



THE IMPACT OF CHATGPT ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC WRITING SKILLS IN ENGLISH

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Abstract

The rapid development of generative artificial intelligence has created new opportunities and challenges in English language education. Among the most widely discussed AI tools is ChatGPT, which can generate, revise, summarize, and explain written texts in response to user prompts. Its increasing use by students has raised important questions about whether artificial intelligence can support the development of academic writing skills or, conversely, reduce students' independent engagement with the writing process. This article examines the potential impact of ChatGPT on students' academic writing skills in English, with particular attention to vocabulary development, grammatical accuracy, organization, coherence, revision, and learner autonomy. The article argues that ChatGPT can serve as an effective supplementary writing tool when it is integrated into a pedagogically structured learning process rather than used as a replacement for students' own writing. The central thesis is that ChatGPT can positively contribute to students' academic writing development by providing immediate feedback, language support, idea-generation assistance, and opportunities for revision, but its educational value depends primarily on responsible use, teacher guidance, critical evaluation, and students' continued production of independent writing. At the same time, concerns regarding overdependence, academic integrity, inaccurate information, and reduced development of independent writing skills require careful consideration.



Keywords: ChatGPT; artificial intelligence; academic writing; English language learning; EFL students; generative AI; writing skills; vocational education

1. Introduction

Artificial intelligence has rapidly become an important part of contemporary education. In recent years, generative AI systems have attracted particular attention because they can produce human-like text, answer questions, explain concepts, provide examples, and assist users with a wide range of writing tasks. ChatGPT, developed by OpenAI, is one of the most prominent examples of this technology. Since its public introduction, teachers, researchers, and students have increasingly discussed its potential role in education.

Academic writing is one of the areas most directly affected by generative AI. Writing in English requires learners to combine several complex abilities, including vocabulary selection, grammatical accuracy, sentence construction, organization of ideas, coherence, cohesion, critical thinking, and appropriate academic style. For students learning English as a foreign language (EFL), these requirements can create significant challenges. Students may have good ideas but struggle to express them accurately in English. Others may understand grammar rules but experience difficulties with academic vocabulary, paragraph organization, or developing arguments.

Traditional writing instruction usually involves several stages: planning, drafting, receiving feedback, revising, editing, and producing a final version. ChatGPT can potentially participate in several of these stages. Students can ask the system to explain a grammatical error, suggest alternative vocabulary, provide feedback on paragraph organization, or identify areas requiring revision. Such functions create possibilities for more immediate and individualized learning support.



However, the introduction of ChatGPT also raises serious educational questions. If students simply ask an AI system to write an entire essay and submit the generated text as their own work, the learning process may be significantly weakened. Academic writing is not merely the production of grammatically correct sentences. It is also a process through which learners develop their ability to think, organize ideas, construct arguments, evaluate evidence, and communicate independently.

Thesis Statement

ChatGPT can positively contribute to students' academic writing skills in English by providing immediate language feedback, vocabulary and grammar support, assistance with organization and revision, and opportunities for individualized practice; however, these benefits can be achieved effectively only when ChatGPT is used as a supplementary learning tool under teacher guidance rather than as a substitute for students' independent writing, critical thinking, and academic decision-making.

2. ChatGPT and the Development of Academic Writing Skills

One of the most significant potential advantages of ChatGPT is its ability to provide immediate language assistance. In conventional writing classrooms, students may have to wait until a teacher reviews their work before receiving feedback. In contrast, AI-based systems can respond immediately to questions and provide suggestions for improvement.

For EFL learners, this feature can be particularly useful. Students can submit a sentence and ask why a particular grammatical structure is incorrect. They can also request examples of how a word is used in an academic context or ask for alternative expressions. This can make the writing process more interactive.

For example, a student may write: "Technology make students more independent learners." The student can ask ChatGPT to identify the grammatical



problem and explain the correction. The response can draw attention to subject-verb agreement: “Technology makes students more independent learners.” The educational value, however, does not come simply from receiving the corrected sentence. The student should understand why “makes” is required and then apply the rule independently in other contexts.

ChatGPT may also support vocabulary development. Academic writing requires learners to use precise and contextually appropriate vocabulary. Students can ask for synonyms, collocations, definitions, and examples. Instead of repeatedly using “important,” a student might learn expressions such as “significant,” “essential,” “considerable,” or “particularly relevant.” Nevertheless, students should evaluate whether the suggested word is appropriate for their intended meaning, because synonyms are not always interchangeable.

Another important area is paragraph organization. Many EFL students have difficulty developing a clear topic sentence, supporting their argument with relevant details, and concluding a paragraph effectively. ChatGPT can be used to provide questions that help students examine their own organization. Rather than asking AI to write the paragraph, students can ask: Is my topic sentence clear? Do my supporting sentences relate directly to the main idea? Is there a logical connection between these ideas? Where should I provide evidence or an example? Is my conclusion consistent with the argument?

3. ChatGPT as a Tool for Revision and Feedback

Revision is a central component of academic writing. Effective writers rarely produce a perfect first draft. They reread their work, identify weaknesses, reorganize ideas, improve language, and edit their final version.

ChatGPT can potentially support this process by providing another source of feedback. Students can submit a draft and ask the system to identify grammatical



errors, unclear sentences, repetitive vocabulary, or problems with organization. The student can then decide which suggestions are appropriate.

This last step is essential. AI-generated feedback should not automatically be accepted as correct. Generative AI systems can produce inaccurate or misleading information, and their suggestions may not always reflect the writer's intended meaning. Therefore, students need to develop the ability to evaluate AI feedback critically.

A practical classroom procedure can involve four stages:

1. Independent writing — Students produce their own first draft without AI assistance.
2. AI-supported feedback — Students use ChatGPT to identify possible language and organizational problems.
3. Critical evaluation — Students examine each AI suggestion and decide whether it is appropriate.
4. Independent revision — Students revise their work and explain the major changes they made.

4. Potential Risks and Challenges

Despite its potential benefits, ChatGPT presents several challenges for academic writing education. The first concern is overdependence. If students routinely ask AI to produce complete essays, paragraphs, or assignments, they may have fewer opportunities to practice independent writing. The immediate result may appear linguistically sophisticated, while the student's actual writing ability remains underdeveloped.

The second concern is academic integrity. When a student submits AI-generated text as entirely their own work, questions arise regarding authorship and



academic honesty. Educational institutions therefore need clear policies explaining acceptable and unacceptable uses of generative AI.

The third concern is accuracy. ChatGPT can produce information that sounds convincing but may be incorrect. This is especially important in academic writing, where claims should be supported by reliable evidence. Students must therefore learn to verify information rather than treating AI-generated content as automatically reliable.

Another challenge is the possibility of homogenized writing. If students depend heavily on AI-generated language, their writing may become formulaic and less reflective of their own ideas, experiences, and individual voices. Academic writing education should therefore encourage students to develop their own arguments and stylistic choices.

There is also a risk that students may focus excessively on grammatical correctness while neglecting higher-level academic skills. A grammatically polished essay is not necessarily a strong academic essay. Effective academic writing also requires a clear argument, appropriate evidence, logical reasoning, synthesis of information, and critical engagement with a topic.

5. Implications for English Language Teachers

The emergence of ChatGPT does not necessarily reduce the importance of English teachers. Instead, it can change some aspects of the teacher's role. In an AI-supported learning environment, teachers can increasingly act as facilitators of critical thinking and communication.

Teachers can design activities in which students compare their own writing with AI-generated alternatives, identify errors in AI responses, discuss whether a suggested expression is appropriate, and revise texts collaboratively.



For example, a teacher can provide students with a short AI-generated paragraph containing several weaknesses. Students can work in groups to identify grammatical problems, inappropriate vocabulary, weak arguments, repetition, unsupported claims, problems with coherence, and inappropriate academic style. Students then rewrite the paragraph themselves.

Such activities transform AI from an answer-producing tool into an object of critical analysis. This approach can potentially develop both English proficiency and digital literacy.

Teachers should also emphasize the importance of process-based writing. Students can be asked to maintain records of brainstorming, outlines, drafts, AI feedback, revisions, and final versions. This provides evidence of the student's learning process and encourages responsible use of AI.

In vocational education, teachers can further connect AI-assisted writing tasks with students' future professions. Students studying technology-related fields can write a short technical description, revise it with AI feedback, and then produce a final independent version. Students can also practice professional emails, project summaries, workplace instructions, and reports.

6. Discussion

The relationship between ChatGPT and academic writing should therefore be understood as a pedagogical issue rather than simply a technological one. The same tool can produce very different educational outcomes depending on how it is used.

When students use ChatGPT to replace their own writing, the technology may undermine the development of independent writing skills. When students use it to obtain explanations, receive feedback, compare alternative expressions, identify weaknesses, and revise their own drafts, it may become a valuable supplementary resource.



This distinction can be described as the difference between AI-generated writing and AI-supported writing. In AI-generated writing, the primary intellectual and linguistic work is delegated to the machine. In AI-supported writing, the student remains the principal writer while AI provides assistance during selected stages of the process.

7. Conclusion

ChatGPT represents a significant development in the educational use of artificial intelligence. Its ability to provide immediate feedback, explanations, examples, vocabulary assistance, and revision suggestions creates new possibilities for English language teaching. For students learning English as a foreign language, these functions can provide additional opportunities to practice and improve academic writing.

However, the educational value of ChatGPT depends largely on how it is integrated into the learning process. Using AI to generate complete assignments may reduce opportunities for students to develop independent writing and critical thinking. In contrast, using ChatGPT as a supplementary tool for feedback, revision, language development, and reflection can potentially support the writing process.

Therefore, the key issue is not whether students should use ChatGPT, but how they should use it responsibly and educationally. Teachers should establish clear expectations, encourage independent writing, teach students to evaluate AI-generated information critically, and use AI-assisted activities that preserve student authorship.

For vocational college students, this approach may be particularly valuable because effective English writing is increasingly connected to professional communication and digital competence. ChatGPT can become part of this learning environment, but it should remain a tool that supports human learning rather than replacing it.



Ultimately, successful academic writing requires more than grammatically correct language. It requires ideas, reasoning, evidence, organization, critical thinking, and the ability to communicate meaningfully. ChatGPT can assist students in developing these abilities, but the responsibility for thinking, evaluating, and writing must remain with the learner.

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