



مجلة العلوم الإنسانية
بجامعة حائل



جامعة حائل
University of Hail

مجلة العلوم الإنسانية

دورية علمية محكمة تصدر عن جامعة حائل



السنة السابعة، العدد 24
المجلد الثاني، ديسمبر 2024

Arcif
Analytics

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



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للتواصل:

مركز النشر العلمي والترجمة

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نبذة عن المجلة

تعريف بالمجلة

مجلة العلوم الإنسانية، مجلة دورية علمية محكمة، تصدر عن وكالة الجامعة للدراسات العليا والبحث العلمي بجامعة حائل كل ثلاثة أشهر بصفة دورية، حث تصدر أربعة أعداد في كل سنة، وبحسب اكتمال البحوث المجازة للنشر. وقد نُجحت مجلة العلوم الإنسانية في تحقيق معايير اعتماد معامل التأثير والاستشهادات المرجعية للمجلات العلمية العربية معامل "آر سيف Arcif" المتوافقة مع المعايير العالمية، والتي يبلغ عددها (32) معياراً، وقد أُطلق ذلك خلال التقرير السنوي الثامن للمجلات للعام 2023.

رؤية المجلة

التميز في النشر العلمي في العلوم الإنسانية وفقاً لمعايير مهنية عالمية.

رسالة المجلة

نشر البحوث العلمية في التخصصات الإنسانية؛ لخدمة البحث العلمي والمجتمع المحلي والدولي.

أهداف المجلة

تهدف المجلة إلى إيجاد منافذ رصينة؛ لنشر المعرفة العلمية المتخصصة في المجال الإنساني، وتمكن الباحثين -من مختلف بلدان العالم- من نشر أبحاثهم ودراساتهم وإنتاجهم الفكري لمعالجة واقع المشكلات الحياتية، وتأسيس الأطر النظرية والتطبيقية للمعارف الإنسانية في المجالات المتنوعة، وفق ضوابط وشروط ومواصفات علمية دقيقة، تحقيقاً للجودة والريادة في نر البحث العلمي.

قواعد النشر

لغة النشر

- 1- تقبل المجلة البحوث المكتوبة باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية.
- 2- يُكتب عنوان البحث وملخصه باللغة العربية للبحوث المكتوبة باللغة الإنجليزية.
- 3- يُكتب عنوان البحث وملخصه ومراجعته باللغة الإنجليزية للبحوث المكتوبة باللغة العربية، على أن تكون ترجمة الملخص إلى اللغة الإنجليزية صحيحة ومتخصصة.

مجالات النشر في المجلة

تتم مجلة العلوم الإنسانية بجامعة حائل بنشر إسهامات الباحثين في مختلف القضايا الإنسانية الاجتماعية والأدبية، إضافة إلى نشر الدراسات والمقالات التي تتوفر فيها الأصول والمعايير العلمية المتعارف عليها دولياً، وتقبل الأبحاث المكتوبة باللغة العربية والإنجليزية في مجال اختصاصها، حيث تعنى المجلة بالتخصصات الآتية:

- علم النفس وعلم الاجتماع والخدمة الاجتماعية والفلسفة الفكرية العلمية الدقيقة.
- المناهج وطرق التدريس والعلوم التربوية المختلفة.
- الدراسات الإسلامية والشريعة والقانون.
- الآداب: التاريخ والجغرافيا والفنون واللغة العربية، واللغة الإنجليزية، والسياحة والآثار.
- الإدارة والإعلام والاتصال وعلوم الرياضة والحركة.

أوعية نشر المجلة

تصدر المجلة ورقياً حسب القواعد والأنظمة المعمول بها في المحلات العلمية المحكمة، كما تُنشر البحوث المقبولة بعد تحكيمها إلكترونياً لتعم المعرفة العلمية بشكل أوسع في جميع المؤسسات العلمية داخل المملكة العربية السعودية وخارجها.

ضوابط النشر في مجلة العلوم الإنسانية وإجراءاته

أولاً: شروط النشر

أولاً: شروط النشر

1. أن يتسم بالأصالة والجدّة والابتكار والإضافة المعرفية في التخصص.
2. لم يسبق للباحث نشر بحثه.
3. ألا يكون مستقلاً من رسالة علمية (ماجستير / دكتوراة) أو بحوث سبق نشرها للباحث.
4. أن يلتزم الباحث بالأمانة العلمية.
5. أن تراعى فيه منهجية البحث العلمي وقواعده.
6. عدم مخالفة البحث للضوابط والأحكام والآداب العامة في المملكة العربية السعودية.
7. مراعاة الأمانة العلمية وضوابط التوثيق في النقل والاقتباس.
8. السلامة اللغوية ووضوح الصور والرسومات والجداول إن وجدت، وللمجلة حقها في مراجعة التحرير والتدقيق النحوي.

ثانياً: قواعد النشر

1. أن يشمل البحث على: صفحة عنوان البحث، ومستخلص باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية، ومقدمة، وصلب البحث، وخاتمة تتضمن النتائج والتوصيات، وثبت المصادر والمراجع باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية، والملاحق اللازمة (إن وجدت).
2. في حال (نشر البحث) يُزود الباحث بنسخة إلكترونية من عدد المجلة الذي تم نشر بحثه فيه، ومستقلاً لبحثه .
3. في حال اعتماد نشر البحث تؤول حقوق نشره كافة للمجلة، ولها أن تعيد نشره ورقياً أو إلكترونياً، ويحق لها إدراجه في قواعد البيانات المحليّة والعالمية - بمقابل أو بدون مقابل - وذلك دون حاجة لإذن الباحث.
4. لا يحق للباحث إعادة نشر بحثه المقبول للنشر في المجلة إلا بعد إذن كتابي من رئيس هيئة تحرير المجلة.
5. الآراء الواردة في البحوث المنشورة تعبر عن وجهة نظر الباحثين، ولا تعبر عن رأي مجلة العلوم الإنسانية.
6. النشر في المجلة يتطلب رسوماً مالية قدرها (1000 ريال) يتم إيداعها في حساب المجلة، وذلك بعد إشعار الباحث بالقبول الأولي وهي غير مستردة سواء أجاز البحث للنشر أم تم رفضه من قبل المحكمين.

ثالثاً: توثيق البحث

أسلوب التوثيق المعتمد في المجلة هو نظام جمعية علم النفس الأمريكية (APA7)

رابعا: خطوات وإجراءات التقديم

1. يقدم الباحث الرئيس طلباً للنشر (من خلال منصة الباحثين بعد التسجيل فيها) يتعهد فيه بأن بحثه يتفق مع شروط المجلة، وذلك على النحو الآتي:
 - أ. البحث الذي تقدمت به لم يسبق نشره (ورقياً أو إلكترونياً)، وأنه غير مقدم للنشر، ولن يقدم للنشر في وجهة أخرى حتى تنتهي إجراءات تحكيمه، ونشره في المجلة، أو الاعتذار للباحث لعدم قبول البحث.
 - ب. البحث الذي تقدمت به ليس مستلماً من بحوث أو كتب سبق نشرها أو قدمت للنشر، وليس مستلماً من الرسائل العلمية للماستير أو الدكتوراة.
 - ج. الالتزام بالأمانة العلمية وأخلاقيات البحث العلمي.
 - د. مراعاة منهج البحث العلمي وقواعده.
 - هـ. الالتزام بالضوابط الفنية ومعايير كتابة البحث في مجلة العلوم الإنسانية بجامعة حائل كما هو في دليل المؤلفين
- كتابة البحوث المقدمة للنشر في مجلة العلوم الإنسانية بجامعة حائل وفق نظام APA7
2. إرفاق سيرة ذاتية مختصرة في صفحة واحدة حسب النموذج المعتمد للمجلة (نموذج السيرة الذاتية).
 3. إرفاق نموذج المراجعة والتدقيق الأولي بعد تعينته من قبل الباحث.
 4. يرسل الباحث أربع نسخ من بحثه إلى المجلة إلكترونياً بصيغة (word) نسختين و (PDF) نسختين تكون إحداها بالصيغتين خالية مما يدل على شخصية الباحث.
 5. يتم التقديم إلكترونياً من خلال منصة تقديم الطلب الموجودة على موقع المجلة (منصة الباحثين) بعد التسجيل فيها مع إرفاق كافة المرفقات الواردة في خطوات وإجراءات التقديم أعلاه.
 6. تقوم هيئة تحرير المجلة بالفحص الأولي للبحث، وتقرير أهليته للتحكيم، أو الاعتذار عن قبوله أولاً أو بناء على تقارير المحكمين دون إبداء الأسباب وإخطار الباحث بذلك
 7. تملك المجلة حق رفض البحث الأولي ما دام غير مكتمل أو غير ملتزم بالضوابط الفنية ومعايير كتابة البحث في مجلة حائل للعلوم الإنسانية.
 8. في حال تقرر أهلية البحث للتحكيم يخطر الباحث بذلك، وعليه دفع الرسوم المالية المقررة للمجلة (1000) ريال غير مستردة من خلال الإيداع على حساب المجلة ورفع الإيصال من خلال منصة التقديم المتاحة على موقع المجلة، وذلك خلال مدة خمس أيام عمل منذ إخطار الباحث بقبول بحثه أولاً وفي حالة عدم السداد خلال المدة المذكورة يعتبر القبول الأولي ملغياً.
 9. بعد دفع الرسوم المطلوبة من قبل الباحث خلال المدة المقررة للدفع ورفع سند الإيصال من خلال منصة التقديم، يرسل البحث لمحكمين اثنين؛ على الأقل.
 10. في حال اكتمال تقارير المحكمين عن البحث؛ يتم إرسال خطاب للباحث يتضمن إحدى الحالات التالية:
 - أ. قبول البحث للنشر مباشرة.
 - ب. قبول البحث للنشر؛ بعد التعديل.
 - ج. تعديل البحث، ثم إعادة تحكيمه.
 - د. الاعتذار عن قبول البحث ونشره.
 11. إذا تطلب الأمر من الباحث القيام ببعض التعديلات على بحثه، فإنه يجب أن يتم ذلك في غضون (أسبوعين) من تاريخ الخطاب) من الطلب. فإذا تأخر الباحث عن إجراء التعديلات خلال المدة المحددة، يعتبر ذلك عدولاً منه عن النشر، ما لم يقدم عذراً تقبله هيئة تحرير المجلة.
 12. في حالة رفض أحد المحكمين للبحث، وقبول المحكم الآخر له وكانت درجته أقل من 70%؛ فإنه يحق للمجلة الاعتذار عن قبول البحث ونشره دون الحاجة إلى تحويله إلى محكم مرجح، وتكون الرسوم غير مستردة.

13. يقدم الباحث الرئيس (حسب نموذج الرد على المحكمين) تقرير عن تعديل البحث وفقاً للملاحظات الواردة في تقارير المحكمين الإجمالية أو التفصيلية في متن البحث
14. للمجلة الحق في الحذف أو التعديل في الصياغة اللغوية للدراسة بما يتفق مع قواعد النشر، كما يحق للمحررين إجراء بعض التعديلات من أجل التصحيح اللغوي والفني. وإلغاء التكرار، وإيضاح ما يلزم. وكذلك لها الحق في رفض البحث دون إبداء الأسباب.
15. في حالة رفض البحث من قبل المحكمين فإن الرسوم غير مستردة.
16. إذا رفض البحث، ورجب المؤلف في الحصول على ملاحظات المحكمين، فإنه يمكن تزويده بهم، مع الحفاظ على سرية المحكمين. ولا يحق للباحث التقدم من جديد بالبحث نفسه إلى المجلة ولو أجريت عليه جميع التعديلات المطلوبة.
17. لا تردّ البحوث المقدمة إلى أصحابها سواء نشرت أم لم تنشر، ويخطر المؤلف في حالة عدم الموافقة على النشر
18. يحق للمجلة أن ترسل للباحث المقبول بحثه نسخة معتمدة للطباعة للمراجعة والتدقيق، وعليه إنجاز هذه العملية خلال 36 ساعة.
19. هيئة تحرير المجلة الحق في تحديد أولويات نشر البحوث، وترتيبها فنياً.

المشرف العام

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Breaking Ground or Barriers? The Influence of AI on English Writing Skills Among Saudi University EFL Learners

كسر التحديات أم بناءها؟ تأثير الذكاء الاصطناعي على مهارات الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية
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(تاريخ الاستلام: 2024/09/20، تاريخ القبول: 2024/12/14، تاريخ النشر: 2024/12/30)

Abstract

The aim of this mixed-methods study was to explore how artificial intelligence (AI) affected the writing accuracy and creativity of 86 Saudi university students with upper-intermediate to advanced English proficiency levels in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. The participants were divided into two groups: one used AI assistance for writing tasks, and the other relied on traditional classroom-based instruction. The students using AI had significantly reduced grammar, spelling, and vocabulary errors, which highlights the efficacy of AI tools in enhancing the mechanical aspects of writing and facilitating the accurate expression of ideas. Conversely, students using traditional writing practices demonstrated greater creativity in their writing, albeit with more grammatical errors. Although AI can significantly improve EFL learners' technical proficiency, educators should balance its use with methods that foster creativity. This research offers valuable insights for educators aiming to integrate technology effectively into Saudi EFL classrooms

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, EFL writing, Saudi learners, writing proficiency.

المستخلص

إن الهدف من هذه الدراسة ذات المنهج المختلط هو استكشاف كيفية تأثير أدوات الذكاء الاصطناعي (AI) على دقة وإبداع الكتابة لدى 86 طالبًا جامعيًا سعوديًّا يتمتعون بمستويات متوسطة إلى متقدمة من إتقان اللغة الإنجليزية في سياق اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL). تم تقسيم المشاركين إلى مجموعتين: إحداهما استخدمت المساعدة التي يوفرها الذكاء الاصطناعي للمهام الكتابية، بينما اعتمدت الأخرى على التعليم التقليدي في الفصول الدراسية. أظهرت المجموعة التي استخدمت الذكاء الاصطناعي عدد أقل في ارتكاب أخطاء القواعد الإملائية والنحوية والمفردات، مما يسلط الضوء على فعالية أدوات الذكاء الاصطناعي في تعزيز الجوانب الميكانيكية للكتابة وتسهيل التعبير الدقيق عن الأفكار. وعلى النقيض من ذلك، أظهرت المجموعة التي اعتمدت على الممارسات الكتابية التقليدية إبداعًا أكبر في كتاباتهم، على الرغم من وجود المزيد من الأخطاء النحوية. وعلى الرغم من أن الذكاء الاصطناعي يمكن أن يحسن بشكل كبير من الكفاءة التقنية للمتعلمين، يجب على المعلمين موازنة استخدامه مع طرق تعزز الإبداع. تقدم هذه الدراسة رؤية قيّمة للمعلمين الذين يهدفون إلى دمج التكنولوجيا بشكل فعال في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في السعودية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الذكاء الاصطناعي، الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، المتعلمون السعوديون، الكفاءة في الكتابة.

Cite as: Alahmadi, Nesreen Saud . (2024). Breaking Ground or Barriers? The Influence of AI on English Writing Skills Among Saudi University EFL Learners. *Journal of Human Sciences at the University of Hail*, 02(24), 223–236

Funding: There is no funding for this research

التمويل: لا يوجد تمويل لهذا البحث

Introduction:

Writing is a complicated task that requires a grasp of different linguistic skills and cognitive processes. Technology-assisted approaches to learning have radically changed educational practices and brought innumerable benefits to English as a foreign language (EFL) learners. This study attempts to investigate the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) tools on Saudi EFL learners' writing performance, with a focus on comparing traditional writing instruction approaches and their limitations as highlighted in international EFL literature. The study evaluates the effectiveness of integrating AI tools into EFL writing classes in Saudi Arabia, examining whether these tools enhance students' writing skills or hinder progress by fostering dependence on technology. Specifically, the study investigates differences in writing performance between students using AI tools and those relying on traditional writing practices to identify areas of improvement and assess the overall impact of AI integration.

The participants in this study were male and female university students with English language proficiency levels ranging from upper intermediate to advanced, as classified by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). A mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods, was employed to collect and analyse data. A questionnaire was used alongside an analysis of students' writing samples to evaluate their performance both with and without the use of AI tools. This study aims to provide insights into the potential of AI to enhance writing instruction and contribute to the development of effective teaching practices in EFL contexts.

Despite the plethora of recent studies on the use of AI in education, particularly in EFL learning and teaching contexts, there are notable research gaps. Few researchers have compared the writing proficiency of EFL students using AI tools with that of EFL students using traditional methods. Moreover, few researchers have comprehensively investigated the efficacy of AI tools to determine whether AI hinders or improves EFL students' writing proficiency, particularly in a Saudi Arabian context.

Thus, the aim of this study was to explore the use of AI tools in enhancing English writing proficiency among intermediate–advanced-level students in Saudi Arabia. Specifically, the author

investigated how the integration of AI affected various aspects of their writing proficiency, including grammar, vocabulary, spelling, creativity, and coherence. By analysing the effectiveness of AI tools compared to traditional methods, the study provides insights into the best strategies for improving writing skills with the integration of AI tools into EFL classrooms in the Saudi education context. This research not only advances our understanding of how AI tools influence language proficiency but also offers practical implications for educators seeking to optimise language learning and teaching in Saudi Arabia.

Research objectives

This study was based on the following questions:

1. How does the use of AI tools affect the English writing proficiency of intermediate–advanced-level EFL students in Saudi Arabia compared to traditional methods?
2. To what extent do AI tools hinder or assist the specific grammar, vocabulary, coherence, and creativity of intermediate–advanced-level students' writing in Saudi Arabia compared to traditional methods?

Literature Review

EFL writing challenges and traditional approaches

Writing is vital for enabling EFL learners to communicate effectively in different academic and professional contexts (Bhowmik, 2021). However, it is a daunting task, since it requires great effort and many skills, including knowledge of syntax and vocabulary, organisation, mechanics, and the steps of the writing process. In addition, writers must show comprehension of the subject matter and convey the right impression to the intended audience (Hussin & Aziz, 2022). However, EFL students' problems in writing can lead to poor academic performance and their inability to secure jobs in the future (Moses & Mohammed, 2019).

Since writing is a complex and crucial skill underpinning students' learning, communication, and academic performance, it has received considerable research attention. Different traditional approaches were used to teach writing before AI was introduced into education. One of the oldest is the form-dominated approach, which

views writing as oral habit formation. It focuses on learning through imitation and includes activities such as fill-ins, sentence completions, and reading model imitations (Iskandar, 2020). In reaction to the form-dominated approach, educators began to avoid direct writing instruction and focused instead on allowing students to express ideas, which led to the process approach of the 1970s. This approach, in contrast to the form-dominated approach, aims to develop students' writing skills, including planning, revising, and drafting, rather than conveying knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, and spelling (Albeshir, 2022). In the 1980s, researchers devised the content-based approach, which involves giving students a topic area to write about, using topic-centred modules to help students become topic experts with a grasp of the structures and vocabulary needed to facilitate writing (Iskandar, 2020).

Other approaches that started to emerge at the beginning of the twenty-first century have relied on the integration of technology into education, including computer-assisted learning (Iskandar, 2020), and with the emergence of AI, technological advances are shaping education. AI is now an integral part of language learning and has changed the way people learn by providing them with personalised learning experiences and real-time feedback (Kamalov, David, & Ikhlaas, 2023).

The emergence of AI in education

John McCarthy began to develop AI in 1956 through the invention of early thinking machines (Viktorivna, Vornachev, Oleksandrivna, & Oleksandrivna, 2022). In the 1980s, researchers developed and evaluated intelligent tutoring systems (Almelhes, 2023), which led to AI transforming the way humans think, work, and learn. AI is defined as a system that can perform tasks that were once considered unique to humans, such as speaking, thinking, and observing (Chaudhry & Kazim, 2022). Its use in EFL teaching and learning is expanding rapidly because it can aid students in producing written work and provide them with instant feedback (Markuzi, Widiati, Rustin, & Indrawati, 2023). The usefulness of AI for language learning has been debated for 30 years, but it eventually gained popularity due to great advances in educational technology (Almelhes, 2023). Natural language processing programmes are key elements of AI (Kamalov et al., 2023), allowing students to interact with chatbots in place of real tutors and providing them with learning opportunities and prompt feedback (Simuka, 2022).

Writing is a challenging process for EFL teachers and learners. EFL students usually face lan-

guage barriers (Zhao, 2023) and find it difficult to master the grammar, vocabulary, syntax, content, and structure of writing (Markuzi et al., 2023). The traditional student-teacher relationship has changed dramatically since education institutes began to adopt blended learning courses using platforms to allow teachers to receive students' assignments without the need for direct communication (Ghufroon & Rosyida, 2018). AI tools have replaced some of the traditional teacher roles, such as providing personalised tutoring, assisting students in writing, and providing real-time feedback on different aspects of the writing process (Miranty, Widiati, Cahyono, & Tengku Sharif, 2021). AI learning tools focus mostly on checking for grammar errors and plagiarism (Zhao, 2022). The use of AI-based tools, such as Grammarly and Quillbots, offers interactive, personalised experiences for improving writing skills and enhancing learners' motivation (Han et al., 2023). Grammarly, for example, has been used as an automated writing evaluation tool to correct students' grammatical errors, in addition to honing the organisation and structure of sentences, saving teachers time in correcting students' work, and allowing students to produce better-quality writing (Miranty et al., 2021). Wordtune is a more advanced AI tool that assists students with their writing. It is an AI-powered technology that provides help to students during the writing process by analysing what they want to say. Wordtune then presents many suggestions for rephrasing the users' words and formulating their ideas into complete sentences (Zhao, 2022). It is an interactive tool that gives instant feedback based on a model that understands students' ideas. More intelligent AI systems have recently been introduced to facilitate EFL learners' language acquisition, especially their writing (Bilal, Safdar, Faiz, & Afgar, 2023). ChatGPT offers effective support for different aspects of writing, including grammatical precision, vocabulary enrichment, and enhancement of general composition (Bilal et al., 2023), thus ensuring correct writing in terms of cohesion and coherence (Song & Song, 2023). ChatGPT has the unique ability to generate texts, answer users' questions, and complete various problem-solving language tasks (Xiao & Zhi 2023). However, all these tools have risks, and researchers have criticised them for hindering intrinsic writing abilities and encouraging dishonesty (Marzuki et al., 2023).

Studies supporting AI's positive influence on writing skills

Many researchers have evaluated the impact of AI learning tools on students' writing abilities.

Xiao and Zhi (2023) conducted a study to collect empirical evidence of students' perceptions of ChatGPT and to discover whether ChatGPT assisted or hindered learning. They found that the participants used ChatGPT for text revision and to improve the structure and content of their essays, since the tool provided them with examples to support their arguments. It also assisted them in writing essays for international assessments. Bilal et al. (2023) also studied the optimisation of ChatGPT as a writing aid for EFL learners. The researchers assessed improvements in writing between two cohorts of students: the first taught in the traditional way, and the second using ChatGPT as a writing assistant. The results showed that ChatGPT improved EFL learners' proficiency. Real-time assistance and feedback contributed to significant improvements in different aspects of the writing process, such as 'grammatical accuracy, vocabulary selection, and overall compositional skills. This also led to refined sentence structure and increased lexical breadth, helping EFL learners improve the linguistic qualities of their writing. Learners also expressed satisfaction with the immediate feedback function, which increased their motivation for writing. Marzuki et al. (2023) emphasised the same benefits of integrating AI into EFL teaching. The researchers aimed to discover teachers' perspectives on using AI as a writing aid for students. They found that teachers thought AI tools could be integrated to cater to students' personal needs in education and could help students organise and produce logically arranged and coherent ideas. The teachers also claimed that AI writing assistants enhanced vocabulary usage and prevented repetition. Song and Song (2023) studied the impact of AI tools on EFL learners' writing skills. Their findings were similar in terms of the benefits students gained from using AI tools to assist them in their writing.

The positive impact of AI tools, such as ChatGPT, on EFL learners' writing skills has been debated in many of these studies. Although AI tools provide students with instant feedback that improves their structure, organisation, grammar, and vocabulary usage in writing, the use of such tools has raised some serious concerns. Overreliance on AI tools for writing can weaken students' intrinsic writing abilities, limiting their creativity and critical thinking skills (Marzuki, et. al, 2023). It has also been noted that the language EFL students use in their writing can be highly complex at times. Song and Song (2023) noted that using ChatGPT to aid EFL learners can pose challenges

with contextual accuracy and overreliance on the tool, thus threatening creativity and critical thinking. Using ChatGPT without training on how to write correct sentences may lead to biased and misleading information, negatively affecting the content of EFL learners' writing. The long-term impact of AI tools is also a concern for learners. There are serious concerns about AI tools giving misleading feedback and information. Although AI tools depend on extremely large databases to generate ideas, their responses can have limited references, leading to incorrect or contrived responses (Xiao & Zhi, 2023). In addition, serious doubts about academic integrity may arise when learners use AI tools to write their academic papers or essays (Kamalov et al., 2023). Ahmed (2023) stated that ChatGPT still fails at tasks where 'emotion, logic, specialist expertise, or up-to-date information'. (P.44) are required, pointing out that the logic of this AI model is deficient.

English began to be taught in Saudi Arabia in the 1920s and became compulsory in public schools in the 1950s, but this did not lead to improved English language acquisition among Saudi EFL learners (Aljameel, 2022). Vision 2030 aims to reform education and integrating technology into education is a prerequisite for this reform. Some studies have supported the positive impact of AI tools, while others have shown hesitation among learners and experts about employing AI tools such as ChatGPT for the learning of writing, Alhalangy and AbdAlgane, 2023). The latter for example, studied teachers in Saudi Arabia to discover whether ChatGPT can support learning and increase motivation. The teachers in their study agreed that ChatGPT can be extremely helpful for EFL learners and increase their motivation. Rahman (2023) conducted a study at Al Qasim University with 50 undergraduate students to investigate the effectiveness of AI tools, such as Grammarly, for improving the writing skills of Saudi undergraduate students. His findings proved that using Grammarly significantly reduced students' writing errors, especially errors in their use of verbs, articles, and plurals. Students were also satisfied with the improvements and received fewer negative comments from instructors. Alotaibi (2023) emphasised the role of Grammarly in refining undergraduate students' writing abilities at Al Majmaa University in Saudi Arabia. A sample of 120 students agreed on the benefits of using AI tools, specifically Grammarly, for enhancing their writing, especially regarding grammatical structures. However, the results of studies conducted in Saudi Arabia have

often diverged from the results of studies conducted in other countries showing the positive role of AI tools in improving the writing skills of EFL learners. AbdAlgane and Othman (2023) researched experts' perspectives on using ChatGPT for EFL writing in Saudi Arabia. They showed that although educators believed in the ability of ChatGPT to improve Saudi learners' writing skills, some hurdles could hinder its use, such as the lack of a speedy internet connection and the financial cost of advanced AI models. They also believed that it required technical knowledge and training to be used efficiently, which learners may not have. Ahmed (2023) studied the preferences of learners in Saudi Arabia and found that they preferred traditional teaching over ChatGPT tutoring. Although Saudi learners found ChatGPT easy to use, they also stated that it was not reliable and therefore could not replace their traditional teachers on the writing course, thus contradicting other studies conducted in the Saudi EFL context. AI generally plays a pivotal role in improving Saudi students' writing skills, as most studies in Saudi contexts have indicated. However, the cautious attitudes of experts, teachers, and students towards adopting AI tools, according to Aljameel (2022), are due to the barriers caused by external factors, such as a lack of teacher and student training, inadequate technological infrastructure, and deficient technological resources.

Comparative studies on traditional and AI approaches

Many studies have been conducted to compare traditional methods for teaching writing to AI approaches. Wei (2023) studied collaborative learning with and without AI tools in a Chinese context. The activities in both groups led to improved language proficiency; however, collaborative activities, supported by AI-powered tools, were more effective in providing immediate and personalised feedback for learners, which increased motivation and developed the EFL learners' language skills. On the level of error analysis and feedback, Algaady and Mahyoob (2023) studied the capability of ChatGPT to analyse the writing errors of EFL learners. The results showed that ChatGPT was useful only for analysing surface-level errors. For deeper-level structural errors and pragmatics, ChatGPT could not replace traditional teachers' feedback. Song and Song (2023) also proved that AI-supported writing classes for Chinese students led to superior EFL proficiency levels over students who were taught writing in traditional classes. Al Mahmud (2023) also conducted a study

with a control and an experimental group in a high school in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, to measure the impact of Wordtune on students' writing abilities. The results revealed that Wordtune had a significant impact on the experimental group's writing compared to the writing skills of the control group. It improved grammatical accuracy and added clarity to the learners' writing at the end of the study. Therefore, empirical evidence has proved that the integration of AI tools into writing classes can enhance and support EFL learners' abilities to produce accurate and coherent writing and Saudi learners are no exception. They can benefit greatly from using AI tools such as Grammarly, Wordtune, and ChatGPT to hone their writing skills and abilities and produce better writing. Researchers are currently studying the most efficient ways to integrate AI into the teaching of writing while preserving human characteristics that cannot be replaced by AI models. Malik et al. (2023) found that AI tools for academic writing should be integrated in such a way that they preserve human creativity and critical thinking skills.

Although AI has received great research attention in recent years, there are still many unexplored issues. The positive impact of AI tools for teaching writing to EFL students is undeniable. However, researchers still need to find ways to prepare learners for the proper integration of AI tools into their learning processes. In addition, it is still unclear what long-term impact AI tools have on the personal aspects of writing, such as the tone and creativity of the writer. Current studies also lack evidence regarding the impact of external factors, such as social, emotional, and economic circumstances, on the efficacy of AI tools in education. In this study, the author aimed to discover what aspects of writing improved and what issues were raised after Saudi EFL university students used AI tools. The implications of this study will help educators maximise the benefits of AI tools for Saudi EFL learners and tackle the barriers that might arise from the use of AI tools to assist with writing.

Theoretical framework

The focus of this study was to integrate technology into language learning and teaching. Technology-enhanced language learning (TELL) has been employed for the purpose of this study. According to Zainuddin (2023), TELL is employed to integrate technology, such as computers, apps, and AI tools, into EFL learning of communication skills, such as computer-mediated commu-

nication (CMC), which leads to scaffolding and improves the linguistic competence of EFL learners (Kranthi, 2017). This framework can provide insights into the affordances and limitations of AI tools in supporting language learning tasks, including writing, and how learners perceive and use these tools.

Methodology

To collect data for this study, the author used a mixed methods approach to provide a comprehensive understanding of the influence of AI on the writing skills of Saudi participants. The author combined both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to enhance the results of the study. Quantitative data were gathered through questionnaire to capture Saudi students' perception, expectation, and attitudes regarding the use of AI tools in their writing. On the other hands, using qualitative data provides deeper insight on the types of errors and the area of student's writing that were improved or hindered due to the use of AI tools which effects the quality of their writing. Thus, using mixed methods to integrate data is considered useful for research because it offers a variety of different results. According to Fielding (2012), 'integration is really the heart of the whole mixed methods exercise because the purpose of mixing methods is to get information from multiple sources and so the issues in bringing together the information are crucial' (p. 127).

The data collection started with a survey questionnaire sent online to the participants, followed by writing exercises in traditional face-to-face classes. For the writing exercises, the participants were divided into two groups: one group comprised 40 students who were asked to write paragraphs without the assistance of AI, and the other comprised another 40 students who were asked to write with the assistance of AI tools. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected through the questionnaire, but the writing samples also captured qualitative observations of Saudi students' writing and linguistic competence.

Participants

A total of 86 male and female university students in their first year at Taibah University that had intermediate-upper-intermediate levels of English proficiency were chosen to participate in this study by filling in the questionnaire. The participants' language level was as determined by

the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR). By including participants with a range of proficiency levels, the author aimed to provide insights applicable to a wide range of EFL learners in Saudi contexts. Academic research ethical guidelines were followed carefully to ensure the confidentiality of the participants' data and to maintain their anonymity. The data collected were used only for research purposes and were accessible only to the author.

Questionnaire distribution

Participants received a questionnaire that was specifically constructed and designed for the purpose of this study. It was reviewed by four experts in the field to evaluate its quality and ensure the reliability and validity of the questions included, aligning with the study's objectives. The questionnaire then sent to the students online. It was designed to gather information on their perceptions, experiences, and attitudes towards AI writing tools. The questionnaire included 30 close ended items related to the frequency of AI tool use, perceived benefits, challenges, and their impact on the participants' EFL writing skills, including grammar, vocabulary, and spelling and 3 open-ended questions to gather additional insights of the student's perception towards the use of AI in their writing. The questionnaire also asked about their preferred writing assistance methods. The questionnaire contained both closed-ended items, with responses given on a 4-point Likert scale, and open-ended items to gain a better understanding and deeper insights into the participants' perceptions by exploring their views and comments. For instance, what are the main advantages of using AI writing tools to improve your writing skills? see examples of the rest of the questions and some students' answers are listed below.

This combined quantitative and qualitative data provided valuable comparative insights into students' writing with and without using AI tools in the context of Saudi EFL writing.

Analysis of writing samples

The participants' writing samples were collected during traditional face-to-face classes as part of their regular assessment of writing skills. The author collected 80 out of the 86 participants' writing samples from 2 groups of 40 students who were asked to write about 4 different topics. One group used AI tools such as ChatGPT and

Grammatically, to assist their writing, and the other group did not. The author analysed the writing samples according to a rubric that was designed and validated by the English language Unit in the institution where the study conducted. The rubric was scrutinized and approved by the testing committee in the ELC unit to assess various aspects of writing accuracy, including grammar, spelling, and vocabulary. However, all students were given the same topics and wrote between 200 and 250 words per topics. To assess various aspects of writing accuracy, including grammar, spelling, and vocabulary the author followed carefully the rubric to ensure validity and reliability of the findings. The analysis involved both quantitative measures, such as error counts and accuracy rates, and qualitative evaluations of writing quality. By comparing the writing performance of participants who used AI writing tools with the performance of those who did not, the author aimed to identify differences in writing outcomes between the two groups. Overall, following this approach permitted a comprehensive examina-

tion of the influence of AI on EFL writing skills, combining quantitative data on their perceptions, attitudes, frequency of IA tools, and writing accuracy with qualitative insights into their creativity and expression.

Study tool

The author used Python to statistically analyse the questionnaire data by using the percentage and frequencies and then calculate the averages and means for the students' responses to the questionnaire. For the writing analysis, the author calculated the number and average of writing errors for both groups and compared the average number for each category for each group based on a specific assessment rubric (see Appendix 1).

Data analysis

The first data collection method was a questionnaire, and the participants' responses were calculated, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Students' responses to the questionnaire

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q1. Artificial intelligence (AI) writing tools help me improve my grammar skills.				
Females	21 (32.3%)	37 (56.9%)	5 (7.7%)	2 (3.1%)
Males	5 (23.8%)	14 (66.7%)	1 (4.8%)	1 (4.8%)
Vocabulary				
Q2. AI writing tools help me improve my vocabulary usage.				
Females	30 (46.2%)	29 (44.6%)	5 (7.7%)	1 (1.5%)
Males	5 (23.8%)	14 (66.7%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (9.5%)
Spelling				
Q3. AI writing tools help me improve my spelling skills.				
Females	20 (30.8%)	39 (60.0%)	4 (6.2%)	2 (3.1%)
Males	4 (19.0%)	14 (66.7%)	2 (9.5%)	1 (4.8%)
General Perception				
Q4. Using AI for writing tasks enhances my overall writing accuracy.				
Females	27 (41.5%)	29 (44.6%)	8 (12.3%)	1 (1.5%)
Males	5 (23.8%)	12 (57.1%)	2 (9.5%)	2 (9.5%)
Q5. AI writing tools limit my ability to express creativity in writing.				
Females	14 (21.5%)	33 (50.8%)	12 (18.5%)	6 (9.2%)
Males	5 (23.8%)	11 (52.4%)	4 (19.0%)	1 (4.8%)
Q6-Traditional classroom writing practices encourage more creative expression compared to AI writing.				
Females	26 (40.0%)	26 (40.0%)	10 (15.4%)	3 (4.6%)
Males	3 (14.3%)	11 (52.4%)	5 (23.8%)	2 (9.5%)
Q7- I prefer using AI writing tools over traditional classroom methods for improving my writing skills.				
Females	23 (35.4%)	30 (46.2%)	8 (12.3%)	4 (6.2%)
Males	7 (33.3%)	9 (42.9%)	4 (19.0%)	1 (4.8%)
Q8. AI writing tools make the writing process more efficient for me.				
Females	30 (46.2%)	30 (46.2%)	3 (4.6%)	2 (3.1%)
Males	5 (23.8%)	13 (61.9%)	2 (9.5%)	1 (4.8%)
Q9. I feel confident in my writing abilities when using AI writing tools.				
Females	26 (40.0%)	34 (52.3%)	3 (4.6%)	2 (3.1%)
Males	4 (19.0%)	13 (61.9%)	3 (14.3%)	1 (4.8%)

Q10. AI writing tools provide helpful feedback on my writing.				
Females	31 (47.7%)	30 (46.2%)	3 (4.6%)	1 (1.5%)
Males	5 (23.8%)	13 (61.9%)	1 (4.8%)	2 (9.5%)
Q11. I believe AI writing tools are essential for improving EFL learners' writing proficiency.				
Females	24 (36.9%)	33 (50.8%)	5 (7.7%)	3 (4.6%)
Males	3 (14.3%)	13 (61.9%)	3 (14.3%)	2 (9.5%)
Q12. I find AI writing tools easy to use.				
Females	28 (43.1%)	31 (47.7%)	4 (6.2%)	2 (3.1%)
Males	4 (19.0%)	14 (66.7%)	1 (4.8%)	2 (9.5%)
Q13. AI writing tools help me identify and correct errors in my writing more effectively than traditional methods.				
Females	34 (52.3%)	23 (35.4%)	6 (9.2%)	2 (3.1%)
Males	5 (23.8%)	13 (61.9%)	1 (4.8%)	2 (9.5%)
Q14. I enjoy using AI writing tools as part of my learning process.				
Females	27 (41.5%)	28 (43.1%)	7 (10.8%)	3 (4.6%)
Males	5 (23.8%)	12 (57.1%)	3 (14.3%)	1 (4.8%)
Q15. AI writing tools provide sufficient support for my language learning needs.				
Females	28 (43.1%)	28 (43.1%)	7 (10.8%)	2 (3.1%)
Males	8 (38.1%)	10 (47.6%)	1 (4.8%)	2 (9.5%)
Q16. I believe AI writing tools contribute positively to my overall language proficiency.				
Females	28 (43.1%)	33 (50.8%)	2 (3.1%)	2 (3.1%)
Males	6 (28.6%)	13 (61.9%)	1 (4.8%)	1 (4.8%)
Q17. AI writing tools motivate me to practice writing in English.				
Females	27 (41.5%)	30 (46.2%)	6 (9.2%)	2 (3.1%)
Males	3 (14.3%)	12 (57.1%)	5 (23.8%)	1 (4.8%)
Q18. I find AI writing tools to be more reliable than human feedback for improving my writing.				
Females	24 (36.9%)	24 (36.9%)	13 (20.0%)	4 (6.2%)
Males	5 (23.8%)	8 (38.1%)	5 (23.8%)	3 (14.3%)
Q19. I feel more comfortable making mistakes when using AI writing tools than when writing without them.				
Females	22 (33.8%)	29 (44.6%)	12 (18.5%)	2 (3.1%)
Males	5 (23.8%)	13 (61.9%)	1 (4.8%)	2 (9.5%)
Q20. AI writing tools provide personalised assistance based on my writing strengths and weaknesses.				
Females	20 (30.8%)	36 (55.4%)	8 (12.3%)	1 (1.5%)
Males	2 (9.5%)	14 (66.7%)	1 (4.8%)	4 (19.0%)
Q21. I believe AI writing tools are suitable for learners at all proficiency levels.				
Females	24 (36.9%)	36 (55.4%)	3 (4.6%)	2 (3.1%)
Males	7 (33.3%)	11 (52.4%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (14.3%)
Q22. AI writing tools help me meet the requirements of academic writing tasks.				
Females	25 (38.5%)	35 (53.8%)	4 (6.2%)	1 (1.5%)
Males	4 (19.0%)	14 (66.7%)	1 (4.8%)	2 (9.5%)
Q23. I am satisfied with the quality of feedback provided by AI writing tools.				
Females	24 (36.9%)	35 (53.8%)	3 (4.6%)	3 (4.6%)
Males	4 (19.0%)	12 (57.1%)	3 (14.3%)	2 (9.5%)
Q24. AI writing tools help me save time when completing writing assignments.				
Females	35 (53.8%)	26 (40.0%)	2 (3.1%)	2 (3.1%)
Males	5 (23.8%)	11 (52.4%)	2 (9.5%)	3 (14.3%)
Q26. AI writing tools enhance my understanding of English language rules and conventions.				
Females	27 (41.5%)	30 (46.2%)	6 (9.2%)	2 (3.1%)
Males	7 (33.3%)	10 (47.6%)	2 (9.5%)	2 (9.5%)
Q27. I feel more independent in my language learning journey when using AI writing tools.				
Females	24 (36.9%)	34 (52.3%)	4 (6.2%)	3 (4.6%)
Males	5 (23.8%)	13 (61.9%)	2 (9.5%)	1 (4.8%)

Q28. AI writing tools help me overcome language barriers more effectively.				
Females	27 (41.5%)	30 (46.2%)	7 (10.8%)	1 (1.5%)
Males	7 (33.3%)	11 (52.4%)	1 (4.8%)	2 (9.5%)
Q29. I believe AI writing tools have the potential to revolutionise language learning.				
Females	27 (41.5%)	29 (44.6%)	6 (9.2%)	3 (4.6%)
Males	8 (38.1%)	8 (38.1%)	4 (19.0%)	1 (4.8%)
Q30. Overall, I believe AI writing tools are beneficial for improving EFL learners' writing proficiency.				
Females	24 (36.9%)	34 (52.3%)	4 (6.2%)	3 (4.6%)
Males	4 (19.0%)	13 (61.9%)	2 (9.5%)	2 (9.5%)

Table 1, which shows the analysis of Saudi students' responses, indicates the learners' strongly positive attitudes towards AI writing tools. These tools are perceived to enhance grammar skills, writing accuracy, spelling, and vocabulary usage, while also providing substantial support in overcoming language barriers and fostering independent learning. The use of AI tools in language education can offer personalised, efficient, and effective learning experiences, potentially enhancing EFL learning. These results were also supported by the answers to the open-ended questions, The analysis of the open-ended questions followed a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to ensure a clear and structured process. The responses were carefully reviewed multiple times to gain a thorough understanding of the data. Key patterns and ideas were identified and coded, which were then grouped to get the common themes and to capture recurring patterns. These themes were reviewed and refined to ensure they were clear, distinct, and aligned with the research objectives. Finally, the themes were linked to the research questions, with quotes from the responses included to support and illustrate the findings. This process ensured a reliable and transparent analysis as shown in the following section.

Examples of open-ended question analysis

Q31: What are the main advantages of using AI writing tools to improve your writing skills?

Common themes from all participants were as follows:

- Ease of use and accessibility
- Immediate feedback on grammar and spelling
- Improvement in vocabulary and language use
- Increased confidence in writing abilities

Q33: How do you think the integration of AI writing tools affects the overall learning experience in English classrooms?

Frequent answers were as follows:

- Enhances learning by providing personalised feedback
- Helps students stay engaged and motivated
- Balance needed between AI use and traditional methods to foster creativity

Q34: Do you think AI tools have improved or hindered your writing skills?

- Common themes among all responses were as follows:
- Mostly positive feedback on improvement in writing skills
- Acknowledgement of potential hindrances due to dependence on AI

The analysis of open-ended responses revealed generally positive perceptions of AI writing tools since they significantly helped the students improve their writing, including grammar, vocabulary, and overall writing confidence. However, the participants also expressed valid concerns about overreliance on AI tools. For example, some students were saying that AI did all the writing for them without giving them constructive feedback on their writing, also, they do the writing in no time without using their own knowledge on the topics.

Nevertheless, the author conducted further analysis of Saudi students' use of AI for their writing. Tables 2 and 3 below compare the number of errors (grammar, spelling, and vocabulary usage) in writing samples produced by the two groups: one using AI tools and one not using AI tools.

Table 2
Average number of errors in students' writing

Group	Number of students	Average number of errors per writing	Number of grammar errors per writing	Number of spelling errors per writing	Number of vocabulary errors per writing
Group A (without AI)	40	15	6	5	4
Group B (with AI)	40	5	2	1	2

Table 3
Total number of errors in students' writing samples

Group	Number of students	Total errors for all samples (40 samples)	Total grammar errors for all samples	Total spelling errors for all samples	Number of Vocabulary errors per writing
Group A (without AI)	40	15 * 40 = 600	6 * 40 = 240	5 * 40 = 200	4 * 40 = 160
Group B (with AI)	40	5 * 40 = 200	2 * 40 = 80	1 * 40 = 40	2 * 40 = 80

The analysis of the average number of errors for both groups showed that errors were significantly lower in the group using AI tools (200 errors) than in the group not using AI tools (600 errors). Grammatical errors were reduced from 240 (without AI) to 80 (with AI). Also, spelling errors decreased from 200 (without AI) to 40 (with AI). On the same scale, the vocabulary usage errors decreased from 160 (without

AI) to 80 (with AI). These findings indicate that AI tools had a significant impact on improving linguistic skills, such as grammar and spelling. However, Saudi students' writing also improved in terms of coherence, creativity, overall language expression, and task completion. Table 4 compares the average scores for creativity, coherence, and language expression for both groups' writing.

Table 4
Average scores for creativity, coherence, and language expression

Group	Number of students	Average creativity score	Average coherence score	Average overall language expression and variation score	Average task completion
Group A (without AI)	40	7/10	8/10	8/10	4.5/5
Group B (with AI)	40	5/10	9/10	7/10	5/5

was higher in Group A (without AI), with an average score of 7/10, than in Group B (with AI), with an average score of 5/10. Also, coherence was higher in Group B (with AI), with an average score of 9/10, than in Group A (without AI), with an average score of 8/10. Additionally, the overall language expression was lower in Group B (with AI), with an average score of 7/10, than in Group A (without AI), with an average score of 8/10. Task completion was almost similar, with an average of 4.5/5 in Group A compared to 5.5 in Group B.

Discussion

According to the questionnaire data, the overall findings indicate the positive impact of using AI tools on improving the writing skills of Saudi

EFL learners. The students' responses showed that about 80% of them believed using AI tools significantly improved their grammar skills. These findings aligned with the overall writing accuracy and spelling skills improvement due to the tools providing learners with immediate corrective feedback that helped them internalise correct linguistic forms. Both genders expressed a strong belief in the positive influence of AI tools, although males slightly edged out females in their assessment of accuracy according to the data extracted. This aligns with the findings of Al Mahmud (2023), who stated that using AI tools, such as Wordtune, greatly influences Saudi students' ability to write and grasp grammar skills. However, in terms of vocabulary usage, the findings showed strong agreement among Saudi learners, regardless of

their gender, that AI tools helped them improve their vocabulary variation and overall writing accuracy. The findings support the results of Bilal et al. (2023) and Alotaibi (2023), who claimed that using AI tools like Grammarly and ChatGPT improved overall writing competence among EFL learners. However, opinions varied regarding the open-ended questions. Some Saudi students believed that using AI tools in their writing limited their free expression and hindered their creativity by making them rely heavily on the tools. Moreover, the repetitive statements suggested by the tools did not help them write creatively as illustrated in table 4. Similarly, there were split opinions about whether traditional methods encouraged more creativity, with higher disagreement among males. Moreover, about 60% of the students, especially males, agreed that AI increased their confidence in writing and provided helpful feedback. Based on the students' responses to the questionnaire and despite their mixed feelings about creativity, they exhibited a general preference for AI tools over traditional methods, with slight variability among males. Most of the students agreed that AI tools enhanced their efficiency during the writing process, underscoring the practicality and time-saving benefits of these tools and their ease of use. This finding contradicts the findings of AbdAlgane and Othman (2023), who believed that despite experts' perspectives on using ChatGPT for EFL writing and the ability of this tool to improve the writing skills of Saudi learners, students may still need training to cope effectively with this technology.

Nevertheless, the comparison of students' writing samples revealed notable findings in terms of both linguistics competence, measured by the number of errors, and overall proficiency, such as creativity and coherence. This comparison highlighted the significant impact of AI tools on improving the accuracy of Saudi students' EFL writing by significantly reducing the number of errors in the group of students who used AI across the tested categories of grammar, vocabulary, and spelling. This finding contradicts Zhao (2023), who claimed that EFL learners find it difficult to master the grammar, vocabulary, syntax, content, and structure of writing, and that students need traditional student–teacher relationships to obtain useful feedback and improve their writing. However, AI tools provide students with instant feedback on their errors without the need to communicate with their teachers.

In terms of coherence and creativity, the findings revealed that the group of students who did not use AI tools exhibited greater creativity in their writing, perhaps because AI tools tend to employ standardised language and follow set patterns, potentially limiting creative expression. Students who wrote without AI gave more real-life examples and included their own experiences and perceptions regarding the requested topics. In contrast, students who used AI tools produced more coherent and varied language expressions. These findings suggest that, although AI tools can enhance the technical aspects of writing, they may do so at the cost of reducing creative expression. This aligns with Marzuki (2023), who stated that overreliance on AI tools in writing can weaken students' intrinsic writing abilities, limiting their creativity and critical thinking skills.

Overall, the findings of this study suggest that AI tools are beneficial for improving writing proficiency and enhancing EFL students' linguistic knowledge; however, they limit their creativity and free language expression by forcing them to follow structured sentences in their writing. However, the sample of this study is small compared to the EFL contexts as larger number may indicate different results. Also, further research is needed to explore the long-term impact of AI tools on language learning, in particular writing skills.

Conclusion

This study highlights the impact of AI tools on the writing proficiency of Saudi EFL learners. The findings show that AI tools significantly improve grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and overall writing accuracy, with a notable reduction in errors. Both male and female students expressed strong beliefs about the benefits of AI tools, particularly for the technical aspects of writing. However, the findings also reveal a potential disadvantage since students expressed concerns about diminished creativity and overreliance on AI-generated content. Traditional methods may foster greater creativity and personal expression. Despite these concerns, the overall preference for using AI tools reflects their practicality and time-saving advantages. Thus, to maximise the benefits of AI tools, they should be integrated with traditional teaching methods to ensure that human interaction and creativity are not compromised. Also, future researchers should focus on enhancing the creative

aspects of AI tools and ensuring that the feedback they provide is focused and contextualised. More studies are needed to explore the long-term impact of AI tools on language learning, particularly in terms of creativity, critical thinking, and deep linguistic understanding. In summary, the author concludes that, while AI tools effectively enhance linguistic skills, a balanced approach that integrates both AI and traditional methods may be necessary to cultivate both technical proficiency and creative writing ability.

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Appendix 1

The rubric of correcting writing samples

	5	4	3	2	1	0
Topic Relatedness & Task Completion	All of the writing is on topic & all parts of the task are fully addressed.	Most of the writing is on topic & most parts of the task are fully addressed.	Some of the writing is on topic & some parts of the task are partially addressed.		The writing is minimally on topic & the answer is vague.	The writing is off topic. <i>Do not continue marking this paper.</i>
Word Count (Off topic sentences should not be included in the word count)	There are at least 150 words.	There are 145-149 words.	There are 140-144 words.	There are 135-139 words.	There are 130-134 words.	There are less than 130 words.
Format					The writing is in the form of a paragraph ₂	The writing is not in the form of a paragraph ₂
Cohesion					Connectors (e.g. and, but, etc.) are used correctly.	Connectors (e.g. and, but, etc.) are not used or used incorrectly.
Coherence				All of the writing has clear & logical organization of thoughts.	A few sentences in the writing do not have a clear & logical organization of thoughts.	Most of the sentences in the writing do not have a clear & logical organization of thoughts.
Vocabulary		There is an adequate range of vocabulary for the task with the exception of 1 error.	There is an adequate range of vocabulary for the task with 2 vocabulary errors.	There is an inadequate range of vocabulary for the task or 3 vocabulary errors.	There is an inadequate range of vocabulary for the task or 4 vocabulary errors.	There is an inadequate range of vocabulary for the task with more than 4 vocabulary errors.
Grammar		The writing is grammatically correct with the exception of 1 error.	There are 2 grammar errors in the writing.	There are 3 grammar errors in the writing.	There are 4 grammar errors in the writing.	There are more than 4 grammar errors in the writing.
Spelling		The words in the writing are spelled correctly with the exception of 1 error.	There are 2 spelling mistakes in the writing.	There are 3 spelling mistakes in the writing.	There are 4 spelling mistakes in the writing.	There are more than 4 spelling mistakes in the writing.
Punctuation				The punctuation in the writing is correct with the exception of 1 error.	There are 2 punctuation errors in the writing.	There are more than 2 punctuation errors in the writing.
Capitalization				The capitalization in the writing is correct with the exception of 1 error.	There are 2 capitalization errors in the writing.	There are more than 2 capitalization errors in the writing.



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Seventh year, Issue 24
Volume 2, December 2024

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