

"THE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE USE OF CHATGPT IN IMPROVING WRITING SKILLS"

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan persepsi mahasiswa tentang penggunaan ChatGPT dalam meningkatkan keterampilan menulis, serta mengidentifikasi keuntungan dan kerugian penggunaan ChatGPT dalam keterampilan menulis. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian deskriptif kualitatif. Partisipan penelitian ini adalah 59 mahasiswa aktif yang mengambil mata kuliah Essay Writing pada semester ketiga Program Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. Data diambil dengan menggunakan kuesioner tertutup dan terbuka, serta wawancara, kemudian dianalisa secara kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan: 1) 80% dari mahasiswa memiliki persepsi positif terhadap penggunaan ChatGPT mereka merasa bahwa setelah menggunakan ChatGPT keterampilan menulis mereka telah meningkat. Namun 20% dari mahasiswa, menyatakan bahwa ChatGPT tidak mempengaruhi keterampilan menulis mereka 2) ChatGPT memberikan tiga keuntungan pada mahasiswa yaitu: ChatGPT memudahkan mahasiswa dalam menemukan ide atau topik untuk menulis esai, membuat proses menulis lebih efisien, dan membantu mahasiswa menulis dengan tata bahasa dan ejaan yang benar. 3) Namun demikian, ada tiga kerugian juga yang dirasakan saat menggunakan ChatGPT yaitu ChatGPT membuat mahasiswa kurang kreatif dalam menulis esai. penggunaan ChatGPT membuat mahasiswa malas dan bergantung pada penggunaannya dan ChatGPT terkadang menghasilkan teks yang tidak akurat.

Kata Kunci: ChatGPT, Kerugian, Keterampilan menulis, Keuntungan, Persepsi mahasiswa

Abstract

This study aimed to describe students' perceptions the use of ChatGPT in improving writing skills, as well as identify the advantages and disadvantages of using ChatGPT in improving writing skills. This study used a qualitative descriptive research design. The participants of this study were 59 active students who took an Essay Writing course in the third semester of the English Education Program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. The data were collected using closed and open questionnaires, as well as interviews, and then analyzed qualitatively. The results showed that 1) 80% of the students had a positive perception towards the use of ChatGPT; they felt that after using ChatGPT, their writing skills had improved. However, 20% of students stated that ChatGPT did not affect their writing skills 2) ChatGPT provides three advantages to students: ChatGPT makes it easier for students to find ideas or topics for writing English essays, makes the writing process more efficient, and helps students write with correct grammar and spelling. 3) there are three disadvantages of using ChatGPT. Firstly, ChatGPT makes students less creative in writing English essays, the use of ChatGPT makes students lazy and dependent in using ChatGPT, and ChatGPT sometimes produces inaccurate texts.

Keywords: ChatGPT, Advantages, Disadvantages, Students' perception, Writing skills

1. INTRODUCTION

In the growing digital era, education faces the challenge of digital transformation that impacts universities and other educational institutions (Anderson et al., 2023). One of the significant innovations in recent years is the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI), which has attracted much attention for its potential to revolutionize educational practices (García-Peñalvo, 2023). In Particular, AI applications like ChatGPT, developed by OpenAI, are gaining popularity in educational settings, offering promising prospects for improving learning experiences, especially in writing skills (Ngo, 2023).

ChatGPT, an AI-powered chatbot, stands out for its ability to automatically generate text in response to user input, catering to formal and informal writing contexts (Shidiq, 2023). Previous research shows that university students often use AI applications such as ChatGPT to assist them in essay writing tasks, and they view it as a helpful tool that facilitates an enjoyable writing experience while providing time-saving benefits and personalized feedback (Ngo, 2023; Toar et al., 2022).

It is important to note that in the context of English education, essay writing courses are often an important and compulsory part of the curriculum in various colleges, including Muhammadiyah Surakarta University. Students taking this course, especially in semester 3, are at a more advanced stage in developing writing skills. Therefore, their understanding of the use of AI technologies such as ChatGPT in an academic context can provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities in their writing learning process.

However, it is crucial to recognize that ChatGPT and similar AI technologies are merely tools to support learning and not the primary sources of knowledge (Liu, 2023). Concerns have been raised about students' ability to discern the quality and authenticity of information generated by such platforms, especially in an academic environment where critical thinking and source evaluation are essential (Ngo, 2023). This underscored the ongoing debate regarding the efficacy and ethical implications of integrating AI into educational practices, especially for students who struggle with writing proficiency.

This debate about integrating AI like ChatGPT in education led the researcher to conduct this study. This study aims to explore university students' perceptions and experiences regarding the impact of ChatGPT on their writing skills. By exploring students' perspectives, this research seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the complexities of integrating AI technologies such as ChatGPT into a higher education context. This research not only contributes to a better understanding of the advantages and disadvantages associated with AI-enhanced learning, but it also provides valuable insights for educators, educational institutions, and students.

By explaining students' perceptions of the use of ChatGPT in academic writing, this study aims

to provide information regarding students' views on the use of ChatGPT in writing skills along with its advantages and disadvantages. Ultimately, the findings of this study may facilitate informed discourse and simplify knowledge-based decision-making regarding the integration of AI into educational practices.

To ensure the objectives of this study, three research questions are formulated as follows:

- 1) What is the students' perception about the use of ChatGPT in improving writing skills?
- 2) What are the advantages of using ChatGPT in improving writing skills?
- 3) What are the disadvantages of using ChatGPT in improving writing skills?

2. METHOD

This research used a qualitative research design. Qualitative research focuses on comprehending phenomena through the perspectives of the study's human participants. A descriptive qualitative study is designed to collect data about a phenomenon. This study aimed to describe students' perceptions of the use of ChatGPT in writing skills, as well as identify the advantages and disadvantages of using ChatGPT in writing skills. The participants of this study were 59 active students who took an Essay Writing course in the third semester of the English Education Program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. In collecting data, the researcher used closed and open questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire and interviews were presented in Indonesian to reduce the potential for misunderstandings due to varying interpretations. To analyze the data, the researcher used qualitative analysis and used three stages of technique in data analysis, 1) Data Reduction, 2) Data Display, and 3) Drawing Conclusion. In terms of data validity, the researcher used methodological triangulation and source triangulation

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The students' perception of the use of ChatGPT in writing skills

A. ChatGPT Improved student's writing skills

Based on the Closed Questionnaire, the researcher found that 55.93% of students perceived that they had improved their writing skills after using ChatGPT. Additionally, 23.73% of students had greatly improved. These findings were supported by the results from the Open questionnaire. The students felt that using ChatGPT improved their writing skills because it helped them find new ideas and get references for words and sentences. ChatGPT has made developing ideas in writing essays easier and more engaging.

SF 12: "Because by using ChatGPT, I can find ideas and develop the ideas more easily."

The results of the Closed and Open Questionnaire were supported by the findings from interviews. The researcher found that after using ChatGPT, some participants perceived that using ChatGPT had improved their writing skills. Their writing improved because their sentence structures were more grammatically correct, and the topics they wrote became more interesting and persuasive than before.

SF 11: “The change I experienced after using ChatGPT is that now the sentence structure in my writing is easier to understand than before. (The sentence structure in her writing had become more grammatically correct, thereby improving the quality of her writing.”

B. ChatGPT did not improve students’ writing skills

Based on the Closed Questionnaire, the researcher found that 16.95% of students perceived their writing skills unaffected after using ChatGPT, and 3.39% felt there was no significant effect after using ChatGPT. These findings were supported by the results from the Open questionnaire. The students felt that using ChatGPT did not affect their writing skills because they only used ChatGPT when pressed by assignment deadlines. Additionally, when using ChatGPT, some students followed the text provided by ChatGPT, which kept their writing abilities unchanged.

SM 7: “Because when I use ChatGPT, I will follow the writing provided by ChatGPT. That is what keeps my writing skills the same. Because I rely too much on ChatGPT.”

The results of the Closed and Open Questionnaire are supported by the findings from interviews. The researcher found that after using ChatGPT, they perceived that using ChatGPT did not improve their writing skills. Instead, using ChatGPT only helps them to finish their writing more quickly.

SM 1: “Using ChatGPT just makes it easier to finish my writing. Meanwhile, my writing skills have not changed.”

3.2 The advantages of using ChatGPT in improving writing skills

A. The use of ChatGPT facilitates students in finding ideas or topics to write English essays.

Based on the Closed questionnaire, the researcher found that 94,9% of students agreed that using ChatGPT facilitates them in finding ideas or topics to write essays. ChatGPT helped students overcome difficulties in finding the right ideas or topics for writing essays. These findings were supported by the results from the Open questionnaire. Students felt the help of ChatGPT made it easier to come up with ideas to write and even helped them to develop the ideas.

SM 3: “In my opinion, the advantages of using ChatGPT in writing are providing new ideas, overcoming obstacles when stuck in writing an essay...”

The findings from the Closed and Open Questionnaire were also supported by the results from

interviews. This showed that ChatGPT could help students to find ideas and concepts, and can also be used as a reference for writing

SF 35: "In my opinion, the first advantage of using ChatGPT is that it can generate initial ideas for me to write, and I can also use it as a reference in the writing that I will make."

B. The use of ChatGPT makes the writing process more efficient.

Based on the Closed questionnaire, the researcher found that more than half of the participants (55.93%) strongly agreed, and 35.59% of participants also agreed that the use of ChatGPT made the writing process more efficient. With suggestions or ideas generated by ChatGPT, students could complete their writing more quickly. These findings were supported by the results from the Open questionnaire that using ChatGPT helped them speed up the writing process and correct.

SM 8: "Because with this software (ChatGPT), I find it very helpful when writing and more efficient" (writing time becomes more efficient)

The findings from the Closed and Open Questionnaire were also supported by the results from interviews that the use of ChatGPT helped students speed up their writing process because the topics and data they searched for were easier to find.

SF 12: "In terms of writing, the first advantage of using ChatGPT is that it makes writing time shorter and more efficient. Because I do not have to spend a long time determining the topic to be discussed..."

C. The use of ChatGPT helps students write with correct grammar and spelling.

Based on the Closed questionnaire, the researcher found that more than half of the participants (55.93%) strongly agreed, and 33.90% agreed that ChatGPT helped students write with correct grammar and spelling. These findings were supported by the results from the Open questionnaire. Students felt that using ChatGPT helped them write with correct spelling and grammar so that their writing became more structured and could avoid spelling mistakes.

SF 11: "ChatGPT answers are usually clearly explained and presented, and the writing structure and grammar are easy to understand, which helps me avoid spelling mistakes."

The findings from the Closed and Open Questionnaire were also supported by the results from interviews, which showed that ChatGPT helped students find references for constructing sentences so that their grammar was appropriate. ChatGPT also helped students to write with correct grammar and structure so that it was more structured.

SF-14: "In terms of writing, ChatGPT can be a reference for me to organize words, sentences,

and grammar."

3.3 The disadvantages of Using ChatGPT in improving writing skills.

A. The use of ChatGPT makes students less creative in writing essays.

Based on the Closed questionnaire, the researcher found that 52.54% of students agreed that using ChatGPT could make students less creative in writing essays. These findings were supported by the results from the Open questionnaire. The use of ChatGPT could limit the perspectives chosen by students, as they followed the suggestions provided by ChatGPT. The result was that students might lose the ability to think creatively in developing their own writing, which could make students lose their creativity in writing.

SM 12: "The use of ChatGPT can make me less creative in writing and reduce the quality of my writing."

The findings from the Closed Open Questionnaire were also supported by the results from interviews that ChatGPT could make students less critical in writing because they relied solely on ChatGPT.

SF 11: "...ChatGPT also makes me less critical in thinking because I only rely on this tool when writing."

B. The use of ChatGPT makes students lazy and dependent in using ChatGPT.

Based on the Closed-ended questionnaire, the researcher found that 59.32% of students agreed that the use of ChatGPT made students lazy and dependent on using it. These findings were supported by the results from the Open questionnaire. Students felt that using ChatGPT made students become lazy when given tasks by lecturers because they had become dependent and relied too much on ChatGPT, which helped them complete their writing more quickly.

SF 39: "Using ChatGPT makes me lazy when given assignments by lecturers, makes me addicted, and makes me easily dependent on ChatGPT when doing assignments such as writing essays or creating articles, journal, or other tasks."

The finding from the Closed and Open Questionnaire was also supported by the results from interviews that Excessive use of ChatGPT could cause students to prefer instant solutions because of their dependency on ChatGPT.

SM 6: "Personally, ChatGPT makes me a person who prefers instant solutions and makes me lazy to think well when writing or doing other tasks..."

C. ChatGPT sometimes produces inaccurate text

Based on the Closed questionnaire, the researcher found that 67.79% of students agreed that ChatGPT

did not always produce text that aligned with students' intentions and contained some inaccurate information. These findings were supported by the results from the Open questionnaire. Students felt that sometimes ChatGPT provided answers with no clear source of where the information came from so it is making the information inaccurate.

SF 11: "From my experience using ChatGPT, the results are not supported with references that could truly be trusted."

The findings from the Closed and Open Questionnaires were also supported by the results from interviews. The students perceived that sometimes the answers provided by ChatGPT were not accompanied by sources, thus causing confusion about whether the information was accurate or not.

SM 14: "Sometimes the answers provided by ChatGPT are not accompanied by sources, making it confusing whether the information was accurate or not."

This study found that 80% of students had a positive perception, and they felt that ChatGPT improved their writing skills. This is because the students felt the positive impact that ChatGPT had on their writing ability. However, the researcher found that 20.34% of students felt the opposite. They felt that ChatGPT did not improve their writing skills. This is because ChatGPT only helped them complete their assignments without any impact on their writing skills.

This finding is in line with the research conducted by Marini et al. (2023), who found that most students of Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) in Malaysia believe that ChatGPT can help them improve their writing skills. This is because ChatGPT can correct grammatical errors in their writing, which can help students improve their writing skills. This finding is also supported by Ali et al. (2023) and Zebua (2024) who stated that ChatGPT can generally motivate students to improve their English reading and writing skills.

Positive perceptions regarding the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), such as ChatGPT, are also supported by Toar et al. (2022) who found that most students in tertiary institutions in Hong Kong have positive perceptions regarding the use of AI in learning to write. In contrast, Chan & Hu (2023) found that students' perceptions of GenAI, such as ChatGPT in higher education, were complex and diverse; students showed both positive and negative perceptions, and they had concerns about reliability, privacy, and the potential impact of AI on personal development, career prospects, and social values.

In this study, the researcher found three advantages of using ChatGPT in writing skills, namely: the use of ChatGPT makes it easier for students to find ideas or topics for writing essays, makes the writing process more efficient, and helps students write with correct grammar and spelling.

The results of this study are consistent with research conducted by (Ngo, 2023) which shows ChatGPT helps Vietnamese students with time-saving, access to diverse information, personalized guidance and feedback, and assistance in generating writing ideas.

Research conducted by Wahyuddin et al. (2023) and Xiao (2023) also support this study that one of the advantages of ChatGPT is that it helps Chinese university students and Muhammadiyah University of Parepare find ideas or topics to write about. They found that the advantages of using ChatGPT include generating ideas for brainstorming. Applying ChatGPT can help students improve their ability to think and understand the structure and style of writing their essays. Students can be creative in improving and developing their writing skills.

Another advantage of using ChatGPT is that it makes the writing process more efficient. The results of this study are in line with the results of the research done by Huang J & Tan M. (2023), A. A. Imran & Lashari (2023), and Nguyen (2023) They found that Writing can be a time-consuming process, but with the help of AI tools like ChatGPT, the writing process can be efficient. The tool has the ability to automatically generate content, which can then be edited and refined by human writers. Teachers from Van Lang University were also able to save time and effort in several stages of teaching writing with the help of ChatGPT.

This researcher's findings also show that ChatGPT helps students to write with correct grammar and spelling. This is supported by the findings of Ningrum (2023) and Zulfa et al. (2023) where they state that AI-based systems such as ChatGPT can be effective in correcting grammar and spelling errors in student writing at Islamic Universities in Indonesia. ChatGPT can provide correct spelling and grammar suggestions so that it can help students write with correct grammar and spelling.

However, the researcher also found three disadvantages of using ChatGPT in writing skills: The use of ChatGPT makes students less creative in writing essays, makes students lazy and dependent on using it, and ChatGPT sometimes produces inaccurate text. These findings are in line with research by Imran & Lashari (2023), Marzuki et al. (2023), and Shidiq (2023), who have described that the use of AI technology like ChatGPT in writing can have negative impacts on students' creativity. This is also supported by the research of Nguyen (2023)) who found that EFL Teachers from Van Lang University stated that excessive use of ChatGPT and the habit of copying generated answers could potentially lead to a decrease in critical thinking and problem-solving skills among users.

This finding is in line with the research of (Rahma & Fithriani (2024) who found that the use of AI such as ChatGPT has a risk of possible dependency on students; this finding suggests that EFL Teachers in Indonesia are concerned that students are likely to rely too much on ChatGPT, potentially

reducing their ability to write independently and develop sustainable writing skills. Feelings of laziness and potential cheating can also occur due to the unwise use of ChatGPT.

However, the results of this study are different from the research conducted by Agustini (2023) who found that ChatGPT can increase students' self-directed learning in the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. According to him, the individualized support provided by ChatGPT can take control of their educational journey. This can foster students' self-confidence and equip them with the skills needed to become independent learners. This difference is due to the different focus of the research. This research focuses on writing skills, while Agustini's research focuses more on independent learning in the context of the Independent Learning Curriculum, which emphasizes the positive aspects of using ChatGPT.

Another disadvantage is that the text generated by ChatGPT may also produce inaccurate or incorrect information. The results of this study are supported by the research of Liu (2023) and Shoufan (2023) who found that despite ChatGPT's ability to generate text similar to humans, there is still a risk that the information provided by the system may be incorrect or inaccurate. The students of Khalifa University and Chinese universities alike agree that ChatGPT has problems providing inaccurate information and responses. Therefore, students should use ChatGPT wisely and pay attention to the credibility of the information sources provided by this model.

4. CLOSING

Based on the findings of this study, the majority of students have a positive perception of ChatGPT as a valuable tool for improving their writing skills, with 80% reporting marked improvement. Meanwhile, 20% of students felt that ChatGPT facilitated assignment completion rather than skill development. The study found three main advantages of ChatGPT to students: ChatGPT makes it easier for students to find ideas or topics for writing English essays, makes the writing process more efficient, and helps students write with correct grammar and spelling. However, there are still disadvantages of ChatGPT found by researchers, namely ChatGPT makes students less creative in writing English essays, the use of ChatGPT makes students lazy and dependent in using ChatGPT, and ChatGPT sometimes produces inaccurate texts. Therefore, although ChatGPT has proven useful in supporting writing skills, overcoming this weakness is critical for effective integration into educational practice.

The limitations of this research include its narrow scope, only focusing on students of the English Language Education program at UMS. These findings may not be generalizable to broader student populations or other educational contexts. Additionally, this study's reliance on student self-reported data may introduce response bias or inaccuracies in assessing ChatGPT's true impact on

writing skills. Additionally, the short duration of the study may not capture long-term effects or changes in student perceptions and usage patterns over time. Future research could address these limitations by expanding sample sizes, diversifying participant demographics, and conducting longitudinal studies to track students' development and attitudes toward AI tools such as ChatGPT. In the future, lecturers must balance this by designing more responsive material. Assignments should emphasize the importance of accurate information and critical thinking, encouraging students to use ChatGPT only as a complementary tool and not as a crutch. Additionally, collaboration among educators is critical to developing best practices and guidelines for effectively integrating ChatGPT into writing instruction, ensuring alignment of ethics and pedagogy with educational goals. By addressing these implications, educators can harness the potential of ChatGPT while reducing its challenges in developing students' writing skills in higher education.

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