EXPLORING UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS EXPERIENCES ON USING CHATGPT IN EFL ACADEMIC WRITING CLASSROOM

Dwi Devi Khoirotun Nisa[1]
Dihliza Basya[1]
Diyah Ayu Nugraheni[1]

Email of corresponding author: anisdevi001@gmail.com
[1]English Languge Department, Universitas Islam Jember, Jember 68131,
INDONESIA

Abstract

This study explores the experiences of Indonesian undergraduate students using ChatGPT in their English as a Foreign Language (EFL) academic writing classes. It begins by addressing the inherent challenges EFL learners face in academic writing, such as difficulties with grammar, coherence, and vocabulary. The research employed a qualitative methodology, specifically narrative inquiry, to gather insights from students through semi-structured interviews. The findings indicate that students find ChatGPT to be a valuable resource that assists them in various aspects of the writing process, including generating ideas, structuring sentences, and correcting grammar. This support leads to noticeable improvements in the quality of their writing, such as enhanced clarity and vocabulary diversity. However, the study also identifies several challenges, including inconsistencies in the responses generated by ChatGPT, issues with the validity of the information provided, and ethical concerns regarding plagiarism and originality. Overall, the thesis emphasizes the importance of critical engagement with AI tools like ChatGPT, suggesting that while they can significantly aid the writing process, students must be cautious and informed about their use. The research highlights the need for educators to provide clear guidelines on the ethical implications of using AI in academic writing, ensuring that students can maximize the benefits while minimizing potential drawbacks.

Keywords: Academic writing; AI integration; ChatGPT; EFL; Student experiences.

INTRODUCTION

Writing is regarded as one of the trickiest and most challenging tasks for writers who are learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), particularly when it comes to academic writing (Dan et al., 2017; Tillema, 2012). This challenge results from academic writing's complicated components, organizational structure, and requirement for precise and sophisticated language use. This phenomenon is also noted in the context of English language instruction in Indonesia. Writing essays and other academic materials is a challenge for Indonesian language learners mainly because they lack skill in syntax, syntactic structures, and vocabulary. Besides that, there are further difficulties in preserving coherence in writing, creating efficient rhetorical structure, and controlling interference from their first language (L1). To counteract this challenge, several writing software can play a crucial role in supporting EFL learners develop their writing capabilities. These digital tools often have features like language and syntax checkers, word count increase recommendations, and plagiarism detection. These features help students in understanding and improving their writing (Roe et al., 2023).

Considering the state of technology today and the importance of language learning in the development of student writing, a few digital tools that provide interactive feedback via a computer have already emerged. One of the fastest-growing technologies lately is artificial intelligence (AI) technology that has cognitive abilities similar to human such as reasoning, meaning search, generalization, and experiential learning (Anantrasirichai & Bull, 2021; Alharbi, 2023). Using AI capabilities has become a common trend in education, especially among students and teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). This technological advancement significantly facilitates language acquisition, in writing skills. It is enriched by the many AI-Based digital Writing Assistants emerging, such as Quillbot, WordTune, Jenni, Chat-GPT, Paperpal, Copy.ai, and Essay Writer, each contributing to improving writing processes and improving learning outcomes. Chat-GPT, an advanced chatbot model rooted in the GPT framework created by OpenAI, has attracted considerable interest in academic circles because of its capacity to produce articulate and complex text quickly. This feature has enabled its incorporation into diverse educational settings, where it functions as a potent resource for enriching learning encounters (Holland, 2023).

For the past few years, several researchers have investigated the integration of ChatGPT in the development of language learners' writing skills (Marzuki's et. al., 2023; Sumakul et. al., 2022; Mahapatra, 2024; Yan 2022; Misra & Chandwar, 2023). Despite that, as far as the researchers know, there are still very few studies that explore the students' experiences on using ChatGPT in EFL Academic writing classes. To fill this gap, this study is conducted to explore Indonesian EFL undergraduate students' experiences on using ChatGPT in Academic Writing. Through the exploration of Indonesian EFL Undergraduate students' experiences of ChatGPT integration in academic writing, this study will provide valuable insights into the potential impact of AI-assisted language learning on students' writing skills, engagement, and overall academic performance. Further, this study will enrich empirical body in this topic. By exploring students' experiences on using ChatGPT in academic writing, this study aims to contribute to the optimization of AI-assisted language learning tools, promoting more effective and engaging educational experiences for EFL undergraduate students. Thus, the current study is therefore trying to answer the following research question; "How are EFL undergraduate students' experiences on using ChatGPT for academic writing?"

LITERATURE REVIEW

AI in Education

Generative AI, which is developed from foundational models like large language models, functions by learning from large digital datasets such as articles, books, and various online platforms then predicting potential subsequent responses (Lodge et al., 2023). With the wealth of various digitized resources available, Generative AI can rapidly acquire knowledge across numerous domains and provide prompt responses following user inquiries. This capability allows Generative AI to perform a wide range of tasks, from drafting various text to answering simple and complex questions. Its efficiency and adaptability make it a powerful tool in various fields, particularly in education.

In the field of educational research and practice, the advent of Generative AI signifies a significant advancement, creating extensive opportunities for students, educators, policymakers, and researchers (Victor et al., 2023). In this regard, Generative AI offers personalized learning routes customized to learners' individual preferences and needs (Cotton et. al., 2023). For young learners, Generative AI interactive capabilities become the perfect conversational partner for language practice (Luo et. al., 2023). Additionally, middle school students could benefit from customized quiz assignments and worksheets (Yan, 2023). Further, tertiary students can utilize Generative AI to aid in their research projects and writing assignments (Sumakul et. al., 2022; Li et. al., 2023)

Even though there are various benefits and advantages to the integration of Generative AI, however, Generative AI also brings significant risks. One of the concern risks is the reinforcement of biases and potential inequities in English language education due to societal prejudices in their training data, leading to discriminatory outcomes that disproportionately affect marginalized students (Rusmiyanto et al., 2023; Gillani et al., 2023). This can result in biased feedback, unfair assessments, and the reinforcement of stereotypes, undermining inclusive and equitable education (Zanetti et al., 2020). Furthermore, the lack of transparency in many AI models makes their decision-making processes difficult to understand, leading to concerns about trust and accountability (Gillani et al., 2023). Additionally, there is a risk that AI tools could disrupt the essential balance of human-centered teaching and learning, potentially replacing the vital interactions between teachers and students (Kasneci et al., 2023).

ChatGPT in Academic Writing

ChatGPT is an example of a Large Language Model (LLM), a form of Generative AI technology that simulates human interaction through extensive data training. ChatGPT understands context and provides suitable responses. Borji (2023) suggests that the system can generate new text based on previously learnt patterns from training data. After pre-training, the creators adjust and fine-tune the algorithm to improve performance (Lund, et al.). Kasneci, et al. (2023) suggest fine-tuning language for domain-specific data gathering, such as medical and legal domains. Besides that, Machine Learning (ML) and deep learning techniques enable these models to learn over time and acquire new information without explicit programming (Hosseini et al, 2023; Lund et al. 2023). Chat GPT, or Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer (Teel, 2023;

Flanagin, et al. 2023), has gained popularity since its November 2022 introduction. While ChatGPT is widely regarded as the most popular of the LLMs, it has been joined by Bing Chat, Google Bard, Meta's Galactica, and Anthropic's Claude (Webb, 2024; Hosseini et al, 2023). Microsoft has implemented Co-Pilot, a generative AI, across its 365 tools (Webb, 2024).

The massive size of these systems and their infrastructure has prompted environmental concerns, as training databases can be gigantic, needing a lot of computer power and leaving a big carbon footprint. Despite these concerns, ChatGPT has proven effective in a variety of applications, including text translation, coding skill learning, text summarization, curriculum construction, and educational content generation (Mogavi et al.,2023). However, these LLMs have shortcomings, such as a lack of a comprehensive grasp of the physical and social worlds, as well as the ability to reason about the relationships between concepts and entities (Talboy & Fuller., 2023). Additionally, these LLMs's responses may not always be accurate, evidence-based, or up-to-date (Ye et. al., 2023). Furthermore, the lack of openness and the possibility of biases and disinformation raise ethical difficulties, particularly in the context of scientific research and publishing.

The employment of LLMs creates copyright and plagiarism concerns because it is impossible to track the sources utilized in AI-generated output. Researchers, publishers, and AI producers must set rules and best practices to ensure that this technology is used ethically, transparently, and accountable. Policies and laws are also required to address the ethical, privacy, and equity problems raised by LLMs (Hosseini et al., 2023). In this sense, LLMs have the potential to benefit users, but they also carry risks and limits. To use these technologies properly, human oversight, meticulous verification, and responsibility are required (Small, 2023). Finally, LLMs like as ChatGPT can be useful when used correctly, but they should not be considered a replacement for expert knowledge or utilized to generate unoriginal content and ideas. As this technology advances, it is critical to identify the best path ahead for maximizing the utility of these tools while resolving their flaws.

The integration of ChatGPT, a language model that uses Reinforcement Learning from Human Feedback (RLHF) (chinoso, 2023), into educational contexts has attracted much attention in recent years. A number of studies have investigated its potential benefits and challenges in education. One important application is language assistance, where ChatGPT serves as a valuable tool for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, offering real-time language correction, vocabulary suggestions, and grammar feedback to improve their writing skills (Sumakul et. al., 2022; Jeond et al., 2023; Jessie S. Barrot, 2023).

In addition, Kohnke et al., (2023) revealed that students can maintain their self-confidence and writing abilities by having the courage to publish their work in public forums. Having a platform like this can encourage student feedback and assessment mechanisms, increase a sense of community, and encourage collaborative learning. Besides that, (Liu & Ma, 2023) identified that ChatGPT has been proven to increase motivation among EFL students, because the interactive nature of ChatGPT makes writing assignments more interesting and enjoyable. Additionally, ChatGPT's ability to provide personalized feedback and adapt to students' writing needs can increase engagement by meeting individual needs (Jessie, 2023).

However, a broader exploration of ChatGPT also highlights its limitations such as the difficulty in understanding the full context. This can lead to potential inaccuracies in feedback and the risk of excessive reliance on this technology (Van Dis et al., 2023;

Graham, 2022). It is feared that this could potentially lead to disengagement if there is excessive dependence on AI tools, because students view them as a substitute for human interaction or creativity in writing (Misra & Chandwar, 2023). Additionally, the use of AI in the classroom raises ethical considerations, including concerns about plagiarism, data privacy, and the need for transparency in recognizing AI contributions to student work (Hong, 2023).

Previous Study

Recently, there have been many studies investigating the use of AI in EFL writing classes, especially ChatGPt. Found this recent research by Wang (2024) discussing the use of ChatGPT to help L2 students with English academic writing assignments, showing its benefits in improving efficiency and accuracy. Researchers found ChatGPT valuable in English writing, and that using ChatGPT, either independently or with teacher guidance, improved writing assignments and improved educational outcomes. In other research it is also stated that EFL Learners find ChatGPT useful in writing feedback, especially in correcting lexical and grammatical errors, thus improving their writing skills (Mun, 2024). Besides that, using ChatGPT makes them more aware of linguistic aspects and reduces their anxiety in writing in English. In another hand, Bouzar et al. (2024) found graduate students who used ChatGPT reported higher self-confidence in their academic writing skills as well as increasing their writing self-efficacy. However, Yan (2022) explored 8 undergraduate students' perceptions of their experiences in using ChatGPT on writing practice, the researcher found that the participants expressed concerns about academic honesty and educational equity, highlighting the need for reconceptualization of plagiarism and development of regulatory policies for its appropriate utilization. Nguyen et al. (2024) also reported a negative correlation between students' perceptions of ChatGPT use and their actual engagement with the tool, where an increase in positive perceptions of ChatGPT was actually accompanied by a decrease in engagement. These findings suggest that although students have positive attitudes towards ChatGPT, their actual practices tend to vary based on their perceptions.

METHODS

Research Design

The purpose of this study is to explore the students' experiences on using ChatGPT integration for EFL Academic Writing. In doing so, this study employed qualitative approach with *Narrative-Inquary* as its research design (Clandinin, 2006) in order to gather comprehensive data based on the experience of Indonesia EFL Undergraduate students during their learning activities on Academic Writing utilizing ChatGPT as an assisting tools. According to (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2) *"Narrative- -Inquiry is a way of characterizing the phenomena of human experience and its study which is appropriate to many social science fields"*. In accordance to this statement, using a narrative approach design allows researchers to explore data from social phenomena in depth and accurately based on specific parameters from the existing procedural formulation, which pays attention to the unique characteristics of each phenomenon studied. Furthermore, this study aims to investigate the experiences of EFL undergraduate students in academic writing classes with AI-based ChatGPT integration

and findings will have practical implications for educators, practitioners, and stakeholders in the education sector.

Research samples

Purposive sampling technique (Jupp, 2006) was used to select participants, because ChatGPT is a new technology that not many students have used recently. With regard to the sampling in question, 3 participants were deliberately selected to fulfill the research objectives, but to consider efficiency and validity, several factors must be taken into account (Creswell and Plano, 2011). In detail, the participants are selected based on the following criteria; (1) the participants need to be University students majoring in English Language Education, (2) the participants need to be accustomed in using AI tools, especially ChatGPT, to help with this assignment, and (3) the participants need to be currently or already finished the Academic Writing class.

The ethical procedures that will be applied in recruiting participants are in accordance with (Hammersley and Traianou, 2012), researchers began by looking for information on students who have met the research criteria. After finding several students as suitable potential participants, researcher sent letters of consent to potential participants who were willing to follow the research procedures until the end of this study. Researchers also explained to participants the purpose of the research and the conditions for participation. Apart from that, researchers explained that their identities would be disguised in order to maintain the confidentiality and privacy of potential participants and give them the freedom to withdraw from this research at any time (Allen, 2017).

Instrumentation

To obtain the necessary data on the students experiences on using ChatGPT for Academic Writing, this study employs semi structure interviews (Barkhuizen et al., 2014). According to Mackey and Gass (2016) interviews can explore phenomena that cannot be observed directly. This method allowed us to collect qualitative data about EFL students' use of ChatGPT in academic writing classes. As well as their experiences on using ChatGPT for the purpose of Academic Writing. In paractice, the interview is conducted several times via WhatsApp and face-to-face. All the interview sessions are audio-recorded after gaining the permission of research participants. During the interview, the participants are asked several questions based on the interview guidelines adopted from previous research (Sumakul et al., 2022) as follows: (1) how they used the AI (ChatGPT), (2) how the app helped them in their writing, (3) the challenges they faced when using the app. Afterward, the interview data will then be analized using thematic analysis.

Data Analysis Method

To analyze the verbal data, this study utilized thematic analysis. As explained by Braun and Clarke (2006), the purpose of thematic analysis is to find patterns and relationships between themes found in qualitative data, so that the researchers can find answers to the research questions. The analysis process is divided into five stages. In the first step, the researchers familiarize themselves with the data by reading the interview data several times. In the second step, the researchers analyse the data and

give code to the data. Afterward, based on the repeated pattern, the researcher will categorize the code to make a theme. The fourth step, the researchers define the emerging theme by giving name to each theme and interpret them. Finally, the researchers present the results of interpretation in this study.

Trustworthiness

The credibility of the data within this qualitative research employs two methodologies that align with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) theoretical framework, specifically the peer debriefing methodology (Janesick, 2015) and the member-checking methodology (Murphey & Falout, 2010). To enhance the quality of data, its credibility, and the validation process, we accomplish this by involving subject matter experts in English Language Teaching (ELT) discussions pertinent to this research dilemma, which constitutes a component of the peer debriefing methodology, and we endeavor to engage participants in a more profound manner in this investigation, following the member-checking protocol. In executing this, we aim to construct arguments that adhere to ethical research standards and guarantee that there is no detriment incurred by either party subsequent to the completion of this research.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Student practical of using ChatGPT in Academic Writing
In this analysis the researcher wanted to know how participants used ChatGPT in academic writing assignments, the researcher previously confirmed to the participants that they had used ChatGPT in academic writing, according to the interviews all three participants had used ChatGPT for academic writing, although for distinct reasons.

" In writing the assignment, I usually determine the theme first. Next, determine the main sentence that I will use for the paragraph in writing. After I feel it is enough, then I use chatgpt to expand the description of the statement that I gave, and I look for arguments from experts and specialists on the theme that I convey".
(Participant B, Interview, 07 December 2024)

In the process of writing academic assignments, respondent B first identified the topic to be discussed. After identifying the topic, the student created a main sentence for each paragraph to guide the writing. The participant used ChatGPT to improve the description of the statement made after determining that the sentence was strong enough. ChatGPT allows users to add more specific and detailed information to the student's writing to make it more interesting. In addition, by obtaining expert opinions relevant to the topic being discussed. This is important to give legitimacy and support to the writing. The combination of the ChatGPT concept and expert references enables respondents to produce well-organized, educational texts supported by solid evidence.

Meanwhile, another respondent also used ChatGPT for academic writing assigment process. The student explain that ChatGPT was used to construct sentences, correct grammar, and get suggestions for academic writing topics.

" I usually use ChatGPT to create sentences and correct sentences, grammar,and asking for advice on academic writing, such as sentences or paragraphs, for example (give me an idea about a theme)". (Participant C, Interview, 10 December 2024)

The data showed that respondent C used ChatGPT to formulate appropriate and effective sentences according to the desired context. In addition, respondents also used ChatGPT to improve sentences and grammar when writing, as using appropriate language is very important in academic writing. In addition, respondents also used ChatGPT as a source of advice on academic writing, asking for ideas on specific topics so that they could find clearer direction in their writing. In this way, ChatGPT serves as a tool that not only improves, but also inspires and provides new insights. Overall, respondents indicated that ChatGPT has become an integral part of their academic writing process.

Additionally, respondent C also explained typically use ChatGPT to support academic writing tasks.

"I usually use chatgpt to develop ideas and create mappings in a paragraph". (Participant D, Interview, 12 December 2024)

Respondent C explained that this tool is used as a means of developing ideas and assembling frameworks into paragraphs. The student described the process as a strategic move to expand on the original idea and then formulate a clear mapping in the form of a paragraph. With the help of ChatGPT, users find it easier to organize thoughts logically and create a structured flow of writing. The respondents seem to use this tool not only as a supporter, but also as a partner to visualize complex concepts in a more manageable way.

The result of this analysis of how students use ChatGPT for academic writing shows a multi-layered approach that improves their writing processes, this aligns with findings from Sumakul et al. (2022), which highlighted the effectiveness of AI tools in enhancing writing assignments. All three participants confirmed that they use ChatGPT, but for different purposes that suit their individual writing needs. Overall, the results suggest that ChatGPT has become an integral part of participants' academic writing processes. It serves not only as a supporting tool to improve language and structure, but also as a collaboration partner that stimulates creativity and facilitates the organization of ideas. This integration of technology into academic writing reflects a significant shift in how students approach their assignments and ultimately improves their writing skills and results.

ChatGPT functional benefits in academic writing

In the context of increasingly complex academic writing, the existence of tools like ChatGPT is crucial. Participant B highlighted the various features of ChatGPT, which were helpful not only in understanding the material but also in writing structured and argumentative texts.

" I think a very useful feature is in clarifying the intent and purpose of the explanation of a material that we do not understand, so that we can easily digest what the goals are aimed at." (Participant B, Interview, 07 December 2024)

In addition, respondent B also stated that ChatGPT plays an important role in the academic writing tasks of EFL learners, where ChatGPT's ability to collect information efficiently, supported by the organized sentence construction feature, allows writers to express their ideas in a to convey clearer and more convincing, which makes ChatGPT a valuable partner in improving the quality of academic writing.

> *"I think the important role of chatgpt in my academic writing task is the information gathering feature, structured sentence construction, and argument development." (Participant B, Interview, 07 December 2024)*

In conclusion, Participant B's findings highlight the significant role that ChatGPT plays in improving academic writing, particularly for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. The tool not only helps clarify complex concepts and make them more accessible, but also facilitates the coherent organization and articulation of ideas. By efficiently gathering information and supporting structured sentence construction, ChatGPT enables writers to develop persuasive arguments and present their ideas clearly and convincingly. As academic writing becomes increasingly complex, the features offered by ChatGPT prove to be invaluable resources and ultimately help improve the quality of writing and the overall learning experience.

In another hand, Participant C emphasised that one of the main useful features was ChatGPT's ability to clarify common definitions.

> *"Mostly in clarifying general definitions, such as the creation of a sentence or a paragraph in accordance with academic writing. But it is only limited to general definitions of things." (Participant C, Interview, 10 December 2024)*

This shows that in academic writing, proper understanding of basic terms and concepts is very important. With the help of ChatGPT, responden found it easier to create sentences or paragraphs that conform to academic writing standards. This represents ChatGPT's role as a tool that can assist users in formulating their ideas in a more structured manner and in accordance with academic conventions.

Futhermore, Participant C mentioned that using ChatGPT Participant C mentioned that using ChatGPT was helpful in creating articles and essays. This implies that ChatGPT acts both as a collaborator in the writing process and as a tool for understanding definitions. Because ChatGPT can help with writing articles and essays, it can potentially provide more comprehensive support in various forms of academic writing, such as developing ideas and constructing logical arguments.

> *" I also find it helpful in the process of making articles, and essays too."* (Participant C, Interview, 10 December 2024)

Comprehensively, this narrative analysis shows that Participant C sees ChatGPT as a very useful tool in academic writing. The functions mentioned not only help with understanding and formulating definitions, but also with creating more complex texts such as articles and essays. This reflects ChatGPT's potential to be a valuable resource for students and academic writers, improving the quality of their writing and streamlining the writing process.

While Participant D emphasised more on the idea development feature for the academic writing task process, the respondent indicated that this feature is very helpful, especially in the context of academic writing to develop strong and relevant ideas. with the variety of ideas offered by ChatGPT, Participant D found it very helpful in completing academic tasks, such as writing essays. This shows that ChatGPT serves not only as a tool, but also as a source of inspiration that can stimulate writers' creativity.

> *" I think the chatgpt feature that really helps in my writing process is ... the chatgpt feature that can provide several choices of ideas, as well as develop these ideas so that it really helps me in completing my academic writing assignments such as making essays." (Participant D, Interview, 12 December 2024)*

In addition, Participant D explained that the role of ChatGPT is very important in the early stages of the writing process. In this case, ChatGPT is used to find topics or images addressed in the text. This allows Participant D to more clearly determine the direction and focus of his writing. This reflects how ChatGPT can serve as a guide to help writers formulate their ideas before they start writing, making the writing process more focused and efficient.

> *" In my experience, the role of Chatgpt that I need is for the beginning of the writing process, as I said earlier that I use chatgpt to find an idea or theme and an overview that I will make in my writing, so that I can determine what I will write." (Participant D, Interview, 12 December 2024)*

Overall, the insights gathered by participants B, C, and D collectively highlight the diverse benefits of ChatGPT in the field of academic writing. ChatGPT's ability to clarify complex concepts and aid in structured writing is supported by Wang (2024), who found that AI tools significantly improve the efficiency and accuracy of EFL students' writing tasks. This is consistent with the perspectives of these three respondents make it clear that ChatGPT is not just a writing aid, but a valuable partner on students' path to academic writing. Its diverse functions – from clarifying definitions and organizing thoughts to generating ideas – contribute significantly to improving the quality of academic writing and enhancing the overall learning experience for students and authors. As the complexity of academic writing continues to increase, the role of tools like ChatGPT in supporting authors in their efforts becomes increasingly important.

ChatGPT Impact on Student Writing Quality

The purpose of this section is to determine how the use of ChatGPT affected students' academic writing quality. Individual students' opinions on the influence of ChatGPT on their writing process varied and reflected their unique learning styles and backgrounds. Students' responses to questions about how ChatGPT affected the quality of their writing focused on several elements, including writing structure, vocabulary variety, sentence clarity, and research support. The following presents the reported data describing the impact on students' writing quality :

> *"There are changes, for example, we are able to process words so that the sentences we will convey are easier to understand, or we can also make it easier to find words that are different but have the same meaning and purpose." (Participant B, Interview, 07 December 2024)*

"Yes, I feel changes in my writing skills, the most I feel is that my writing is more structured and systematised." (Participant D, Interview, 12 December 2024)

Participant B indicated that using ChatGPT led to positive changes in his writing skills. One of the most noticeable changes was the improvement of word processing. The respondent reported that he was now better able to formulate more understandable sentences. This shows that ChatGPT serves not only as a tool but also as a source of inspiration, helping writers think more critically about how to convey their ideas clearly and effectively. Additionally, Participant B also noted that ChatGPT made it easier for her to find synonyms or alternative words with the same meaning. This skill is particularly important in academic writing, where the use of varied language can improve the quality of writing and avoid tedious repetition, supported Bouzar et al. (2024) which found that AI tools can boost students' self-efficacy in academic writing.. With the support of ChatGPT, Participant B felt more confident in choosing the right words, which ultimately enriched the expression and nuance in his writing.

Similarly,this is also supported by Participant D also felt positive changes in her writing skills. respondent emphasized that her writing was now more structured and systematic. This shows that using ChatGPT not only helps with word choice, but also helps organize ideas in a more logical and orderly manner. Improving writing structure is an important aspect of academic writing, where a clear and organized presentation of arguments is necessary to achieve good understanding in the reader.

"I feel that there is a change in my writing, but it is only to provide general information, for that I do not only rely on chatgpt but also supported by research and experts in the field." (Participant C, Interview, 10 December 2024)

Meanwhile, Participant C expressed changes in his writing, although the participant emphasised that these changes were more limited to conveying general information. respondent realised that while ChatGPT provided useful support, respondent did not rely solely on this tool. They emphasised the importance of doing research and consulting experts in the field to gain a deeper and more thorough understanding. This suggests that while ChatGPT can help in the writing process, writers still need to combine this tool with other resources to achieve optimal results.

In summary, the analysis of the impact of ChatGPT on the quality of students' academic writing reveals a number of positive impacts reflected in the experiences of Participants B, C and D. Both Participants B and D reported significant improvements in their writing skills, highlighting improvements in word processing, sentence clarity, and overall structure. Participant B noted an improved ability to formulate understandable sentences and find synonyms, which contributed to a richer and more nuanced writing style. Similarly, participant D emphasized that his writing had become more structured and systematic, suggesting that ChatGPT helps not only with word choice but also with the logical organization of ideas.

In contrast, Participant C acknowledged changes in writing but indicated that these were primarily focused on conveying general information. This participant recognized the importance of not relying solely on ChatGPT, but advocated for integrating research and expert advice to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the topic. Overall, ChatGPT serves as a valuable tool for improving various aspects of academic writing. Results suggest that effectiveness is maximized when combined with traditional

research methods and expert insights. This combination allows students to leverage ChatGPT's strengths while ensuring a comprehensive approach to their writing process, ultimately resulting in higher quality academic work.

Student Challenges When Using ChatGPT for Academic Writing

Despite the many benefits that Chatgpt offers for students' academic writing, there is no denying that its use also presents a number of challenges and difficulties. In this context, it is important to understand the challenges that university students face when using ChatGPT for academic writing tasks. This analysis examines the various difficulties that can arise, including issues of data validity, plagiarism detection, and language barriers, and how these challenges can impact the quality and integrity of students' academic work.

"Yes, I found some difficulties when using chatgpt, sometimes the answers given by Chatgpt do not match what we expect, cannot provide valid sources, and the language used by chatgpt is sometimes not easy to understand" (Participant D, Interview, 12 December 2024)

According Participant D revealed that he experienced some difficulties while using ChatGPT. One of the biggest challenges was the discrepancy between the answers provided by ChatGPT and the user's expectations. This suggests that although ChatGPT is designed to provide relevant information, the results obtained do not always meet the author's specific needs. Furthermore, D noted that ChatGPT is often unable to provide valid sources, which is an important aspect of academic writing. This inability can reduce the author's confidence in the information generated and compromise the integrity of the text.

"In addition to the lack of valid data, language that is difficult to understand, the feedback given is not appropriate even though I tried to change my instructions to be more detailed for example but the feedback given remained the same." (Participant C, Interview, 10 December 2024)

Participant C added that in addition to issues with data validity, he also had difficulty understanding the language used by ChatGPT. Despite attempts to provide more detailed instructions, feedback remained unsatisfactory. This suggests that although the author tries to communicate clearly, the tool does not always respond in the expected manner.

"Besides that, I also found grammar mistakes and the vocabulary used was too general so it was not suitable for academic writing." (Participant C, Interview, 10 December 2024)

Participant C also noted grammatical errors and the use of overly generalized vocabulary, which is not appropriate for the context of academic writing. This highlights the challenge of ensuring that the language used in academic writing meets the required standards.

The findings indicated that students' experiences with ChatGPT reveal a number of significant challenges that university students face when using this academic writing tool. Despite the potential benefits of increased efficiency and improved access to information, students reported encountering several barriers that impede their writing process. One of the main problems is the discrepancy between the answers generated by ChatGPT and the expectations of students. Participants expressed frustration that the answers provided did not meet their specific needs, leading to a lack of confidence in the reliability of the tool.

Additionally, students highlighted the challenge of ChatGPT's inability to provide valid and credible sources, which is essential for supporting arguments in academic writing. This lack of reliable references can undermine the integrity of their work and weaken their confidence in the information generated. Language comprehension also proved to be a significant obstacle; Students found the language used by ChatGPT difficult to understand and despite their efforts to provide detailed instructions, feedback was often unsatisfactory. This suggests that the tool may not interpret user requests effectively, resulting in responses that do not meet the clarity and specificity required for academic writing.

Moreover,participants noted the presence of grammatical errors and the use of overly generalized vocabulary in the answers, which is particularly problematic in an academic context where precision and adherence to linguistic standards are crucial. These issues can affect the professionalism and academic rigor of the writing. Although ChatGPT offers numerous benefits overall, the challenges identified – such as inconsistencies in answers, lack of valid sources, language barriers and grammatical inaccuracies – highlight the need for students to approach the tool with caution and mirror those expressed by Yan (2022), concerns about the need for a reconceptualization of plagiarism in the context of AI-generated content. This narrative highlights the importance of critical engagement with technology and the need for students to complement its use with traditional research methods and their own writing skills to ensure the quality and integrity of their academic work.

Ethical Concerns when using ChatGPT on Academic Writing

Integrating ChatGPT into academic writing has revolutionized the way students and researchers carry out tasks such as collecting, writing and editing information. However, these technological advances raise a number of ethical issues that require careful consideration. Key themes include the potential for plagiarism and the challenges of maintaining academic integrity. As universities strive to adapt to this new reality, it is critical to understand the ethical implications of using ChatGPT in academic writing. This analysis aims to examine their impact on academic practice and suggest possible strategies for mitigating ethical risks in academic writing.

Based on the interview data, there were several ethical challenges participants faced when using ChatGPT in academic writing. The biggest challenge was that ChatGPT was limited in providing valid and reliable information, which directly impacted the writing process.

> *"Of course, due to the limitations of Chatgpt which cannot provide valid sources, so I have to look for sources that match the information provided by chatgpt. With the difficulties I face, I only use chatgpt for the beginning of the writing process*

such as finding ideas or themes and mapping paragraphs." (Participant D, Interview, 12 December 2024)

Participant D emphasized that one of the main problems was ChatGPT's limitation in providing valid sources. This forced authors to find sources that matched the information provided by the tool. Respondent explained that because of this difficulty, they only used ChatGPT in the early stages of the writing process, such as finding ideas and topics and drafting paragraphs. This approach shows that his awareness of the importance of accuracy and validity of information in academic writing and seeks to avoid potential ethical issues that could arise from using information that cannot be taken into account.

"yes, as said earlier that the information provided is not valid, for example chatgpt can provide references, even if it is fake citation so when I look for it, it doesn't exist, so this is certainly a problem in writing ethics." (Participant C, Interview, 10 December 2024)

In similarly, Participant C added that the issue of information validity also includes the risk of inaccurate or even fictitious references. The respondent pointed out that when ChatGPT provides a reference, it often presents a "mis-citation" that cannot be found in a search. This raises serious concerns about the ethics of writing, as the use of invalid information can undermine academic integrity and mislead readers.

"Yes, in the form of plagiarism and originality of writing." (Participant B, Interview, 07 December 2024)

"For that, my suggestion is to include references to scientific papers and others so that the resulting statement does not doubt the accuracy of its users." (Participant B, Interview, 07 December 2024)

Meanwhile, Participant B highlighted the issues of plagiarism and originality as significant ethical challenges. Interviewer stated that using ChatGPT can pose risks to the originality of writing, as authors may not fully realize that they are using content generated by the tool without providing proper attribution. To address this problem, he suggested that authors include references from academic papers and other sources so that the resulting statements are not of questionable accuracy and credibility.

According to the results, students who use ChatGPT for writing encounter a number of ethical dilemmas surrounding plagiarism and originality that were highlighted by participants resonate with the findings of Misra and Chandwar (2023) who discussed the ethical challenges that AI poses in academic writing. These difficulties illustrate the difficulties authors encounter when using technology to support their writing process, and range from issues of information validity and the possibility of misattribution to concerns about plagiarism and originality. Knowledge of these ethical concerns makes it even more important for authors to use these tools critically and responsibly and to ensure that their scholarly work meets the necessary standards of accuracy and integrity.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of the research on the experiences of Indonesian EFL undergraduate students using ChatGPT in academic writing reveals several key themes that highlight both the benefits and challenges associated with this AI tool. Students reported significant improvements in their writing processes, as ChatGPT provided assistance in generating ideas, structuring sentences, and correcting grammar. This aligns with previous studies, such as those by Sumakul et al. (2022) and Marzuki et al. (2023), which emphasize the role of AI in enhancing writing skills among EFL learners. These studies found that AI tools not only facilitate the writing process but also help students develop a better understanding of language structure and coherence. Participants in the current study indicated that ChatGPT serves as a collaborative partner, helping them visualize complex concepts and organize their thoughts logically, which echoes findings from Bouzar et al. (2024), who noted that AI tools can boost students' self-efficacy in academic writing.

Furthermore, the use of ChatGPT led to noticeable enhancements in writing quality, including better sentence clarity, vocabulary variety, and overall structure, which boosted students' confidence in their writing abilities—an essential factor for academic success. This is consistent with the findings of Wang (2024), who reported that AI-assisted writing tools significantly improve the efficiency and accuracy of EFL students' writing assignments. However, the research also uncovered challenges faced by students, particularly concerning data validity and reliability. Many participants experienced discrepancies between the expected and actual responses from ChatGPT, leading to doubts about the validity of the content generated. The tool's inability to provide credible sources raised ethical concerns regarding academic integrity, as students feared the potential for plagiarism and misattribution. This concern is supported by Yan (2022), who highlighted the need for a reconceptualization of plagiarism in the context of AI-generated content. Additionally, some students found the language used by ChatGPT difficult to understand, which hindered their ability to effectively utilize the tool, highlighting the need for AI tools to be more user-friendly and accessible to non-native speakers. This aligns with the observations made by Hosseini et al. (2023), who noted that while AI tools can enhance learning, they must also be designed to accommodate the diverse linguistic backgrounds of students.

Ethical considerations emerged as a significant theme, particularly regarding plagiarism and originality. Students expressed concerns about the risk of producing work that lacked personal expression and creativity due to over-reliance on AI-generated content. They emphasized the importance of including proper citations and references to maintain academic integrity, indicating a need for clear guidelines on the ethical use of AI tools in education. This concern resonates with the findings of Misra and Chandwar (2023), who discussed the ethical dilemmas posed by AI in academic writing, particularly regarding the originality of student work. The findings suggest that educators should provide clear guidance on the appropriate use of ChatGPT in academic writing, including teaching students how to critically engage with AI-generated content and integrate it with their own research and writing skills. Policymakers should also consider developing regulations that address the ethical implications of AI in education, ensuring that students are equipped to navigate the challenges posed by these technologies. In conclusion, while the integration of ChatGPT in EFL academic writing presents numerous opportunities for enhancing the writing process and improving quality, it also raises significant ethical concerns and challenges related to data validity and language comprehension. As AI tools continue to evolve, it is crucial for educators

and students to engage critically with these technologies to maximize their benefits while minimizing potential drawbacks.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the experiences of Indonesian EFL students using ChatGPT in academic writing, focusing on the benefits, challenges, and ethical concerns. The results show that ChatGPT serves as a valuable tool for improving students' writing processes by providing support in idea generation, sentence structuring, and grammar correction. Participants reported significant improvements in their writing quality, including better sentence clarity, vocabulary variety, and overall structure. However, challenges such as discrepancies in expected responses, issues with data validity, and ethical concerns regarding plagiarism and originality were also identified. Integrating ChatGPT into academic writing presents both opportunities to improve learning and risks that require careful consideration. Although ChatGPT can significantly assist EFL learners in their writing endeavors, it is critical for students to critically engage with this technology in order to maximize its benefits while minimizing potential drawbacks.

The authors acknowledge the limitations of this study. For example, the lack of participant participation may have limited the range of viewpoints and experiences that could have been used to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of ChatGPT on academic writing. Future studies should focus on including a larger and more diverse sample of EFL students from different educational institutions and backgrounds to overcome this limitation. Additionally, as students' experience with ChatGPT increases, a longitudinal study can provide deeper insights into how their experiences change over time. The data collected could also be improved through the use of mixed-method techniques such as surveys and qualitative interviews, which would allow for a more thorough investigation of the benefits and difficulties of using ChatGPT for academic writing. In order for educators and policymakers to ultimately make informed decisions about the use of this technology in educational settings, it is critical that future research examine the long-term effects of AI integration on students' writing skills and academic integrity.

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