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THE IMPACT OF CHATGPT ON ENGLISH WRITING SKILLS OF 11th-GRADERS IN A VIETNAMESE HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstract

This research explores how the use of ChatGPT, an AI-powered language model, affects the English writing skills of 11th-grade students from a high school in An Giang Province, Vietnam. A mixed-methods approach was used to track students' writing proficiency before and after using ChatGPT to give corrective feedback in writing classes, focusing on four key components: task fulfillment, organisation, vocabulary, and grammar. A total of 70 EFL students took part in the study, divided into two groups: the experimental receiving written corrective feedback through ChatGPT, and the control group given conventional teacher feedback during the second semester of the 2024-2025 school year. A pretest, posttest and four periodic tests were evaluated using adapted IELTS and VSTEP criteria on a 10-point scale. Quantitative findings indicated a statistically meaningful improvement in the experimental group. The interview findings demonstrated a generally positive view of ChatGPT, emphasising its usefulness in offering individualised support, immediate feedback, and increased students' engagement in writing activities. These results suggest that ChatGPT can be an effective tool for improving English writing skills, providing a foundation for further research on AI-assisted language teaching and learning.

Keywords: *AI-assisted feedback, AI in education, ChatGPT, EFL students, English writing skills.*

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TÁC ĐỘNG CỦA CHATGPT ĐỐI VỚI KỸ NĂNG VIẾT TIẾNG ANH CỦA HỌC SINH LỚP 11 TẠI MỘT TRƯỜNG TRUNG HỌC Ở VIỆT NAM

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Tóm tắt

Nghiên cứu này khảo sát tác động của ChatGPT, một mô hình ngôn ngữ được hỗ trợ bởi trí tuệ nhân tạo, đối với kỹ năng viết tiếng Anh của học sinh lớp 11 tại một trường trung học ở tỉnh An Giang, Việt Nam. Nghiên cứu áp dụng phương pháp hỗn hợp để theo dõi năng lực viết của học sinh trước và sau khi sử dụng ChatGPT nhằm cung cấp phản hồi chỉnh sửa trong các tiết học viết, tập trung vào bốn thành phần chính: mức độ thỏa mãn yêu cầu, tổ chức bài viết, từ vựng và ngữ pháp. Tổng cộng 70 học sinh EFL tham gia nghiên cứu, được chia thành hai nhóm: nhóm thực nghiệm nhận phản hồi chỉnh sửa viết thông qua ChatGPT và nhóm đối chứng nhận phản hồi truyền thống từ giáo viên trong học kỳ II năm học 2024–2025. Bài kiểm tra trước, bài kiểm tra sau và bốn bài kiểm tra định kỳ được đánh giá theo tiêu chí IELTS và VSTEP đã điều chỉnh trên thang điểm 10. Kết quả định lượng cho thấy nhóm thực nghiệm có sự cải thiện đáng kể về mặt thống kê. Kết quả định tính cho thấy quan điểm nhìn chung tích cực về ChatGPT, nhấn mạnh tính hữu ích của công cụ này trong việc cung cấp hỗ trợ cá nhân hóa, phản hồi tức thì và tăng cường sự tham gia của học sinh vào hoạt động viết. Nghiên cứu đã khẳng định ChatGPT có thể là một công cụ hiệu quả để nâng cao kỹ năng viết tiếng Anh, đồng thời tạo nền tảng cho các nghiên cứu tiếp theo về việc dạy và học ngôn ngữ với sự hỗ trợ của AI.

Từ khóa: *AI trong giáo dục, ChatGPT, EFL, kỹ năng viết tiếng Anh, phản hồi tự động.*

1. Introduction

As a developing country, Vietnam is actively joining the global economy and striving to increase its position in international trade. English proficiency, as a cornerstone of international communication, plays a critical role in facilitating this integration. Among the four skills of English, writing is often regarded as the most difficult to develop because it requires a mastery of cognitive and linguistic skills, yet it holds significant value in both academic and professional domains (Hussin et al., 2015). Mastering writing is essential alongside the other three English language skills, whether in school, university, or any context where written communication is required. During one's career, it is consistently important to maintain good writing skills to deal with written documents properly, communicate ideas effectively, and complete work-related tasks successfully (Hampton & Resnick, 2009).

With the advancement of technology, integrating technology into teaching language has gained popularity due to its effectiveness, and ChatGPT is one of the options. ChatGPT can significantly enhance the writing processes in several key areas, as evidenced by Barrot (2023) and Yan (2023), who found that students in English writing practicum experienced fewer grammatical errors and greater lexical diversity when using the tool.

As research on the use of ChatGPT in writing has just emerged and there has been few studies on its effect on students' writing skills at high school globally and locally, particularly in An Giang province. Hence, this study aims to examine how ChatGPT impacts students' writing proficiency as a supportive tool in writing, thereby providing suggestions to help educators and students make the most of its use.

With these aims, the study raised two core questions:

1. What is the impact of using ChatGPT on the EFL learners' writing skills?
2. What are students' perceptions of using ChatGPT for English writing?

2. Literature review

2.1. EFL writing skills

Writing is widely acknowledged as one of the most challenging skills for EFL students, since it requires the integration of cognitive, linguistic, and communicative competences (Hyland, 2019). Unlike receptive skills such reading and listening, writing involves generating ideas, organising them coherently, and expressing them through accurate and appropriate language. For this reason, writing proficiency is often considered a strong indicator of overall language development and academic success (Hamp-Lyons & Heasley, 2006).

In high school EFL writing classes, teachers normally provide written corrective feedback with reference to four main criteria: task fulfillment, organisation, vocabulary, and grammar, based on assessment frameworks such as the IELTS writing band descriptors (British Council & IELTS, 2023) and the Vietnamese Standardised Test of English Proficiency (VSTEP; Quynh, 2019). In detail, task fulfillment measures how well students address the requirements of a given writing task; organisation refers to the logical sequencing of ideas and effective use of cohesion and paragraphing; vocabulary involves the range, appropriacy, and precision of lexical choices; and grammar evaluates both the accuracy and variety of grammatical structures used.

Since teachers often face time limitations in delivering feedback on students' drafts, peer feedback may provide a more feasible alternative. However, the use of peer feedback in writing lessons encounters challenges because inadequate feedback proficiency combined with insufficient domain expertise often leads to feedback that lacks both productivity and reliability (Ciampa & Wolfe, 2023). As a result, AI-generated feedback is emerging as a

promising option as it effectively supports teachers' traditional practices when appropriately integrated (Tay, 2024).

2.2. Using ChatGPT for EFL teaching practice

According to Su et al. (2023), ChatGPT is a chatbot developed using a large language model, such as GPT-3.5 or GPT-4. It relies on a transformer architecture that uses self-attention to determine how much weight to give different parts of the input. During its pre-training, the model processes a large collection of text, helping it learn how words and phrases relate to each other in context. As a result of this training, it can produce responses that closely resemble natural human language when interacting with users. Although some concerns have been raised about academic honesty and ethical issues (Yan, 2023), ChatGPT has rapidly become widely popular among language teachers since its launch in late 2022 (OpenAI, 2022).

2.2.1. Idea generation

Research has increasingly focused on ChatGPT's role in generating ideas for writing. Lingard (2023) highlights that teachers and students can use ChatGPT to generate and brainstorm ideas in class. Basic et al. (2023) investigated ChatGPT-3.5 as a writing assistant in student essays, reporting that it supported idea generation, language accuracy, and text coherence. However, they noted the risk of overreliance and lack of originality. Fitria (2023) agrees that ChatGPT can organise ideas logically, include relevant supporting details, and craft effective conclusions.

2.2.2. Feedback and evaluation

If teachers know how to utilise it, ChatGPT can be potentially used as a feedback tool that is absolutely dependable. Specifically, it serves as a great support tool for learning grammar and vocabulary (Guo et al., 2022). ChatGPT is capable of offering feedback and relevant information regardless of students' language ability to make requests (Rudolph et al., 2023). Students receiving corrective feedback from ChatGPT is also confirmed by Dai et al. (2023). Research by Mizumoto and Eguchi (2023) demonstrated a reasonable level of accuracy and reliability, making it a potentially valuable complement to human evaluations. Ohio University (2023) acknowledges that ChatGPT can provide feedback on text structure and language use and suggest appropriate corrections. Parker et al. (2023) demonstrated how ChatGPT could provide automated writing evaluation in nursing education, offering timely feedback on structure and clarity. Their findings suggested that AI could complement instructor feedback, particularly in disciplines with high writing demands.

2.2.3. Motivation and confidence

Another significant advantage of ChatGPT is its ability to enhance students' motivation and confidence. Ali et al. (2023), in their study conducted in Saudi Arabia, emphasize ChatGPT's positive impact on students' motivation, particularly for developing reading and writing skills. According to Kohnke et al. (2023) and Su et al. (2023), ChatGPT can provide such clear and reliable explanations that students can feel more at ease when asking questions in a classroom setting. Stokel-Walker (2022) acknowledges that ChatGPT can speed up the writing process as well as increase its effectiveness.

2.2.4. Using ChatGPT in Vietnam

In Vietnam, there have been some studies examining ChatGPT's role, particularly in teaching English. ChatGPT is accepted to have mixed potential in improving students learning experience and language proficiency. ChatGPT is considered promising in Vietnamese high school mathematics education by fostering active and interactive learning environments (Truong, 2023; Cao et al., 2023). Nguyen et al. (2024) investigated how VoiceGPT (another

version of ChatGPT), helps in vocabulary acquisition among sixth-grade students in Vietnam. The findings confirm considerable progress lexical performance: appropriate use of register, vocabulary range, vocabulary accuracy, as well as cohesion and coherence, showing the tool's flexibility and effectiveness in developing English vocabulary. When used to work out a test in the Vietnamese National High School Graduation Examination, ChatGPT achieved a score of score of 7.92 out of 10. Especially, it performed really well in reading, writing, and grammar sections, and just encountered a minor difficulty in phonetics, indicating further improvement (Dao et al., 2023). A study conducted at a university in Mekong Delta confirms that university students perceive ChatGPT as a useful tool for their academic writing, especially in proofreading, coherence, and rephrasing (Vo, 2025).

Only a limited number of studies on ChatGPT have examined its application to high school students' English writing skills in Vietnam. Its contribution to the development of structured writing abilities has yet to be thoroughly studied. Most existing research has concentrated on other academic areas, such as mathematics (Truong, 2023; Cao et al., 2023), or specific language skills like phonetics. In addition, while ChatGPT offers personalised support (Cao et al., 2023), its reliance on human supervision (Tipayavaravan, 2023) and inability to fully replace human teachers pose challenges for training students' independent thinking. The feedback mechanism of ChatGPT also lacks sufficient investigation regarding its long-term impact on writing practice. These gaps highlight the need for further research on its specific benefits for high school students' English writing development. To its goals, this study aims at exploring the effect of ChatGPT on the development of students' English writing skills.

3. Methods

3.1. Research Design

Owing to the absence of random assignment, this study adopted a quasi-experimental design within a mixed-methods framework (Creswell, 2012). The convenience sample of 70 of 11th graders from two classes (35 students per each group) in the 2024-2025 academic year was chosen at Thoai Ngoc Hau High School, An Giang province, in Vietnam. The research took the use of ChatGPT as a writing supportive tool as its independent variable and students' English writing skills as its dependent variable, which was evaluated using the VSTEP criteria.

3.2. ChatGPT intervention

The experimental group (EG) benefited from integrating ChatGPT into five modified lesson plans for Units 5–9 in English 11 textbook “Global Success”, by Hoang Van Van, Vietnam Education Publishing House and Pearson (2024). The book is organised so that each unit focuses on a particular topic and includes exercises in listening, reading, speaking, and writing. In particular, ChatGPT was used to provide writing corrective feedback during the post-writing stage of each lesson. The control group (CG), however, follows traditional writing techniques, using only peer-correction and teacher's feedback for one or two of students' first drafts in each writing lesson without access to ChatGPT tools. To ensure consistency in teaching conditions, the Wi-Fi connection in the classroom is disconnected during lessons for both groups, except during the post-writing stage for the EG, when ChatGPT is used to deliver personalised feedback. Each writing lesson lasts 90 minutes (since it occupies the time of communication and culture lesson, there will be a make-up class for this period later). The process of integrating ChatGPT into writing lessons includes three following steps:

Step 1: The researcher optimised ChatGPT error-marking prompts and trained students to use them. The researcher consulted with the information technology specialist and the English subject leader in his school. A pilot test was conducted with sample texts from 11th-

grade students to evaluate the effectiveness and clarity of some suggested prompts in generating structured feedback. Based on the pilot results, minor changes were made to increase the precision. The final version of the prompt is as follows:

“Carefully analyse the following piece of writing and identify issues in four specific areas:

1. Task fulfillment issues: for any part that fails to meet the task requirements (e.g., unclear main idea, insufficient explanation, missing comparison, lack of examples), enclose the problematic section in italics.

2. Organisation and coherence problems: for issues related to paragraph structure, logical flow, or lack of cohesion, enclose the problematic text in quotation marks.

3. Inappropriate word choice: highlight any incorrect, awkward, or imprecise word choices in bold.

4. Grammar and syntax errors: highlight all grammatical mistakes, including tense, subject-verb agreement, punctuation, and sentence structure in square brackets.”

After highlighting these issues, provide brief correction suggestions or improved alternatives next to the highlighted errors in smaller font size and in parentheses.”

Step 2: Students send all their first writing drafts to the host computer (the teacher’s computer) via the LAN. The Wi-Fi connection is enabled only after all drafts have been received. Students are then given 7 minutes to use ChatGPT to obtain written corrective feedback on their work, examining how ChatGPT provides corrections and taking notes.

Step 3: After 7 minutes, all students’ computer screens are blacked out. The teacher selects one original draft to display on the big screen and invites the respective student to the board to present corrections to their own draft in front of the class. The teacher may provide support if necessary.

3.3. Data collection instruments

3.3.1. Pretest, Periodic tests and Posttest

The pretest required students to write a short paragraph of approximately 100 words on the topic “How to protect endangered animals” (adapted from the English 10 textbook – Global Success). The four periodic tests and the posttest required longer essays of approximately 160–180 words (adapted from the English 11 textbook – Global Success). These tasks were designed to monitor students’ progress over a five-month period and to reflect an increasing level of complexity in both length and content. The topics were as follows:

Periodic Test 1: Advantages and disadvantages of living in a smart city

Periodic Test 2: Ways to prevent cyberbullying

Periodic Test 3: Pros and cons of limiting teenagers’ screen time

Periodic Test 4: Advantages and disadvantages of self-study

Posttest: The importance of restoring local ecosystems

3.3.2. Interviews

A semi-structured interview was carried out with 10 students from the EG. These students were randomly selected based on their availability and consent. The questions were grouped into five main topics: usefulness, motivation, features, challenges, and suggestions for improvement. Each interview lasted approximately 5-10 minutes.

1. Do you think your overall writing improved after using ChatGPT? In what ways (e.g., task fulfillment, coherence, vocabulary, grammar)?

2. Do you think ChatGPT has improved your motivation to practice writing in English? Please explain why or why not.

3. What aspects of ChatGPT do you find most helpful when working on your writing?

4. What challenges have you experienced when using ChatGPT?

5. In your opinion, how can ChatGPT be effectively used in English writing lessons at school?

3.4. Data analysis

3.4.1. Quantitative analysis of writing test and questionnaire

The writing tests were scored and subsequently double-scored by an experienced teacher serving as the English subject leader. The collected data were analysed using IBM SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 26. Independent Samples T-Test was run to compare the average scores of the two groups and to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference in their writing skills before and after the treatment. According to Brown (2001), the T-test is suitable for comparing between two independent groups' performance, and it is particularly necessary when measuring intervention effects.

3.4.2. Qualitative analysis of the interview

Ten students from the EG were randomly chosen to be interviewed. To thoroughly examine the data, the responses were transcribed and classified into categories, which helped to complement the quantitative data from the T-Tests. The researcher used quotes to organise and present the information clearly and effectively so that the validity and reliability of the study's overall findings is guaranteed.

3.5. Ethical considerations

Throughout the research process, the ethical standards were consistently maintained. Consent was obtained from relevant parties, including students, parents, and the school administration. The protection of participants' privacy and confidentiality were fully taken into account. During data collection and analysis, pseudonyms or numerical codes to refer to participants and to ensure no recorded personal or identifiable information were used to preserve their anonymity. Participants were also assured of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without facing any negative consequences.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Impact of ChatGPT on students' writing proficiency

The researcher examined the pretest and posttest scores of the CG and the EG by using a Normal Q-Q Plot. The results showed that the scores from both groups followed a normal distribution, so the Independent Sample T-test can be carried out.

Table 1. Independent sample T-test of pretests and posttest of the CG and the EG

		Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Pretest	Equal variances assumed	.218	.268	68	.790	.0429	.1602

		Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Posttest	Equal variances not assumed		.268	66.215	.790	.0429	.1602
	Equal variances assumed	.015	2.782	68	.007	.4657	.1674
	Equal variances not assumed		2.782	62.578	.007	.4657	.1674

As shown in Table 1, the pretest results showed that there was no clear difference between the average scores of the CG and EG. Levene's Test gave a significance value of 0.218 (which is higher than 0.05), meaning the condition of equal variances was met. Also, the t-test for the difference in averages gave a Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.790, which is also above 0.05, confirming that there was no statistically significant difference between the two mean scores. For posttest, the Sig. value from Levene's Test for Equality of Variances is 0.015, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the assumption of equal variances is violated. Consequently, the results from the "Equal variances not assumed" row were used. The Sig. (2-tailed) value is 0.007, which is less than 0.05, showing that the difference in posttest average scores between the CG and the EG is statistically meaningful. According to Table 2, the mean posttest score of the EG (M=8.260) was noticeably higher than that of the CG (M =7.794). Overall, while the writing results of both groups were nearly the same before the treatment, the EG showed a greater improvement compared to the CG after the treatment, suggesting that repeated and guided use of ChatGPT for written feedback is more effective in improving students' writing compared to traditional approach.

Table 2. The mean scores in the CG and the EG

Tests	CG	EG
Pretest	7.026	7.069
Periodic Test 1	7.209	7.297
Periodic Test 2	7.311	7.549
Periodic Test 3	7.511	7.794
Periodic Test 4	7.657	8.014
Posttest	7.794	8.260

Table 3 illustrates the average score improvements in key components of writing, including task fulfillment, organisation, vocabulary, and grammar. All participants experienced some level of improvement between the pretest and posttest. However, the extent and significance of these improvements vary considerably between the two groups. In the EG, the greatest improvement were observed in vocabulary and grammar. Both aspects show a mean score increase of approximately 1.72 and 1.78 points respectively, highlighting a statistically and pedagogically significant improvement. This sharp rise suggests that the intervention applied to this group had a particularly strong effect on enhancing learners' lexical range and grammatical accuracy. In comparison, improvements in task fulfillment and organisation were more modest, averaging around 0.6-0.66 point. Although they still increased, the difference is less pronounced. For the CG, score improvements were consistently lower across all four aspects. The average increase in task fulfillment, organisation, vocabulary, and grammar hovered around 0.48 to 1.08 points. While positive, these increases were considerably less than those of the EG, especially in language-related

aspects (vocabulary and grammar). These improvements are illustrated as follows:

Task Fulfillment: students' performance in task fulfillment improved gradually. Earlier essays demonstrated limited idea coverage. For instance, in test 1 (smart city), responses listed benefits superficially, such as “a life convenient, and cleans air.” By test 4 (self-study), however, students developed both advantages and disadvantages, supported with explanations and examples (e.g., “self-study offers flexibility and independence... but individuals may face stress and anxiety”), indicating more balanced argumentation.

Organisation: progress was also observed in organisation. In test 2 (cyberbullying), transitions were limited, with ideas connected mainly by “and” or “but,” resulting in poor cohesion. Looking at test 3 (screen time), students used clearer sequencing devices such as “Firstly... As a result... Additionally... For instance,” reflecting better coherence and logical flow.

Vocabulary: improvement was particularly evident. While In test 1, word choice was basic (e.g., “good city, clean air”), students began using more topic-specific expressions such as “online activities, strong passwords, hackers.” in test 2. When it comes to test 3, lexical variety further expanded with terms like “generation gap, emergency cases, online assignments.”, and for test 4, academic vocabulary appeared more frequently, including “problem-solving skills, financial pressures, mental health, negative impacts,” showing a broader and more context-appropriate lexical range.

Grammar: improvement was significant. Early work contained frequent errors (e.g., “Living in a smart city bring,” “help pollution levels low” in test 1). In contrast, later essays displayed more accurate verb tense usage and complex structures. For example, in test 3, students correctly applied conditional forms (“if they get lost and find out that they have run out of screen time”) and, by test 4, used more relative clauses accurately (“students who want flexibility and independence”).

Table 3. Means of the writings' key aspects

Tests	CG				EG			
	TF	ORG	VOC	GRM	TF	ORG	VOC	GRM
Pretest	7.14	7.30	6.96	6.68	7.36	7.34	6.78	6.80
Test 2	7.22	7.38	7.28	6.96	7.30	7.22	7.32	7.36
Test 3	7.34	7.46	7.32	7.08	7.52	7.46	7.54	7.68
Test 4	7.58	7.78	7.56	7.12	7.80	7.7	7.78	7.92
Test 5	7.60	7.90	7.82	7.36	7.96	7.98	8.02	8.12
Posttest	7.62	7.80	8.04	7.74	7.96	8.00	8.50	8.58

4.2. Students' perceptions of using ChatGPT as a writing support tool

4.2.1. Benefits

Most students had a positive perception of using ChatGPT to improve their English writing. They described it as useful, easy to use, and effective in supporting their learning. The majority (Respondent (R) 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10) said that ChatGPT helped them with grammar correction, vocabulary, and organising their ideas. While R3 and R5 also mentioned that it helped them write faster and fix mistakes right away, which gave them more confidence in their writing, others (R2, R6, R8) even called it a “learning companion” because it made writing less stressful and more enjoyable.

“ChatGPT offers instant feedback. I can write a paragraph and get quick corrections

on grammar, vocabulary, and expressions without having to wait like I would if asking a teacher. I also learn through examples. I can ask ChatGPT to provide sample paragraphs for various topics, like argumentative writing, job applications, emails, and creative writing, which helps me understand structure, vocabulary, and writing styles. Furthermore, ChatGPT helps me experiment with different tones: formal, academic, friendly, or humorous, and adjust them easily. It gives useful vocabulary and sentence structure suggestions, making my writing sound more natural and native-like. Additionally, ChatGPT helps me think more logically by supporting brainstorming and outlining ideas for writing tasks, which teaches me how to organise my thoughts clearly.” (R6)

The majority of students agreed that ChatGPT gave them more motivation to write in English. For example, R2, R5, R6, R8, and R9 felt encouraged to try new words or sentence structures because they knew they would get instant feedback. They liked how the tool corrected their mistakes and explained them, which made learning easier.

“Yes. ChatGPT makes English writing feel more approachable and enjoyable. I receive immediate feedback and learn how to express my ideas more clearly. This encourages me to practice writing every day without feeling bored.” (R2)

4.2.2. Challenges

Some students (R3, R6, R7) said that sometimes the language used by ChatGPT sounded too academic or unnatural for their level. Others, like R1, R4, and R6, found that some suggestions were not correct or didn't fit the writing well. Some (R6 and R7) also felt that they started to depend too much on the tool and didn't think for themselves as much.

“In my opinion, using ChatGPT too often has not increased my motivation. In fact, I became dependent on it and became lazy in writing. If possible, I think I would try to change my learning habits to rely less on it.” (R7)

Some (R6, R9) said they weren't sure how to ask questions or give commands to ChatGPT in a clear way, which made it harder to get the results they wanted. R5 mentioned another issue: without a paid version, some features were limited. These problems show that students need to be guided in how to use ChatGPT in a smart and balanced way, especially in the classroom.

“One difficulty I faced was not knowing how to create prompts properly. Sometimes, I wasn't sure how to ask questions clearly to get the results I wanted.” (R9)

4.2.3. Suggestions for classroom use

(a) *Brainstorming and outlining:* Students (R6, R8, R9) suggested using ChatGPT to generate ideas and create outlines before starting to write, helping to overcome writer's block and organise thoughts effectively.

(b) *Collaborative writing:* R6 mentioned that group writing activities could be enhanced by ChatGPT, allowing students to co-construct texts with AI support, making the process more engaging and interactive.

(c) *Practicing writing genres:* Some students (R6, R10) pointed out that ChatGPT could support practice with specific genres such as essays or emails, providing models and examples tailored to different writing contexts.

(d) *Teacher guidance for responsible use:* Students (R7, R9) emphasised the importance of teachers guiding learners in how to use ChatGPT responsibly. They recommended setting boundaries to prevent overreliance while encouraging students to think critically and develop

independent writing skills.

“ChatGPT could be used in class as a tool for editing writing. After students finish writing, teachers can guide them to use ChatGPT to make revisions. It can also be part of creative group activities, where students brainstorm ideas, write paragraphs, then discuss and edit together....”(R6)

4.5. Discussion

The findings corroborate studies by Barrot (2023), Yan (2023), Mizumoto and Eguchi (2023) on the use of ChatGPT and other AI-powered systems to improve writing quality, and Su et al. (2023), who emphasised combining AI with teacher guidance would achieve better learning outcomes. Using ChatGPT to generate feedback and revise their writing might have increased their autonomous learning strategies as well as minimising the risk of misuse or overreliance thanks to support and supervision from the teacher, which are often cited concerns (Nguyen, 2024). In summary, ChatGPT can serve as an effective tool to support traditional writing instruction in EFL classrooms. The analysis of four key components (task fulfillment, organisation, vocabulary, and grammar) showed that students' lexical grammar level improved the most in the EG with students using a wider range of structures (especially complex and compound sentences) and making fewer errors in verb tenses, which backs the earlier research by Chang et al. (2021), Mizumoto and Eguchi (2023), Tay (2024), Nguyen et al. (2024), Guo et al. (2022), Kohnke et al. (2023) and Barrot (2023).

Most students in the EG generally had positive attitudes toward the integration of ChatGPT into English writing activities, acknowledging that it helped them improve their writing skills, mostly in grammar, vocabulary and overall sentence structure (complex and compound sentences). These perceptions support prior studies by Dai et al. (2023), Mizumoto and Eguchi (2023), and Guo et al. (2022), which reported that students valued ChatGPT's immediate feedback, correction suggestions, and alternative phrases for writing. Students also reported that ChatGPT helped reduce their stress and increased their learning autonomy, which endorses Kohnke et al.'s finding (2023).

Students also found that they were able to use ChatGPT independently without serious difficulty, which backs findings by Escalante et al. (2023). Many students admitted it provided them with personalised feedback, noting that they could interact with ChatGPT to ask for more following explanations as reported in studies by Lingard (2023) and Su et al. (2023). Receiving immediate feedback made students more engaged in writing lessons, helping to strengthen students' learning motivation as described by Ali et al. (2023).

Besides the positive attitudes, several students expressed their concerns about being too dependent on ChatGPT. A few interview participants admitted that they occasionally used the tool to generate entire paragraphs, which reduced their effort to think independently. As mentioned in the study by Nguyen (2024), excessive dependence on AI tools may negatively impact on critical thinking and decrease students' intrinsic motivation to learn. Some students reported that ChatGPT's feedback was sometimes inaccurate and suggested more personalised feedback. The short duration of the study may have prevented ChatGPT from receiving enough personalised input to adapt to the students' individual needs.

5. Conclusion and implications

The findings demonstrated that the EG, which used ChatGPT for written corrective feedback during the post-writing stage, outperformed the CG in all measures. A statistically significant difference was found in the posttest scores, indicating that ChatGPT had a positive effect on writing skills and was effectively incorporated in the learning and teaching of

English. The qualitative data from the questionnaires and interviews confirmed that most students had positive attitudes toward ChatGPT. Many found it useful for providing feedback immediately, especially on vocabulary and grammar correction. However, some students raised concerns about the occasional inaccuracy of this AI tool's feedback and the overdependence on it. Teachers should supervise and guide students to balance AI assistance with their own efforts and avoid overdependence, as demonstrated in the process of ChatGPT intervention during the post-writing stage of the writing lesson, ensuring their long-term progress and academic integrity. Schools are suggested to pay more attention to planning teacher training programs and adjusting the current curricula to support effectively the incorporation AI into language teaching and learning, and policymakers should introduce clear regulations to ensure the integration of AI into the education system is conducted ethically.

Due to the time and cost limit, the researcher was unable to include more participants in or outside this school. A longer study may have revealed more comprehensive insights into the long-term impacts of using ChatGPT and offered deeper insights into aspects of writing skills such as creativity, idea development, and argumentation, were not deeply explored apart from task fulfillment, organisation, vocabulary, grammar. Future studies should involve a broader and more diverse group of participants, including different age groups, proficiency levels, and school types (e.g., public, private, rural, and urban schools). Next, conducting long-term investigations over one or more academic years would help assess the sustained impact of ChatGPT on writing development and student autonomy. Also, they should include qualitative analysis of students' writing samples to identify how AI feedback affects writing quality, structure, and coherence in more detail. Other areas should be explored such as the attitudes of teachers, parents, and other stakeholders toward AI in education, particularly concerning academic integrity, curriculum alignment, and learners' readiness. Finally, research is also needed to develop practical frameworks for incorporating ChatGPT in EFL classrooms, focusing on digital literacy, ethical use, and strategies to prevent misuse or overreliance.

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APPENDIX

Scoring rubrics for Writing test (adapted from “A proposed revised version of the scoring rubrics of VSTEP 3-5 level” by Ton (2021) and the IELTS writing band descriptors (British Council & IELTS, 2023))

Score	TASK FULFILMENT	ORGANISATION	VOCABULARY	GRAMMAR
9-10	- covers all the requirements of the task sufficiently and effectively - presents a fully-developed (well & convincingly) response with relevant, extended and well-supported ideas.	- organises information and ideas logically - uses a variety as well as a range of cohesive devices and organisational patterns flexibly - uses paragraphing sufficiently and appropriately (well-organised and developed)	- uses a wide range of vocabulary including less common lexis precisely and flexibly - shows full control of style and collocation, but there may be occasional inappropriacies - errors are very rare with just one or two minor slips	- uses a wide range of structures precisely and flexibly - errors are very rare with just one or two minor slips
7-8	- covers all the requirements of the task - presents a generally clear position throughout the response - develops main ideas (topic sentence of each body paragraph) with most of the details relevant	- organises information and ideas coherently - uses a range of linking words and cohesive devices appropriately, though there may be some under/overuse - uses paragraphing quite well	- uses a good range of vocabulary including some less common lexis appropriately - shows some control of style and collocation - errors, if present, are non-systematic and non-impeding	- uses a variety of simple and complex structures with good control - the majority of the sentences are error-free - errors, if present, are non-systematic and non-impeding
5-6	- covers almost all (lack 10-15% words) the requirements of the task - presents a generally clear position, but in some parts the conclusions may be repeated or unclear - presents relevant main ideas but some may be not fully developed or unclear	- organises information and ideas generally coherently - uses linking words and a limited number of cohesive devices within and across sentences accurately, but there may be some inappropriacies - manages paragraphing relatively well	- uses a sufficient range of vocabulary - attempts less common lexis but most are faulty - errors do not impede communication	- uses both simple and complex structures - errors occur but they rarely lead to misunderstanding
3-4	- partially (lack >15% words) covers the requirements of the task - presents a position but it is not always clear throughout the response; there may be no conclusions - present some main ideas, but they may be repetitive and are not sufficiently developed with relevant details	- presents information and ideas with some organisation - uses linking words accurately and attempts a few familiar cohesive devices within and across sentences, though there may be repetitions or inaccuracies - may not write in paragraphs, or paragraphing is confusing	- uses basic vocabulary with acceptable control - errors are noticeable and impede comprehension at times	- shows acceptable control of simple structures - attempts some complex structures, but unsuccessfully - errors occur frequently and impede comprehension at times
1-2	- barely responds to the task - does not present a position - presents one or two ideas which are not developed	has very little control of organisational features	- uses a very limited range of words and phrases - errors are dominant and distort the meaning	- can only use some memorised structures - errors are dominant and distort the meaning