

EFL STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON USING ChatGPT IN WRITING

Nur Salsabila^{1*}, Warsidi², Sulviana³

Received: September 17, 2025; Accepted: November 21, 2025; Published: January 1, 2026

^{1,2,3}English Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training, Education and Literature, Universitas Islam Makassar, Indonesia

^{1*}Corresponding author, email: nursalabila926@gmail.com

Abstract: This study aims to explore EFL students' perspectives on the use of ChatGPT in writing tasks. The research employs a qualitative descriptive method, with data collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The participants consisted of undergraduate students from the English Education Department, who actively engaged with ChatGPT to support their academic writing. The findings reveal two main aspects: 1) Perceived Usefulness, where students acknowledged that ChatGPT helps them generate ideas, improve vocabulary, and enhance sentence structures and Perceived Ease of Use, as most students found the platform accessible, user-friendly, and supportive in completing writing tasks; and 2) Challenges, which include issues such as Information Literacy, Reproduction Literacy and Socio-Emotional Literacy. Overall, students demonstrated positive perceptions of ChatGPT as a supplementary tool in their writing process. However, they also encountered challenges in managing information, reproducing content, and dealing with socio-emotional aspects. Therefore, teacher guidance and students' critical evaluation are still essential to ensure effective and responsible use of ChatGPT in academic writing.

Keywords: ChatGPT, EFL Students, Writing Tasks

1. INTRODUCTION

Writing is considered one of the most challenging skills for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners to master. It requires not only proper mechanics but also the ability to organize ideas coherently, use appropriate vocabulary, and apply correct grammar. Many EFL students struggle to express their ideas effectively, often feeling uncertain about how to begin or structure their writing. This difficulty is commonly linked to a lack of consistent writing practice and limited self-training. In the Indonesian EFL context, the importance of academic writing continues to grow due to institutional demands for publication in reputable journals (Warsidi, 2017). Effective academic writing, however, requires adequate foundational knowledge to ensure meaningful knowledge sharing (Yeboah, 2023).

Recent technological advancements, particularly in Artificial Intelligence (AI), have significantly influenced education and language learning. Various AI-based tools have been developed to assist learners, from grammar checkers to automated writing assistants. Among these, ChatGPT has gained particular attention due to its accessibility and interactive feedback features that help users generate ideas, correct grammar, and improve sentence structures more efficiently.

Several studies have examined the use of AI-based tools in language learning. For example, Imran (2022) found that the Hemingway App improved students' writing performance through its corrective feedback, while Imran et al., (2023) reported that lecturers generally viewed AI positively for its flexibility in teaching. Similarly, Fitria (2023) noted ChatGPT's ability to generate well-written essays and provide grammar

suggestions. However, most of these studies have focused on the pedagogical benefits of AI tools rather than on students' subjective experiences and perceptions.

Although the use of ChatGPT in EFL writing tasks is growing rapidly, there remains a lack of research exploring how students personally perceive and experience this tool, particularly in the Indonesian context. Teng (2024) emphasizes that research on learners' experiences with ChatGPT in academic writing is still limited. Understanding students' perspectives is essential to identify both the benefits and the challenges of using ChatGPT in writing tasks.

Therefore, this study aims to explore EFL students' perspectives on the use of ChatGPT in writing tasks and to identify the challenges they encounter. The research is grounded in two theoretical frameworks: the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis (1989) focusing on perceived usefulness and ease of use, and the Digital Literacy Framework by Eshet (2004) which highlights challenges related to information, reproduction, and socio-emotional literacy. This study seeks to contribute to the growing literature on AI integration in language education, offering insights into how ChatGPT supports and challenges EFL students in developing their writing skills.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. EFL Students

EFL students are learners who study English in countries where it is not used as a native or official language. Johnson (2017) defines teaching English as "learning and instructing the language outside of the people's native speech," while Harmer (2001) explains that EFL refers to learning English in contexts where it is not used for daily communication. Unlike ESL learners who study English in English-speaking environments, EFL students depend mainly on classroom instruction and self-study due to limited exposure to authentic language use (Brown, 2001). Although English is seen as an important skill for education, career, and international communication, the lack of real-life practice makes it challenging for EFL students to achieve fluency, especially in productive skills such as writing (Richards & Renandya, 2002).

2.2. Students Perspectives

Understanding students' perspectives on AI tools such as ChatGPT is essential to see how learners experience and respond to technology in writing tasks. Caucheteux et al., (2024) explain that students' representations of AI's potential shape their expectations and learning experiences. A study by Zebua and Katemba (2024) also found that students have varied opinions about ChatGPT's usefulness, ease of use, and role in improving writing skills. Similarly, Tian and Wang (2025) emphasize that students' views on AI extend beyond practical benefits, involving broader concerns about its impact on learning. In this study, students' perspectives refer to their attitudes, opinions, and experiences toward using ChatGPT in supporting academic writing tasks.

2.3. ChatGPT

Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer (ChatGPT) is an AI-powered chatbot developed by OpenAI based on the GPT language model. It uses Natural Language Processing (NLP) and deep learning to understand user input and generate coherent,

human-like text (Santhosh et al., 2023) ChatGPT's transformer-based system enables it to recognize linguistic patterns and context, making it a useful tool for assisting students in academic writing. According to Anastassia et al. (2024), when used appropriately, ChatGPT can enhance the learning process in the digital era while maintaining ethical and responsible application. In summary, ChatGPT is an artificial intelligence chatbot designed to provide human-like responses and support users in various text-based tasks.

2.4. Academic Writing

Writing is a mental and linguistic process in which writers generate, organize, and express ideas in a coherent manner. Nunan (2003) defines it as a mental process that involves generating ideas and arranging them into meaningful statements, while Flower and Hayes (1981) describe it as a complex activity that requires planning, translating, and evaluating texts based on communicative purposes and audience. Writing functions as a means of expressing thoughts and emotions while conveying information effectively (Imran, et al., 2023). In the EFL context, it is an essential skill for producing academic works such as essays, reports, and research papers, allowing learners to consolidate knowledge and demonstrate understanding (Warsidi, 2021). Writing tasks are structured activities designed to help students develop their writing skills through meaningful and context-based practice. Hyland (2019) explains that writing involves complex cognitive and linguistic processes; therefore, writing tasks should be carefully designed to enhance these skills effectively. Brown (2001) emphasizes that writing activities should reflect real and purposeful language use to encourage authentic communication. Similarly, Harmer (2006) highlights the importance of providing learners with clear purposes and contexts in writing so that the tasks become relevant and engaging. In essence, writing tasks aim to help students achieve learning objectives by practicing writing in various forms, such as essays, reports, or short stories.

3. METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design to explore EFL students' perspectives on using ChatGPT in writing tasks. Participants were EFL undergraduates from the English Education Department at Universitas Islam Makassar (semesters six and eight), selected through purposive sampling; data were gathered from 14 respondents who completed an open-ended questionnaire administered via Google Form and from 10 students who took part in semi-structured, face-to-face interviews lasting 20–30 minutes (with consented audio recording and verbatim transcription). The instruments an open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interview guide were developed based on the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989) and Eshet's Digital Literacy Framework (2004). Collected data were analyzed following Miles and Huberman (1994) steps of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing to identify themes related to perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and challenges in information, reproduction, and socio-emotional literacy.

4. RESULTS

In this section, the researcher presents the results of the study based on data collected from the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The findings describe EFL students' perspectives on using ChatGPT in writing tasks and the challenges they encountered during the process. The data were analyzed according to the two constructs of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis (1989), namely Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use, as well as the three components of Eshet's (2004) Digital Literacy Framework: Information Literacy, Reproduction Literacy, and Socio-Emotional Literacy.

4.1. EFL Students' Perspectives on Using ChatGPT in Writing Tasks

The first research question investigated students' perspectives on using ChatGPT in writing tasks. The data from the open-ended questionnaire revealed that most students held positive perceptions toward ChatGPT. They viewed it as a helpful and accessible tool that assists in generating ideas, organizing thoughts, and improving grammar and vocabulary.

Table 1. Presents the summary of students' perspectives

No.	Aspect	Key Positive Responses	Key Negative Responses
1.	Perceived Usefulness	Helps generate ideas, improve grammar, vocabulary, structure and saves time	Content not always reliable and risk of dependency
2.	Perceived Ease of Use	Easy to access, user-friendly interface, quick responses	Confusing prompts and sometimes irrelevant answers

The majority of students agreed that ChatGPT made the writing process easier and more efficient. As one respondent mentioned:

"It helps me organize my ideas and correct grammar quickly."

Another added:

"I can finish my writing faster because ChatGPT gives examples and ideas."

However, some students expressed caution about relying too much on the tool. They noted that ChatGPT sometimes produces general or inaccurate responses, and excessive use may decrease their independent thinking skills. In summary, students perceived ChatGPT as both useful and easy to use, aligning with the two main constructs of the Technology Acceptance Model.

4.2. EFL Students' Challenges When Using ChatGPT in Writing Tasks

The second research question focused on identifying the challenges students encountered when using ChatGPT in writing tasks. The findings were categorized according to three components of Eshet's (2004) Digital Literacy Framework: Information Literacy, Reproduction Literacy, and Socio-Emotional Literacy.

a. Information Literacy

Students reported difficulties in evaluating and verifying information generated by ChatGPT. Some responses were inaccurate, repetitive, or lacked academic depth. A few students mentioned that they felt unsure whether the content produced by ChatGPT could be trusted.

"Sometimes ChatGPT gives wrong or too general information."

This indicates that students need stronger information evaluation skills when using AI tools for academic purposes.

b. Reproduction Literacy

Several students mentioned that paraphrasing or modifying ChatGPT's responses was challenging. They tended to copy sentences directly without sufficient revision, raising the risk of plagiarism. Some also found it difficult to adapt the AI-generated text to their own writing style.

"It's hard to rewrite the sentences from ChatGPT in my own words."

These finding highlights student's limited ability to transform digital information into original writing.

c. Socio-Emotional Literacy

In the socio-emotional aspect, some students felt uncertain or confused when interacting with ChatGPT, especially when responses were unclear. Others mentioned feeling overly dependent on the tool, which affected their confidence in writing without it.

"When I always use ChatGPT, I become lazy to think by myself."

5. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study revealed that EFL students generally have positive perceptions toward the use of ChatGPT in writing tasks. In line with the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989), students considered ChatGPT both useful and easy to use. They reported that the tool helps them generate ideas, organize their thoughts, and improve grammar and vocabulary. This finding supports Fitria (2023), who found that ChatGPT enhances students' writing performance through its instant feedback and suggestions. These results indicate that ChatGPT can serve as a supportive digital assistant that facilitates students' academic writing process.

Furthermore, the simplicity and accessibility of ChatGPT contributed to students' positive perceptions. Most participants agreed that the tool is easy to operate and provides immediate responses, allowing them to work more independently. This supports Zebua and Katemba (2024), who stated that AI-based tools are perceived as user-friendly and time-saving in language learning. However, some students experienced difficulties in formulating clear prompts, which occasionally led to irrelevant or less accurate responses. This suggests that while the tool is easy to use, it still requires user competence in crafting effective input.

Despite its usefulness, several challenges were identified in relation to Eshet's (2004) Digital Literacy Framework. In terms of information literacy, students struggled to assess the reliability and accuracy of ChatGPT's responses, confirming Tian and Wang's (2025) argument that AI-generated content must be critically reviewed. Regarding reproduction literacy, students faced difficulties paraphrasing and rewriting AI-generated texts, which sometimes resulted in plagiarism or dependency. Meanwhile, in socio-emotional literacy, some students expressed confusion or overreliance, reflecting Teng's (2024) observation that constant AI use may reduce creativity and confidence in writing independently.

These findings highlight the dual nature of ChatGPT in EFL contexts—it functions as both an aid and a potential obstacle. While it provides support in developing writing skills, it also poses risks of dependency and superficial learning if not guided properly. Therefore, teachers should encourage students to use ChatGPT critically, integrating AI literacy and ethical awareness into classroom instruction.

From a reflective standpoint, this study has certain limitations. The number of participants was relatively small, and the data were collected from a single department, which may not fully represent all EFL students' experiences. In addition, the study focused only on students' perceptions and challenges without examining long-term impacts on writing proficiency. Future research should involve larger and more diverse participants and consider experimental designs to measure the actual influence of ChatGPT on writing outcomes.

6. CONCLUSION

This study explored EFL students' perspectives on using ChatGPT in writing tasks and identified the challenges they encountered. The findings revealed that students generally hold positive perceptions toward ChatGPT, acknowledging its usefulness and ease of use in assisting idea generation, grammar correction, and vocabulary development. However, some challenges were also identified, including difficulty evaluating information accuracy, paraphrasing AI-generated text, and managing emotional dependency on the tool. Overall, ChatGPT serves as a valuable digital assistant that supports students in their writing process, yet its effectiveness depends on how critically and responsibly it is used. The findings emphasize the importance of balancing technological assistance with independent thinking and academic integrity. It is recommended that teachers integrate AI literacy into writing instruction to help students evaluate, modify, and ethically use ChatGPT outputs. Institutions should also provide training programs or workshops that enhance students' digital literacy and

critical thinking when engaging with AI tools. Developing clear classroom guidelines for AI use, encouraging paraphrasing practice, and promoting collaboration between teachers and students can help minimize plagiarism risks and overreliance while maximizing ChatGPT's potential as a learning aid. Future educators, researchers, and policymakers are encouraged to continue exploring responsible and ethical AI integration in language education. By fostering critical awareness and accountability, ChatGPT and similar tools can become not just a writing assistant, but a bridge to greater creativity and digital empowerment in academic learning.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The researchers would like to express the deepest thanks to all of those who had helped, supported, and suggested them during the process of writing.

REFERENCES

- Agip et al., 2009. (2018). Analisis Kemampuan Berpikir Kritis Siswa SMA Pada Materi Koperasi. *OIKOS Jurnal Kajian Pendidikan Ekonomi dan Ilmu Ekonomi*, 11, 52–56. <https://doi.org/10.23969/oikos.v2i1.920>
- Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy* (2nd ed.). Longman.
- Caucheteux, C., Hodgkins, L.-B., Batifol, V., Fouché, L., & Romero, M. (2024). Students' perspective on the use of artificial intelligence in education. In *Creative Applications of Artificial Intelligence in Education* (pp. 101–113). Springer Nature Switzerland Cham.
- Davis, F. D. (1989). Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. *MIS Quarterly*, 319–340.
- Eshet, Y. (2004). Digital literacy: A conceptual framework for survival skills in the digital era. *Journal of Educational Multimedia and Hypermedia*, 13(1), 93–106.
- Flower, L., & Hayes, J. R. (1981). A cognitive process theory of writing. *College Composition & Communication*, 32(4), 365–387.
- Harmer, J. (2001). The practice of English language teaching. *London/New York*, 32(1), 401–405.
- Harmer, J. (2006). Review of “How to teach writing.” *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 3(2), 246–248.
- Hyland, K. (2019). *Second language writing*. Cambridge university press.
- Imran, M. C. (2022). *Education, Language, and Culture (EDULEC)*.
- Imran, M. C., Amaliah, N. N., Rampeng, N., Syam, N. N. I., Room, N. F., & Sage, N. (2023). The Feasibility of Artificial Intelligences (AI) in speaking Skill: Lecturers' perceptions. *IJOLEH International Journal of Education and Humanities*, 2(2), 135–144.
- Imran, M. C., Mursidin, M., & Adawiah, M. (2023). GRAMMAR TRANSLATION METHOD TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL. *VERBA: Journal of English Language Issues, Trends and Studies*, 1(2), 1–6.
- Johnson, K. (2017). *An introduction to foreign language learning and teaching*. Routledge.
- Miles, M. B. (1994). Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook. *Thousand*

Oaks.

- Nunan, D. (2003). *Practical english language teaching*.
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. Cambridge university press.
- Santhosh, R., Abinaya, M., Anusuya, V., & Gowthami, D. (2023). ChatGPT: Opportunities, features and future prospects. *2023 7th International Conference on Trends in Electronics and Informatics (ICOEI)*, 1614–1622.
- Sulviana, S. (2022). A Review On The Contextual Teaching And Learning Process Using Procedural Text Writing. *JOEL: Journal of Educational and Language Research*, 2(5), 827–836.
- Teng, M. F. (2024). “ChatGPT is the companion, not enemies”: EFL learners’ perceptions and experiences in using ChatGPT for feedback in writing. *Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence*, 7, 100270.
- Tian, Z., & Wang, C. (2025). *Rethinking Language Education in the Age of Generative AI*. Taylor & Francis Group.
- Warsidi, W. (2017). The effect of Texts-Based Interactional Feedback (TIF) on the students’ EFL writing. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Linguistics*, 2(3), 245–258.
- Warsidi, W. (2021). What Communicative Functions to Begin Writing a Research Article Abstract in the Applied Linguistics Discipline? *Jurnal Sinestesia*, 11(2), 150–161.
- Yeboah, A. (2023). Knowledge sharing in organization: A systematic review. *Cogent Business & Management*, 10(1), 2195027.
- Yunus, M. M. (2017). *Keterampilan menulis dan permasalahannya*.
- Zebua, J. A. Z., & Katemba, C. V. (2024). Students’ perceptions of using the OpenAI ChatGPT application in improving writing skills. *Journal of Language and Literature Studies*, 4(1), 110–123.