ESSENCE

INTEGRATING AI IN WRITING CLASS; BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This study explores the integration of AI (artificial intelligence) in writing classes such as chatGPT, Quillbot, Google translate, etc. in higher education at KH University. Mukhtar Syafa'at, focusing on their engagement and use of AI in the writing classroom. A survey of 5 students and 1 lecturer revealed a generally positive attitude towards AI in the teaching and learning process. Students realize that AI can help them develop ideas in writing class. However, apart from that, you also need to be very concerned about the challenges of using it. This research is relevant to research from Nazari (2021) The results indicate that AI-powered writing tools can be an effective tool for improving learning and technology adoption through format-based rewrites and annotations for non-native graduate students in English language textbook writing use of AI in writing classes shows that there are several benefits and challenges in its application. Insights from this study can provide input for policy development regarding the integration of AI in the writing classes of English department students. Understanding the benefits and challenges of integrating AI can improve the teaching and learning experience in higher education. *Keywords:* *Artificial intelligence, writing class, benefits and challenges.*

Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly influencing various dimensions of human life, especially due to its capability to perform tasks automatically. One of the fields most affected by this technological shift is education. The presence of AI brings both new opportunities and challenges for educators and students, as it transforms teaching methods and learning processes. This is particularly evident in language education, including environments where English is taught as a foreign language (EFL) (Toar et al., 2022). In this context, AI is not merely viewed as a tool, but as a distinct domain of academic inquiry.

Although experts have yet to agree on a single, universal definition of AI (Holmes & Tuomi, 2022), its influence in education is clearly demonstrated through technologies like machine learning, chatbots, augmented reality (AR), and virtual reality (VR) (Fauziyati, 2023). While these innovations offer clear advantages, they also introduce challenges that may impact the overall quality of education and human well-being (Zahara et al., 2023).

In writing instruction, AI applications have shown potential to support and enhance student performance. Toar et al. (2022) emphasize that writing assignments are essential for students to develop their language and composition skills. Tools such as the Plot Generator can assist by offering writing prompts to stimulate student creativity. Fauziyati (2023) identifies two main ways AI can be implemented in educational contexts: first, as a virtual tutor that handles tasks typically performed by a teacher, and second, as an automated assessment system that simplifies evaluation processes. These systems help educators manage tests more efficiently and reduce manual effort (Mufid et al., 2022).

Generative AI (Gen AI) further contributes to higher education by aiding in idea generation, textual analysis, and academic writing. Studies by Berg (2023), Chan and Zhou (2023), and Chan and Hu (2023) highlight how Gen AI serves as a powerful research assistant capable of analyzing extensive text data and synthesizing information. Moreover, Gen AI can provide tailored learning resources that meet individual student needs, such as conversational tools like ChatGPT for reading or comprehension assistance (Chan & Hu, 2023).

Research also shows that many students rely on AI tools like ChatGPT, Quillbot, Google Translate, Grammarly, and Gamma to complete writing assignments. Some find these tools helpful for generating ideas, while others struggle to develop their own thoughts when overly dependent on AI (Dwi et al., 2023).

In education, integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into writing teaching has become commonplace. This article explains why. The application of AI offers advantages and obstacles that must be overcome in addition to helping the teaching and learning process thanks to advances in time and technology. AI is often used in education, especially for teaching writing. By providing more focused and timely feedback to students, artificial intelligence (AI) in writing teaching can improve learning efficiency. In addition to finding grammatical errors, AI can also find writing patterns in students' work that can help improve their writing skills.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the benefits and challenges of AI in English writing classes. It is hoped that it will provide in-depth insight into the integration of AI

in teaching writing, as well as help students and educators make good use of AI technology.

Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach, as suggested by Sugiyono (2019), who states that qualitative research aims to understand perspectives through flexible and interactive methods. The participants consisted of five students from the English Tadris program and one lecturer from KH. Mukhtar Syafa'at University. The goal was to explore their experiences and perceptions regarding the use of AI in writing classes.

Data were collected through open-ended interviews, which allowed participants to freely express their opinions and experiences. This method was chosen because it provides rich, in-depth insights that structured questionnaires might not capture. Open-ended interviews are particularly effective for exploring subjective perceptions and uncovering detailed narratives from both students and lecturers. As Kriyantono (2020, pp. 291–293) explains, interviews are useful for gathering comprehensive and in-depth information by engaging directly with informants in a focused yet conversational manner.

Findings

This study revealed that the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in writing classes at the English Education Program of KH. Mukhtar Syafa'at University has significantly influenced how students develop their academic writing. Most students actively use various AI tools such as Quillbot, Google Translate, ChatGPT, and Zotero. These tools assist them not only in paraphrasing sentences or correcting grammar but also in enhancing word choices, restructuring sentences, and generating ideas when they experience writer's block. The tools serve not just as translators or grammar checkers but also as creative aids during the initial stages of writing.

Some students shared that they often begin their writing by using ChatGPT to get a basic idea or structure. They feel supported by the AI's ability to provide an initial framework or sample sentences they can build upon. This process boosts their confidence because they no longer feel completely alone when facing academic writing tasks.

However, this study also highlighted several challenges related to the use of AI. One of the major issues is students' growing dependence on AI tools. Some students tend to directly input prompts into AI systems and copy the results with minimal adjustment. As a consequence, their critical thinking and independent idea development are hindered. Writing becomes a passive activity, where students act more as tool users rather than as active thinkers. This undermines the core purpose of writing instruction, which is to cultivate analytical and expressive skills.

One of the lecturers involved in this study, referred to as ZZDA, observed this phenomenon. He noticed a mismatch between the quality of some students' writing and their verbal abilities during in-class discussions. Several assignments appeared overly polished in terms of structure and language, exceeding what would normally be expected of students at their current academic level. Upon closer inquiry, it was discovered that

many students were indeed relying heavily on AI to compose their writing. This situation led the lecturer to develop a manual or guide aimed at promoting responsible and ethical AI use in writing classes.

The manual does more than just list technical instructions; it also emphasizes academic integrity. It encourages students to write their initial drafts based on their own understanding and then use AI as a tool for revision rather than as the primary writer. It also includes steps for ensuring that the final product reflects the student's own voice and abilities, rather than a fully machine-generated text.

Beyond academic concerns, the study also uncovered significant non-academic barriers, particularly related to access to technology. Some students—especially female students living in boarding school environments—faced difficulties accessing stable internet connections. Internet use is often restricted in dormitory settings, limiting their ability to use AI tools freely. As a result, these students often wrote their assignments manually first and then revised them using AI only when internet access became available. This creates a disparity in learning opportunities, as not all students are able to fully benefit from available technology.

Another serious concern is related to academic integrity. Lecturers noticed a growing tendency among students to submit assignments of unusually high quality, inconsistent with their known academic performance. This raised doubts about the originality of those assignments. In such cases, AI can undermine the validity of assessment because the submitted work may not accurately reflect a student's true ability. Thus, the manual created by the lecturer became a crucial tool in addressing this issue, reinforcing the principles of honesty and responsibility in academic writing.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal the complex impact of AI integration in writing classes—both positive and negative. On the positive side, students benefit significantly in technical areas such as sentence construction, grammar, and idea development. AI becomes a learning companion that provides instant solutions when students face difficulties. This is especially helpful for students who experience anxiety when initiating a writing task. In practice, they feel more confident because they have a starting point or model generated by AI to build upon.

Lecturers also acknowledge the advantages of AI-supported platforms. For example, using tools like Gmail to collect and review assignments improves the efficiency of the teaching process. Students can submit their work at any time, and lecturers can provide feedback more easily. This speeds up academic interaction and minimizes administrative barriers in the teaching-learning process.

However, the drawbacks of AI usage should not be ignored. Overreliance on AI may hinder the development of critical thinking among students. Those who depend too much on ChatGPT or Quillbot tend to bypass the reflective thinking process that is central to writing. Although the final output may be technically sound, it often lacks depth, personal insight, and authenticity. This trend risks turning writing into a mechanical task, which fails to nurture essential academic skills.

In addition, digital inequality must be addressed by educational institutions. When access to technology is not evenly distributed, the benefits of AI remain limited to only some students. Those in remote areas or within restrictive living environments, such as Islamic boarding schools, are disadvantaged. This gap can widen academic disparities and result in unequal learning outcomes.

Concerns about the originality of AI-assisted writing are also growing. Some students may complete their assignments almost entirely with the help of AI, without substantial intellectual involvement. In such cases, the academic value of the work becomes questionable. The manual created by the lecturer in this study serves as an effective strategy to mitigate this issue. Instead of banning AI entirely, it promotes ethical and productive use. For instance, students are encouraged to use AI for generating outlines or revising sentence structures but are discouraged from using it to generate complete content.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research by Nazari (2021), which also emphasized the benefits and limitations of using AI in writing classes. Nazari's research demonstrated that AI can provide instant feedback on word choice and sentence structure, helping students during the revision process. However, Nazari also warned that AI usage must be accompanied by ethical awareness and supervision to avoid undermining the learning process. This current study supports those conclusions by showing that students who use AI as a revision tool tend to grow more effectively compared to those who depend on it entirely for content generation.

Some students interviewed in this study expressed an emerging awareness of ethical AI use. They stated that while they use AI for assistance, they still revise and personalize the output to match their own writing style and ideas. This shows that responsible AI usage is gradually taking root, although it is not yet consistent across the board. Other students mentioned that the language generated by AI often feels "too stiff" or "unnatural," prompting them to rely more on their own sentences while using AI only for minor corrections.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into educational settings, particularly in teaching writing, presents both opportunities and challenges. AI technologies such as chatbots, automated assessment tools, and language processing applications offer significant benefits by providing instant feedback, improving learning efficiency, and enhancing students' ability to develop ideas and critical thinking skills. This transformative impact extends beyond traditional learning methods, potentially revolutionizing how educators teach and how students learn.

However, the use of AI in education is not without its challenges. Issues such as the potential for reliance on AI for creativity, ethical concerns regarding plagiarism and academic integrity, and disparities in access to technology among students are critical considerations. Despite these challenges, the research underscores AI's potential to significantly improve educational outcomes and equip students with essential skills for navigating the digital age.

Moving forward, educators and policymakers must address these challenges proactively while leveraging AI's capabilities to create inclusive and effective learning

environments. By doing so, we can harness the full potential of AI to support and enhance education in meaningful ways.

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