bypass the writing process entirely. The tool's limitations in the form of occasional inaccuracies and "hallucinations" emphasize the need for students to exercise caution and verify the information generated by ChatGPT.

Regarding students' perspectives, latest studies show that, in general, English language students from a range of academic backgrounds, embrace this tool in their language acquisition process. They report a positive impact on their writing proficiency, particularly in the planning, drafting and revision phases. It is of paramount importance to mention that students also display acute awareness of the downsides of using ChatGPT. In that context, they particularly underline its lack of nuanced, human-like language, occasional stylistic inconsistencies, shortcomings in the use of informal and neutral register, and difficulties logging in and signing in.

Ultimately, the findings and insights gained from these studies show that while ChatGPT offers substantial support, it should be viewed as a supplemental tool, not as a replacement for the students' own effort and intellectual engagement. Universities and language instructors must guide students in using AI tools responsibly, ensuring that these complement rather than replace student learning and development in academic writing. Thus, for instance, in the pre-writing phase, students should be encouraged to do the brainstorming independently first, and then ask AI tools to generate ideas for them. Also, in the writing and revision phase, students should be instructed to be persistent in verifying the truthfulness and reliability of AI-generated content.

A major recommendation for future studies is to include longitudinal research that examines potential changes in students' experiences with and attitudes toward the use of ChatGPT in writing contexts. Additionally, future research could address unresolved questions, such as how educators can train students to use ChatGPT ethically and whether universities should implement specific regulations to address the ethical challenges associated with using AI in writing assignments.

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