THE PRECEIVED IMPACT OF AI - ASSISTED WRITING TOOLS ON EFL LEARNERS IN UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract: *The role of artificial intelligence (AI) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education has been increasing, especially with regard to writing skill. AI-assisted writing tools such as Grammarly, Quillbot and ChatGPT offer automated feedback, grammar correction, vocabulary suggestions, paraphrasing options, idea generation, and structural improvements that may enhance learners' writing development. While international studies have reported positive effects of AI-based writing support on grammatical accuracy, writing complexity, and learner motivation; however there is a lack of substantial empirical evidence in the Uzbek EFL context. This study investigates the perceived impact of AI-assisted writing tools on intermediate EFL learners in Uzbekistan. Using a quantitative survey design, data were collected from 100 university students through a 25-item Likert-scale questionnaire. The results revealed that, on average, EFL learners hold a positive attitude towards AI writing support, especially regarding grammar, idea generation, and writing confidence. However, moderate concerns about over-dependence on AI tools were identified. The study highlights the pedagogical potential of AI-assisted writing tools when implemented strategically to promote learner autonomy and critical engagement.*

Keywords: *AI-assisted writing, EFL learners, learners perceptions, grammar accuracy, writing efficiency.*

Introduction

The rapid development of Artificial Intelligence technologies has significantly influenced language education worldwide. AI-assisted writing tools, including automated grammar checkers, intelligent feedback systems, and generative text platforms, are becoming popular means of helping EFL learners master the four language skills, particularly the writing skill. For instance, Grammarly offers sentence-level feedback on grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors; Quill Bot provides paraphrasing and vocabulary enhancement features; and ChatGPT helps users generate ideas, outline, and create content generative AI technology.

Previous empirical studies on various EFL contexts worldwide showed the positive impacts of AI-aided feedback on EFL learners' grammar, vocabulary, and overall quality of written texts. Further studies showed the positive impacts of AI technology on EFL learners' self-confidence and motivation through instant feedback.
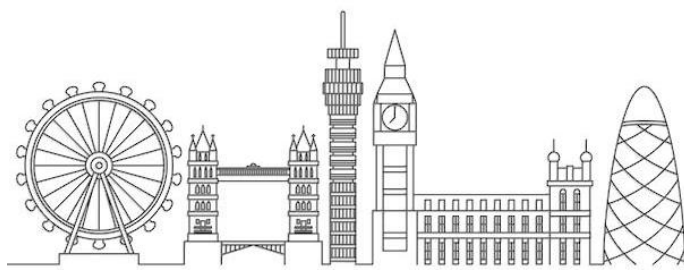
Despite growing global attention, there is a lack of research focused on the effects of AI-based writing tools in Central Asia regions, especially in Uzbekistan. In this context, considering the ongoing reforms in the educational sphere and digitalization initiatives in higher education in Uzbekistan, it is pertinent to investigate students' perceptions regarding the incorporation of AI-based tools in writing. Students' perceptions significantly influence their acceptance of technology and effectiveness of teaching methods.

Therefore, this research aim to investigate how intermediate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in Uzbekistan perceive the impact of supported writing tools, i.e., Grammarly, QuillBot, and ChatGPT, on their writing development, motivation, and confidence.

Methods

A descriptive quantitative research design was adopted to explore the learners' perceptions. The investigation involved 100 EFL students at intermediate level who were enrolled in English courses at three universities in Uzbekistan. The participants indicated that they had previously engaged with at least one AI-assisted writing tool, with Grammarly frequently used for grammar correction, QuillBot for paraphrasing tasks, and ChatGPT for assistance in brainstorming and drafting during their academic writing tasks.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire composed of 25 items on a Likert scale that measured responses from 1(Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). this questionnaire was divided into four distinct sections: perceived benefits of AI tools(such as the clarity and usefulness of feedback), perceived writing improvement(grammar, vocabulary, coherence, organization), levels of writing confidence and motivation, and concerns regarding the use of AI(for instance, issues related to dependancy or academic integrity). the development of this instrument was informed by themes found in earlier research regarding AI-mediated writing feedback and digital language learning tools. Two TESOL specialists reviewed the questionnaire for content validity, and pilot testing indicated a high level of internal reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.87.

Results

The descriptive analysis indicated that the majority of learners viewed AI-assisted writing tools as beneficial. Participants reprted that grammar-focused tools like Grammarly enabled them to identify linguistic mistakes with greater efficiency (M=4.18), while QuillBot contributed to vocabulary expansion and paraphrasing flexibility(M=4.02). Additionally, generative AI tools such as ChatGPT were perceived useful for structuring ideas and overcoming writer's block (M=3.95). Moderate improvements were observed in coherence and logical organisation (M=3.81), indicating that while AI tools provide structural guidance, the development of higher-order writing abilities may still require teacher support and critical revision. In terms of affective factors, learners indicated a boost in their confidence when executing writing
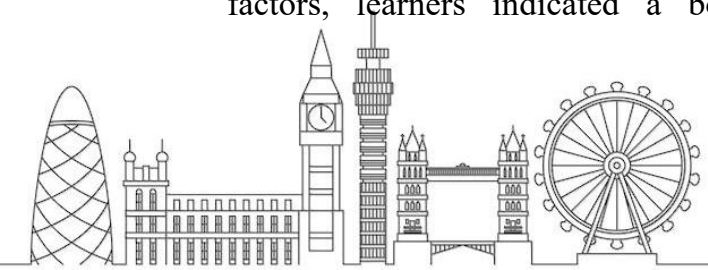
assignments (M=4.07) an increase in motivation to refine their drafts after obtaining automated feedback (M=3.93). However, responses also releaved certain concerns. Some learners expressed fear of becoming overly dependent on generative AI platforms and worried about excessive reliance might reduce independent critical thinking skill. While gender differences were not statistically significant, frequent users of AI writing tools reported slightly higher perceived benefits than occasional users, suggesting that consistent exposure may enhance positive perceptions.

Discussion

The results of this study are align with previous international research indicating that AI-assited writing tools have a positive impact on students' views regarding improvements in writing skills. Tools focused on grammar, such as Grammarly, seem to be particularly effective in tackling basic language aspects, while paraphrasing tools like QuillBot enhance vocabulary variation. Generative AI platforms such as ChatGPT extent this support to idea development and orginizing content on a large scale.

The moderate improvements reported in coherence and rhetorical structure suggest that AI tools serve more as supportive aids rather than complete writing educators. The role of teachers remains vital, especially when integrating generative AI tools into academic writing instruction. Concerns about dependence, especially related to ChatGPT, illustrate ongoing discussions in the fields of educational technology about ethical practices and cognitive involvement. While AI tools can help in the drafting and editing processes, excessive reliance might limit independent skill development. Therefore, AI-assisted writing resources should be incorporated as additional teaching tools rather than substitutes for critical thinking and teacher feedback.

Conclusion

This research investigated how intermediate EFL learners in Uzbekistan perceive the influence of AI writing tools like Grammarly, QuillBot, and ChatGPT. The results indicate that learners generally hold positive views, especially in areas such as grammar improvement, vocabulary development, organization of ideas, writing confidence, and motivation. However, concerns regarding accessive dependence on generative AI suggest that a balanced and well-guided approach to its use is essential.

The use of AI writing tools greatly support the development of writing skills in EFL learners when they are thoughtfully integrated into instructional practices. Educators are encouraged to promote reflective and responsible use of technologies such as Grammarly, ChatGPT, QuillBot integrating automated feedback with guidance from teachers to to foster student independence and critical thinking. Future research should adopt experimental and longtidunal methodologies to assess measurable enhancement in writing skills and examine the enduring of AI integration in Uzbek EFL educational classroom.
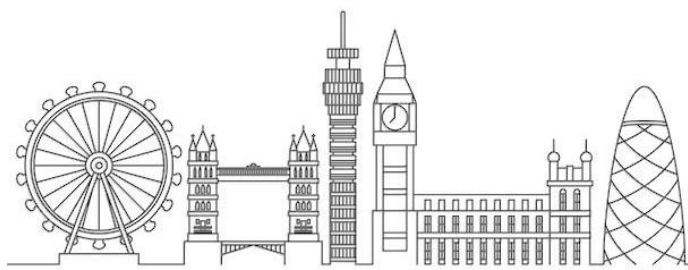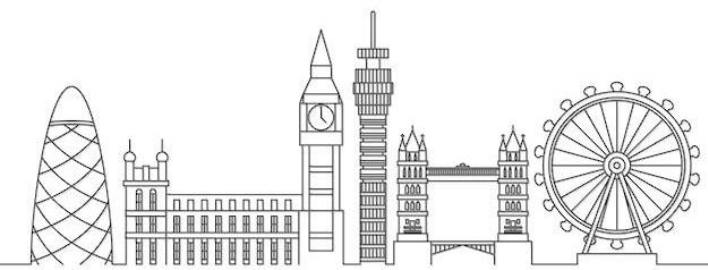
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