

TEACHER AND STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF CHATGPT IN ACADEMIC WRITING AND ESL CLASSROOMS

Khusanova Mukaddas Mavlonovna

Uzbek State World Languages

Universite English Faculty 1

English integrated course №1

Abstract: This article explores the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the use of ChatGPT in academic writing within English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms. With artificial intelligence (AI) increasingly influencing language learning, tools like ChatGPT are becoming accessible and popular among ESL learners. The research investigates the perceived benefits, drawbacks, ethical concerns, and pedagogical implications of integrating ChatGPT into ESL writing instruction. Through a mixed-methods approach involving surveys and interviews, the study identifies emerging attitudes and practices, highlighting the potential of ChatGPT to enhance ESL writing skills while also raising important concerns about academic integrity and student dependence.

Keywords: ChatGPT, Artificial Intelligence, ESL Classrooms, Academic Writing, Language Learning, Teacher Perceptions, Student Perceptions, Educational Technology, AI Literacy, Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, AI in Education.

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in education has accelerated in recent years, particularly with the release of advanced natural language processing tools such as ChatGPT. Developed by OpenAI, ChatGPT is a generative AI chatbot capable of producing fluent, contextually appropriate responses to user prompts, including academic writing assistance. While the tool has garnered attention for its ability to support student writing, it has also raised concerns about misuse, plagiarism, and the redefinition of academic skills. In the context of English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms, where students often struggle with linguistic expression, ChatGPT offers

both promise and pitfalls. This article examines how both ESL teachers and students perceive the use of ChatGPT in academic writing tasks.

Recent studies suggest that AI tools like ChatGPT can support academic writing by providing real-time grammar correction, vocabulary suggestions, and idea generation. In academic writing, especially for second-language learners, coherence and grammatical accuracy are major concerns. ChatGPT can assist in these areas by generating structured content and reformulating ideas. However, some scholars warn against over-reliance, as students may bypass the learning process and reduce their engagement with critical writing tasks.

Teachers and students often differ in their attitudes toward educational technologies. According to Warschauer, teachers may be skeptical of new tools that disrupt established pedagogical practices, while students are more willing to embrace technology if it enhances their learning. In ESL contexts, the digital divide also influences the adoption and acceptance of AI tools. Some learners may lack access to the necessary digital literacy skills, limiting their ability to use tools like ChatGPT effectively.

One major concern is the ethical use of ChatGPT in academic contexts. Issues such as plagiarism, authenticity, and reduced critical thinking skills have been raised. Educators are now grappling with how to teach academic integrity alongside digital fluency. The blurred line between assistance and authorship challenges traditional notions of originality and ownership in writing. Moreover, the lack of clear institutional policies on AI use in education exacerbates confusion for both instructors and students.

This study employed a mixed-methods approach:

- **Participants:** 12 ESL instructors and 45 university-level ESL students in a preparatory academic writing course.
- **Data Collection:** Online surveys and semi-structured interviews.

- **Instruments:** Likert-scale questionnaires and open-ended interview prompts focused on experience, perceived benefits and challenges, and ethical considerations.
- **Data Analysis:** Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics; qualitative data were coded thematically using grounded theory principles.

The study was conducted over a period of 8 weeks in a university ESL program. All participants were briefed on the research purpose and gave informed consent. The student group included both undergraduate and graduate learners from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Most students (82%) reported using ChatGPT for generating ideas, checking grammar, and reformulating sentences. Positive feedback included improved confidence, better understanding of structure, and faster writing. A number of students mentioned using ChatGPT as a "language coach" that provided immediate feedback and clarification.

Some students admitted to copying AI-generated content without revision, especially under deadline pressure. 26% of respondents indicated they had submitted writing assignments with significant sections composed by ChatGPT.

While 58% of teachers recognized the potential of ChatGPT for supporting struggling writers, they also expressed serious concerns:

Loss of Originality: 9 of 12 teachers observed decreased creativity and critical thinking.

Plagiarism: 67% believed students were submitting ChatGPT-generated essays without proper citation.

Pedagogical Tensions: Teachers noted a lack of clear institutional guidelines for AI use.

Several teachers also expressed anxiety about their roles being diminished or replaced by AI-driven instruction. Others were open to the idea of integrating ChatGPT into lesson planning as a way to model strong writing practices.

The study reveals a complex landscape in which ChatGPT functions as both a helpful tool and a pedagogical challenge. From a constructivist perspective, the tool can be used to scaffold writing development, especially for learners lacking confidence. However, sociocultural theory reminds us that writing is not just linguistic output—it is a form of meaning-making shaped by interaction, feedback, and reflection. If students outsource too much of their writing process to AI, they risk losing these essential components.

Teachers are at the forefront of this paradigm shift. Their concerns highlight the urgent need for AI literacy training, curriculum redesign, and institutional policies that define acceptable use. Rather than banning ChatGPT, educators may consider embracing it as a teachable tool—similar to how calculators were integrated into math education. Future teacher training programs should include modules on AI integration, focusing on ethical classroom practices, responsible use, and student-centered applications. Moreover, further research is needed on how ChatGPT affects long-term writing proficiency. It remains unclear whether students who rely on AI tools actually improve their writing skills or merely become better at editing machine-generated content.

ChatGPT has introduced new dynamics into ESL academic writing instruction. While many students appreciate the linguistic support, teachers are cautious about the implications for academic integrity and skill development. For ChatGPT to become a productive educational tool, educators must strike a balance between embracing innovation and preserving the core values of language education. This calls for explicit instruction on responsible AI use, collaborative policy-making, and research-driven pedagogy. Future directions include longitudinal studies on writing development in AI-assisted learning environments, as well as the creation of classroom frameworks for responsible ChatGPT use. As AI continues to evolve, the challenge for educators will be to ensure that technology enhances, rather than replaces, authentic learning.

The purpose of this article is to investigate and analyze the perceptions of both teachers and students regarding the use of ChatGPT in academic writing within English

as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms. As AI technologies become increasingly prevalent in education, this study aims to evaluate how ChatGPT influences writing development, teaching practices, and academic integrity. It explores the pedagogical opportunities and ethical challenges presented by AI-assisted learning, with the goal of informing future teaching strategies, curriculum design, and policy-making related to AI integration in ESL education.

Literature:

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