

Exploring Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of AI Tools in Teaching EFL Writing Skill at Vocational School

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Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) has increasingly transformed English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing instruction, particularly in vocational education where students are expected to develop workplace-oriented communication skills. This study aimed to explore teachers' and students' perceptions of AI tools in teaching EFL writing at a tourism-focused vocational school. Employing a qualitative descriptive design, the study involved three English teachers and fifteen eleventh-grade students of SMKN 1 Batulayar. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis of students' writing products. The data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, while triangulation was employed to ensure trustworthiness. The findings revealed that teachers generally perceived AI as a beneficial instructional support tool that facilitates grammar checking, feedback provision, and material preparation. However, they expressed concerns regarding students' dependence on AI, declining vocabulary retention, reduced critical thinking, and diminished writing originality. Students, on the other hand, viewed AI as a practical and efficient tool for generating ideas, improving grammar, translating vocabulary, and completing writing assignments. Despite these benefits, many students reported feelings of guilt, lack of confidence, and reduced independence in composing texts. Classroom observations and document analysis further demonstrated a discrepancy between students' submitted writing products and their actual language competence. The study concludes that AI possesses significant pedagogical potential when utilized as a learning scaffold rather than a substitute for students' cognitive efforts. Therefore, AI integration in EFL writing instruction should be accompanied by AI literacy education, process-based assessment, ethical guidelines, and teacher-mediated feedback. These measures are essential to ensure that AI supports students' writing development while maintaining their critical thinking, language competence, and professional readiness.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Vocational school is like the tip of a machete; students are provided with skills to be ready to be used in the tourism industry. Vocational schools focus not only on hotel management theory or the art of cooking, but they also conduct real training, such as conducting guest service simulations or even how to deal with tourist events. This can help students to make a big contribution after graduation and be able to become the backbone of the tourism industry. Vocational education is fundamentally tied to the integration of work activities and learning processes (Billet, 2020). He emphasized the importance of connecting learning with real-world practices. The concept of human capital in modern

education suggests that skills are a form of capital (Marginson, 2019). Furthermore, Experiential learning involves a cycle of concrete experience and reflection (Morris, 2020). Vocational education is fundamentally tied to the integration of work activities and learning processes; connecting learning with real-world practices (Billet, 2020). Experiential learning involves a cycle of concrete experience and reflection (Morris, 2020). The concept of human capital in modern education suggests that skills are a form of capital (Marginson, 2019).

In vocational schools, English teaching has its own influence. Not as an additional lesson, because interacting with the world outside of English is the main tool. Students who are involved in tourism majors often write tour package descriptions, booking confirmation emails, and even scripts to promote destinations. Therefore, the ability to perform writing skill for vocational school students. Writing skills help them to appear as professional people, can attract investors, and can even serve tourists from various countries. I myself, when doing school field practice, have seen students at vocational schools who are majoring in the travel business trying to arrange travel itineraries using English, not only about the grammar that is taught, but also how to make it look interesting and accurate. They can be left behind if they do not have this writing ability. In the job market that we know is increasingly globalized and has begun to compete with neighboring countries, this writing ability is very necessitated. The significance of this writing ability is in line with the communicative competence theory emphasizing that language proficiency involves the ability to use linguistic resources effectively within specific social contexts (Diaz, 2022). ESP is an approach to language learning which is based on learner need (Brian Paltridge & Mathew T. Prior, 2024). In addition, writing is no longer viewed merely as a final product, but as a complex, recursive process of discovery and this writing must be used appropriately based on its communicative function and audience (Hyland, 2003).

However, with increasingly modern technology, the AI phenomenon has arrived, namely artificial intelligence technology such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, and even Quillbot, which has begun to help students and teachers in writing and even seems to change this dynamic quickly. In vocational education, these tools are like a small revolution. ChatGPT can generate descriptions in an instant, Grammarly can fix grammatical errors instantly, and Quillbot can paraphrase to sound more elegant. This feels like a Magic Solution for students who are used to the "fast and results" mindset. It is uncommon for students at vocational schools who focus on the field of tourism to feel that AI can make everything easier without having to bother with brainstorming ideas for tourism promotion. Students feel that technological innovation is very useful to achieve industry standards, which is in line with industry innovation, namely, using the best tools to complete tasks. It's not a matter of laziness, but a reflection of the reality of this fast-paced world of tourism work where time is money, and efficiency can determine business success. The acceptance of AI tools is determined by perceived usefulness and ease of use (Granić & Marangunić, 2019). The integration of artificial intelligence serves as a transformative force that can change traditional pedagogical systems, making them more efficient and personalized (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). In addition, digital literacy involves not just technical skills but also the cognitive ability to utilize digital tools effectively (Yang, 2024).

Indeed, the presence of such advanced technology worry the English teachers and consider it as a serious issue. Learning a language will be a long process to build the ability of their students. Then that process will involve trial and error and trying new words, understanding sentence structure, and thinking critically in conveying messages. When students submit clear writing that is full of AI help, teachers often feel betrayed. Because it is not the result of natural hard work from the students themselves. According

to them, it can avoid the essence of learning, namely, developing vocabulary, grammar, and creativity in English. Therefore, how frustrating it is for teachers who have tried hard to teach, but whose students instead look for shortcuts by using the help of AI without relying on their original abilities. Such concerns on overusing of AI may reduce students' critical thinking development and originality in producing ideas (Hyland and Jiang, 2024; Hwang and Chen, 2023). Whereas, critical thinking should be regarded as an active intellectual habit that requires persistent and guided practice within the learning environment. This development corresponds with Falloon (2020:2451), who posits that digital literacy extends beyond technical mastery to encompass the strategic use of information.

In the field of tourism, this tension is increasingly complicated because discussions about AI still rarely touch vocational schools, especially those that focus on the tourism sector, such as SMKN 1 Batulayar. A lot of literature discusses universities, where AI is used for research or academic essays. However, in vocational education, tourism is rare, and can even be said to be empty. In fact, those who are most likely to use AI in their careers are those who, for example, create social media content to promote tourism or write event reports. Teachers can make students incompetent in the digital era if they completely ban the use of AI, where AI literacy has become a must in the tourism industry. But if, on the contrary, AI is allowed without control, students will likely lose the foundation of their basic language. They may become dependent on this machine and then lose their originality in their thinking. In this situation, it is high risk in real condition, such as negotiating with foreign clients directly. This situation is not aligned with the Situated Learning theory that learning is a social participation process that becomes most effective when deeply embedded within the authentic practices and real-life contexts of a community (Farnsworth, Kleantous, and Wenger-Trayner 2016:142).

Referring to the explanation above, it can be understood that the use of AI tools in teaching EFL writing at vocational schools, especially in the tourism field, is not only a matter of technology but also closely related to how teachers and students perceive it. On one side, many students tend to perceive AI as a helpful and practical tool that can support them in completing writing tasks quickly and efficiently, which also reflects the real demands of the tourism industry. On the other side, teachers often perceive AI differently, as they are concerned that its excessive use may reduce students' learning process, critical thinking, and originality in writing. These different perceptions create a gap between students and teachers in understanding the role of AI in the classroom.

Therefore, this study is conducted to explore and understand these perceptions more deeply from both teachers and students. The focus of this study is not to judge whether AI is good or bad, but to explore how teachers and students perceive the use of AI in teaching and learning writing. Specifically, this study aims to examine teachers' perceptions of using AI in teaching EFL writing and students' perceptions and experiences in using AI for writing activities. In the end, this research seeks to provide a clearer understanding of how AI is viewed by both teachers and students in the classroom and how these perceptions influence its use in the learning process. It is expected that the findings can help teachers and schools develop more appropriate strategies in integrating AI, so it can support learning while still maintaining students' writing skills and preparing them for their future careers. However, there is a clear gap: while students frequently use AI tools in their daily lives, their formal English writing still lacks of vocabulary and proper structure. Currently, a "grey area" exists where many students use AI for assignments secretly because there are no official guidelines. At the same time, teachers are in a dilemma between embracing this technology or banning it to prevent cheating.

Therefore, this study aims to address on how AI can be used as a helpful collaborator rather than just a shortcut, ensuring students are truly prepared for the professional world.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses qualitative descriptive method. This study seeks to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social problem from the perspective of the participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:4). A qualitative descriptive approach is used since this study aims to describe and explore the perceptions of students and teachers toward the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in teaching writing in a natural and detailed way. This method allows the researcher to understand participants' opinions, experiences, and attitudes based on real situations studying the use of AI tools such as ChatGPT, QuillBot, and Grammarly in teaching writing activities in a particular setting.

This research conducted at SMKN 1 Batulayar. This research was emphasized on learning and teaching activities in English classes. SMKN 1 Batulayar is a vocational institution that focuses on tourism, where English functions as a mandatory subject for professional careers. Participants in this study used the Purposive Sampling method. Purposive sampling is a technique for determining research samples with certain considerations. It consists of: *Key informants*: 3 English teachers of SMKN 1 Batulayar. The selected teachers are those who actively develop written materials and have first-hand experience in observing the influence of AI in their teaching. *Supporting informants*: 15 students from grade 11. They were chosen because they were in the transition stage, since compared to grade 10, their writing demands were more complex, so they often tended to seek quick help with the help of technology. The collection of this information will be stopped if the data obtained begins to repeat and does not provide new insights.

To collect data more directly, the following instruments are used: The type of interview used in this study is a semi-structured in-depth interview. This type of interview allows the researcher to prepare guiding questions while still giving flexibility for participants to express their opinions, experiences, and feelings more freely and deeply. The interview is the main instrument used to collect data about participants' perceptions. It is developed based on several key indicators, such as understanding of AI tools, attitudes toward AI, perceived benefits, challenges, and ethical considerations. Observation list used in English classes. To record student behavior in real-time as they complete a writing task, such as how often they open an AI application, when students are seen copy-pasting, when students appear to panic when teachers start approaching, and when they discuss with friends how to instruct or draft prompts to AI. This list is also used to record teachers in real-time monitoring their writing process, or when they ask their students directly the meaning of the words their students wrote. Document analysis is used to support the data from interviews and observation. The data collected include students' writing results, classroom photos or recordings. These documents help the researcher understand students' writing patterns, such as their vocabulary, sentence structure, and writing style. They also help show how AI influences the writing process in a real classroom context.

Data analysis used an interactive model and took place continuously until completion by Miles and Huberman (2020), which consisted of: Data reduction: Data reduction was carried out by selecting and focusing on information that was relevant to the research objectives. The researcher transcribed the results of the interviews and then selected the parts related to the views of teachers and students regarding the use of AI in writing learning. Data from observations and documentation were also filtered to find important information, such as how AI was used. Data display: The reduced data is then

compiled into a narrative structured around the theme being studied. The data is grouped based on categories such as teachers' perceptions and students' perceptions regarding the use of AI. This presentation aimed to help make information easier to analyze and understand. Conclusion drawing/verification: In the final stage, the researcher interpreted the data that had been presented to answer the research question. This conclusion is drawn from patterns and findings obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation. To ensure the accuracy of the data, the researcher conducted a verification by comparing the three sources of information.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Research Results

Teachers' Perception on the Use of AI for Teaching EFL Writing Skills

The English teachers view that AI in writing learning is realistic, careful, and see AI as a challenge and an opportunity. In general, teachers' perceptions can be grouped into three themes:

a. AI as a technical Tool that ease task

Teachers recognize that AI has a significant advantage in helping them check assignments and prepare study materials. Teacher 1 and teacher 2 stated that the presence of this AI helps to facilitate the task of checking grammar. "Actually, to me, the presence of this AI helps me check and teach so much more easily" (teacher 1.) "The presence of AI makes it easier for students to learn the wrong location of their grammar in doing assignments" (teacher 3).

b. Concerns about vocabulary, memory, and independence

Teacher 2 expressed her disappointment when students submitted writing assignments that were entirely made by AI without any effort to think for themselves. She realized that when checking in class, students often do not understand the meaning of the vocabulary on their assignment sheets. Meanwhile, teacher 3 emphasized the decline in students' ability to remember vocabulary, because they are used to looking up the meaning of words quickly through mobile phones instead of thinking for themselves first. "Of course, I feel disappointed, because this is not the result of their own thinking and not the manual work, he established. Finally, when asked again or when checked in class, students just remain silent and do not understand what the vocabulary they have collected means..." (teacher 2.) "The downside is that when they don't use AI, they have trouble remembering vocabulary. They become too dependent on the application" (teacher 1).

c. Control and evaluation strategies

Teachers apply a fairly strict supervision strategy in the classroom to deal with this problem. Teacher 2 chose to require students to hand over their mobile phones at the beginning of learning and use a printed dictionary so that the writing process still occurs naturally. Meanwhile, teacher 1 and teacher 3 used a mixed method, namely by allowing students to open the AI on their mobile phones to search for vocabulary during writing practice. However, at the next meeting, the vocabulary that they have found before will be tested directly without holding a mobile phone. "The main strategy is to collect students' mobile phones during class hours, as well as to require the use of printed dictionaries or focus on manual writing..." (teacher 2). I implemented a strategy where students were allowed to search for difficult words through AI during practice, but at the next meeting, I would do a review or vocabulary test in person without a mobile phone " (teacher 1).

Students' Perceptions and Experiences of the Use of AI

Based on findings, 15 of the 11th graders from various majors showed that students were very familiar with various AI platforms. The platforms they use most often include AI, with 15 11th-grade students from various majors showing that students are very familiar with various AI platforms, such as ChatGPT, Meta AI, Gemini, and Dola AI. The data shows that 100% of participants are very familiar with AI platforms. Quantitatively, ChatGPT is the most common tool used by 9 out of 15 students (60%), followed by Meta AI (4 students/26.6%), while Gemini and Dola AI are used by 1 student (6.6%) each. Based on their real-life experience in the classroom, Students' perceptions and experiences can be divided as follows:

a. AI as a Practical Solution for Assignment

For AI students, it's a "helper" because it can help them complete writing tasks quickly and easily. They use AI to search for words, translate sentences, improve grammar, and provide ideas. This is especially helpful for them in tasks that require writing in English. From an experiential perception, students not only utilize AI for learning, but also as a quick solution to efficiently complete writing assignments about tourism. All participants in this study reported that greatly speeds up the completion of their assignments. In practice, their experience involves typing instructions (prompts) directly to request vocabulary, translations, and sentence structures rather than opening a dictionary. As SN (student 1) expressed, "ChatGPT makes it easier, more accessible, and faster." MI (student 2) chose Dola AI simply because it was "easy to use." They use AI as a shortcut to avoid the difficult manual translation process, this is in line with the mindset of vocational school students who want to work quickly.

b. Guilt and lack of confidence

Although they feel helped, most students are honest and admit to feeling guilty and lacking confidence when putting together writing assignments that are entirely AI-based. They realized there was a "gray area" where copy-pasting the full version of AI was not the right way to learn. So, students' experiences with AI are psychologically quite complex. When asked how they felt when they submitted an assignment that was 100% created by AI, all interviewed students reported feelings of guilt and reduced confidence (they often referred to their feelings as "fifty-fifty"). They experience a moral dilemma and realize that they are in the "gray area" between learning and cheating. SP (student 3) confessed, "I feel guilty because it is not my own work. " NPA (student 4) added, "Lack of confidence, so fifty-fifty." This shows that while they find AI very helpful, the reality when they use it is filled with imposter syndrome, as they realize the task doesn't reflect their true abilities.

c. Less independent in thinking

Many students are aware that excessive use of AI can reduce their ability to think on their own. They acknowledge that AI helps them complete tasks faster, but on the other hand, it also makes them more dependent on AI. As a result, they feel less motivated to find answers and use their own ideas, or to practice their ability to remember English vocabulary. Some students also realize that when they try to do tasks without the help of AI, they often feel burdened and find it difficult because they are used to getting direct help from technology.

Regarding their cognitive experience, 10 out of 15 students (66.6%) openly admitted that they felt their independent thinking skills declined due to relying too much on AI. Their experience shows that when AI is kept away, they have a very difficult time finding original ideas or simply remembering vocabulary. Lukman Hakim stated, "It's difficult to come up with your own ideas because you're used to being helped by AI." In addition, they also experienced a crisis of trust in the AI machine, as NKS (student 5)

admitted, "Like to doubt the AI's answers, it is difficult to fully believe." This highlights that their experience with AI creates a paradox. AI provides quick answers, but at the same time undermines their self-reliance and self-confidence.

These findings show that while students benefit from the use of AI in learning, some of them are also aware of the negative effects that may arise, especially reduced independent thinking skills, the ability to develop ideas without the help of technology, and independence in their learning.

From the result of classroom observation in class XI it shows that once a writing task is given, many students immediately open an AI application (ChatGPT, Gemini, Meta AI, or Dola AI) on their phones stealthily. When the teacher starts walking around the classroom to check assignments, the atmosphere of the class turns tense. Panicked students seem to quickly lower the brightness of the phone screen, close the app tab, turn the phone over on the table, or hide it behind a notebook. Researchers also heard students whispering to each other recommending the AI application that provided the fastest answers (such as Dola AI) and exchanging ideas about prompts to type. On the other hand, teachers actively move between rows of desks to keep an eye on the students' phone screens directly. Tension builds when teachers point to unfamiliar vocabulary on students' worksheets and ask them to interpret it orally on the spot. Most students are instantly stunned, nervous, and confused because they are just copying from the AI without understanding the meaning.

Findings of students' documents analysis also shows that the writings that students collect have a clear difference between the students' actual language skills and the results of the texts they collect. This is proved by the difference between the regular sentence structure and the inability of students to explain the meaning of vocabulary orally and in writing in class. This condition indicates that there is a tendency to use AI as the main source in working on students' writing assignments. The flow of thought and sentence structure on the worksheet, such as YC (student 6) use of the complex phrase "that is if nothing comes up" or "as I am used to eating at school," seems very systematic, flexible, and too smart for the original abilities of vocational school students. However, on the other hand, because students only copy the text from the cellphone screen to paper mechanically without understanding its meaning, they instead make fatal transcription errors when copying, such as the word "immedietely" (immediately), "breack" (break), writing "the" for the word then, and phonetic errors when copying the word "want" that should be went. This fact shows that students often do not understand the material they are collecting.

3.2. Discussion

Teachers' Perception on the Use of AI for Teaching EFL Writing Skills

Based on the results of the research, English teachers at SMKN 1 Batulayar have a realistic and cautious view of AI. Instead of considering AI as the main enemy, they see it as an educational challenge that requires a proper adjustment strategy. This is in line with Wang (2022:80), who states that teachers generally view AI as a useful tool, as long as its use is well-regulated. Specifically, the strategies implemented by teachers show a good educational approach. For example, the "combination method" used by Mr. Khairul Rizal, which requires students to write drafts manually before using AI to check grammar, can be analyzed through Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (Lantolf dkk, 2018:22). In this case, AI is not allowed to be a task jockey, but rather functions as a scaffolding (gradual assistance) in the student's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Teachers use AI to connect what students can write independently with ideal grammar, so that students can slowly learn independently. This approach is a tangible manifestation of the concept of

digital literacy by Falloon (2020:2451), which emphasizes that digital literacy is not only about being proficient in operating tools, but also the brain's ability to use technology intelligently and responsibly. Observation data in the classroom shows that teachers' control in handling the use of technology is still reactive, where supervision only occurs after students are shown to make mistakes, not through a good literacy system from the beginning.

On the other hand, the strict rules of Mrs. Liza, who confiscated cellphones so that students were forced to use printed dictionaries, were actually based on very reasonable psychological and cognitive concerns. Their fear that students will lose the ability to remember vocabulary and be lazy in thinking critically can be explained by Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, dkkgrani, 2019:262). When students completely surrender writing to AI, they miss out on the productive struggle that is actually so important for the vocabulary to stick in long-term memory. So, this strict restriction is actually a teacher's tactic to force students' brains to keep working actively, not just become passive copy-paste.

Furthermore, the teacher's sensitivity in distinguishing between the typical language of AI and which is the original writing of students proves one important thing: the role of human evaluation cannot be replaced by machines. This supports the argument of Hyland and Jiang (2024:2), who assert that we must be able to distinguish between tools and the original author in order to maintain the authenticity of the work. This phenomenon in the field shows that the findings suggest that schools may benefit from developing an AI Literacy Framework. Today, teachers rely only on instinct and personal initiative to organize classes. If AI literacy is formalized in schools, teachers can structurally teach students how to use AI correctly (such as how to create prompts), evaluate the results, and use them ethically without having to be secretive.

Students' Perceptions and Experiences of the Use of AI

From the perspective of students, their high interest in using AI platforms can be explained by the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) from Granić & Marangunić (2019:2575). The students participating in this study appeared to accept AI because they perceived it as useful (Perceived Usefulness), can solve difficult English tasks, and Perceived Ease of Use, so that the results are immediate. In a vocational school environment such as SMKN 1 Batulayar, which focuses on tourism, the demand to respond quickly and professionally to work, for example, replying to emails from foreign guests or creating itineraries, is very high. As Billett (2020:45) says, vocational education is closely related to job readiness. So, it is natural for students to use AI as the main weapon so that they can quickly meet these industry standards. This is also in line with Li (2023:47), who found that AI does make it easier to find ideas and reduce the workload of tasks.

However, when viewed from the psychological side, it turns out that there is a big inner conflict in students. Although they felt helped, many of them admitted to feeling guilty, lacking confidence, and realizing that they were doing something "gray" or cheating. This guilt and dependence can be analyzed with the theory of Self-Regulated Learning (Panadero, 2017:3). Students' experiences in using AI in the classroom are experiences full of anxiety and fear because they realize that the use is "illegal" in the classroom rules. The students' panic when the teacher approached, and their attempt to hide the cellphone screen, were proof that they had failed to organize themselves. Because they leave difficult thinking tasks (looking for ideas, composing sentences, correcting grammar) to machines, they fail to build confidence in their own language skills.

The interview data suggest that some students may experience anxiety related to their dependence on AI: AI does manage to complete schoolwork quickly, but at the same time, it impairs their mental readiness and skills for the future of work. In the real world of tourism, for example, in interacting or negotiating directly with foreign tourists in the hotel lobby, they don't have time to open up AI. This creates a huge gap between their great writing, thanks to AI, and their native capabilities. These findings strongly support the theory of Ali and Warschauer (2024:5), who state that while AI provides efficiency, it also triggers serious problems related to academic honesty and the loss of independent thinking skills.

Pedagogical Implication Toward EFL Writing Instruction

Based on findings regarding assessment weaknesses, students' stealth behavior, and their psychological experiences, the use of AI must be managed in a structured manner through several pedagogical implications.

First, teachers should see AI as scaffolding at the pre-writing or final examination stage, not as a shadow writer who creates the work entirely. Second, it's important to teach basic prompt engineering so that students can direct AI as a language tutor, not just a task-solving machine. Third, writing assessments should be converted to process-based (such as portfolio assessments and verbal confirmations) instead of just assessing the final product, to avoid draft manipulation. Fourth, schools must include AI literacy in the official EFL curriculum so that students, especially tourism majors, understand the ethical limits of its use. Fifth, the development of self-regulated writing needs to be improved to build students' confidence so that they can critically evaluate AI results and not automatically accept machine translations. Lastly, although AI provides instant corrections, the combination with human feedback from teachers remains essential to adapt to the nuances of the tourism industry-specific language that are often not understood by machines. By implementing these pedagogical mentoring strategies, the use of AI by students will not be a blind copy-paste activity, but will become a strategic tool that supports the mastery of actual English language competencies.

The results of the document analysis show that the way teachers give writing tasks as usual is very vulnerable to being "manipulated" by AI. The fact that students cannot explain the meaning of vocabulary when teachers check orally proves that the current assessment system has not been able to prevent the abuse of AI. Without a change in control strategies and more in-depth mentoring during the writing process, the use of AI by students will only end up in blind copy-paste activities that undermine the process of mastering students' real English competencies.

In conclusion, the relationship between writing skills, digital literacy, and job readiness in vocational schools is complex. Students see AI as an important tool, but the way they use it today, without clear supervision and rules, actually reduces their basic language skills. The experience of these students is proof that without strong self-regulatory learning skills and clear ethical boundaries, overreliance on AI may reduce opportunities for students to independently develop language competencies required in future workplaces.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the use of AI-based tools in learning English (EFL) in vocational schools has made a real change in the way teachers teach and students learn. Conceptually, this study emphasizes that AI is not only a common technical tool but also a learning partner that can help facilitate the creative thinking

process and increase efficiency in drafting texts. Teachers consider AI to be a very useful tool. Additionally, AI is considered a tool that helps improve efficiency and speed up the process of providing feedback. Even so, teachers still emphasize that AI cannot replace their primary role in teaching. Meanwhile, students consider AI to be a learning companion that helps boost their confidence when writing. The live feedback from the AI helps them overcome difficulties in composing sentences and choosing words, making the writing process more enjoyable and no longer feels like a daunting task.

This finding provides real benefits for the field of education, especially in the process of teaching writing to English as a foreign language learners. Our findings suggest that the use of AI technology can improve the learning experience by providing feedback that aids learning. However, the success of AI depends largely on how the technology is managed in the classroom. We affirm that AI can provide the best benefits only if used in a clear direction and directly supervised by teachers. The role of the teacher remains very important as a guide who helps students not only to rely on the results of AI automatically, but also to develop critical thinking skills and independent writing skills. With good supervision, AI can be an effective means to improve the quality of learning to write in today's digital age.

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