



The Influence of Chatgpt on Writing Anxiety Among English Department Students

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Abstract: *Writing anxiety is a prevalent problem among students of English, which can discourage their academic performance and writing confidence. As AI-based tools like ChatGPT are becoming more widely used, it is essential to analyze whether such tools have any influence on the level of students' writing anxiety. This study aims to know the influence of ChatGPT usage on English students' writing anxiety levels. Specifically, it examines whether there is a significant relationship between the use of ChatGPT and students' anxiety in academic writing. The research employs a quantitative descriptive approach using a simple linear regression analysis. Data were collected from English students at Universitas Kristen Indonesia Toraja through a questionnaire based on the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI). The findings suggest that although there is a trend indicating that using ChatGPT might reduce writing anxiety among students, the influence is not statistically significant. This implies that other factors may play a more crucial role in influencing writing anxiety. Further research with a larger sample and additional variables is recommended to gain deeper insights into this relationship.*

Keywords: *ChatGPT, Writing Anxiety, Influence*

INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology has brought significant transformations in various sectors, particularly in education. In recent years, AI has become a valuable tool for enhancing learning experiences, especially in academic writing. (Zhang et al., 2024), AI tools are reshaping how students approach tasks such as essay writing, grammar checking, and content generation. These advancements have not only made the writing process more accessible but have also influenced students' attitudes toward writing itself, offering new ways to address traditional challenges in the classroom.

Among the various AI technologies, ChatGPT has emerged as a widely used tool among university students. (La'biran & Dewi, 2023) As an advanced language model, ChatGPT can assist with idea generation, content expansion, grammar correction, and text refinement. (Shahzad et al., 2024) notes that students appreciate ChatGPT's ability to offer instant suggestions and alternatives, which enhances the quality and coherence of their academic writing. As a result, many students perceive ChatGPT as a helpful partner in completing writing assignments, particularly when they encounter writer's block or uncertainty in word choice and sentence structure.

Despite its growing popularity, the use of ChatGPT is not without controversy. Some educators and researchers express concerns that over-reliance on AI may limit the development of essential academic writing skills. S(Gutierrez & Viacrusis, 2023) argue that dependence on AI-generated responses can hinder critical thinking and creativity, two core elements in academic writing. Moreover, students may experience increased anxiety due to doubts about the originality and accuracy of AI-generated content, especially when used in high-stakes assignments or evaluations.

Writing anxiety itself is a common issue among English learners, and several factors contribute to it. (Fox, 1999), students may struggle with writing due to academic pressure, low self-confidence, limited vocabulary, and insufficient grammar knowledge. These challenges often make the writing process stressful and overwhelming, especially for those majoring in English, where writing is a central component of academic success. Anxiety can negatively impact the writing process, resulting in avoidance behaviors, reduced motivation, and poorer performance.

While ChatGPT can reduce some anxiety-inducing elements—such as grammatical errors and vocabulary limitations—it does not address all underlying causes of writing anxiety. Surveys show mixed results regarding the psychological impact of using ChatGPT(Salah et al., 2024) report that although approximately 75% of students feel more confident after using ChatGPT, a notable portion of students experience increased anxiety due to fears of academic dishonesty or an erosion of their own writing voice. This highlights the need to explore how students psychologically respond to AI-assisted writing.

This study seeks to examine the correlation between the use of ChatGPT and writing anxiety among English department students. By analyzing students' experiences and perceptions, this research aims to uncover whether the benefits of using ChatGPT outweigh its potential drawbacks in the context of academic writing. Preliminary results suggest that although ChatGPT can facilitate the writing process, its impact on reducing writing anxiety is not consistently significant. Individual differences, such as writing proficiency and attitude toward technology, play a crucial role in shaping these outcomes.

Given these findings, it is essential to position ChatGPT as a supportive tool rather than a replacement for traditional writing instruction. Educators should guide students in integrating AI responsibly and effectively, ensuring that technological support enhances—not replaces—their writing development. (Cechova et al., 2015) emphasize, institutions must promote digital literacy and critical engagement with AI tools so that students can maintain autonomy, creativity, and confidence in their writing. This balanced approach can help maximize the educational potential of AI while minimizing unintended consequences like increased writing anxiety.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Writing Anxiety in English Language Learning

Writing anxiety is a well-documented affective factor that significantly impacts students' performance in academic writing. (Holland, 2013), writing anxiety is a situational fear or apprehension encountered by individuals when required to produce written texts, particularly in a second or foreign language. Many English language learners, especially those in university-level programs, perceive writing as a high-stakes activity, leading to stress, procrastination, and underperformance (Barkaoui, 2013)

(Quvanch & Kew, 2022) highlights that writing anxiety stems from various factors such as lack of vocabulary, fear of negative evaluation, insufficient writing practice, and limited grammar knowledge. These issues are more pronounced in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) contexts, where learners may not have sufficient exposure to English writing in daily life.

2. The Role of AI Tools in Language Learning

With the advancement of educational technology, artificial intelligence (AI) has become an integral tool in language teaching and learning. AI tools like Grammarly, Google Translate, and more recently, ChatGPT, have been explored for their capacity to support language learners. These tools can offer instant feedback, alternative expressions, and error correction, which are especially useful in writing tasks (McCloskey, 1999) The interactive nature of AI-powered writing assistants allows for a more personalized learning experience. Lee (2020) found that students using digital feedback tools showed improved writing performance and a reduction in anxiety related to grammar and structure.

3. ChatGPT as a Writing Assistant

ChatGPT, developed by OpenAI, is an advanced AI language model that can generate human-like text responses. It has been increasingly used in educational settings, particularly for generating ideas, correcting grammar, paraphrasing, and brainstorming in academic writing. (Lund & Wang, 2023) ChatGPT can function as a "cognitive partner," providing scaffolding for students during the writing process.

Preliminary studies suggest that ChatGPT may reduce writing anxiety by offering low-pressure, anonymous assistance. For example, (Rahman et al., 2023) indicate that learners who used ChatGPT for academic writing tasks reported feeling more confident and less stressed compared to those relying solely on traditional feedback methods.

However, while ChatGPT can help alleviate surface-level issues such as grammar and coherence, it may not fully address deeper concerns related to writing originality, critical thinking, or contextual appropriateness. This leads to an ongoing debate about its educational implications and ethical use (Landoni et al., 2022)

4. Theoretical Framework: Affective Filter Hypothesis

The study aligns with Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, which posits that emotional variables like anxiety can block language input from being fully processed. When learners experience reduced anxiety, their "affective filter" lowers, allowing for more effective language acquisition. ChatGPT, by offering non-judgmental support and instant feedback, may serve as a means to lower this affective filter in writing contexts.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with descriptive methods (Sugiono, 2014). The data was collected through questionnaires adapted from the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) and given to 30 students majoring in English at the Christian University of Indonesia Toraja. Data analysis was conducted using a simple linear regression test with the help of SPSS software to determine the relationship between the use of ChatGPT and the level of anxiety writing students.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results showed that there was no significant effect between the use of ChatGPT on student writing anxiety. The results of a simple linear regression test showed a significance value of 0.109 (> 0.05), which means that the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted, so the use of ChatGPT does not significantly affect the anxiety of writing students. The results of a simple linear regression test showed a significance value of 0.109 (> 0.05), which means that the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted, so the use of ChatGPT does not significantly affect the anxiety of writing students. In the descriptive analysis, the average value of the ChatGPT usage variable (Total_X) was 19.07 with a standard deviation of 2,690, while the average anxiety writing (Total_Y) was 13.63 with a standard deviation of 3,499. Normality test results with Shapiro-Wilk showed that the data is normally distributed with a significance value of 0.234 ($p > 0.05$). The majority of students admitted to using ChatGPT to help with writing, but not all felt their anxiety reduced. Some students feel more confident in writing, while others still experience anxiety due to dependence on this technology.

The results of this study showed that although ChatGPT provided benefits in helping students compose writing, its effect on writing anxiety was not statistically significant. This is in line with Cheng's (2004) theory of writing anxiety, which states that writing anxiety is more influenced by internal factors such as self-confidence, writing experience, and individual perceptions of writing tasks. Some previous studies, such as those (Jawas, 2019) found that the use of AI-based technology can reduce writing anxiety. However, in this study, most students only used ChatGPT for the brainstorming stage and not for revision or thorough evaluation of their writing. This may explain why there is no significant decrease in anxiety, since direct feedback on the structure and grammar of writing that can reduce anxiety is not fully utilized.

In addition, differences in the level of language proficiency can also be a factor affecting the results of this study. Students who have a higher level of proficiency may already have a strategy to overcome writing anxiety, so the existence of ChatGPT does not have a big impact. On the other hand, students with lower proficiency levels may experience dependence on ChatGPT, which can add to their anxiety when it comes to writing without the help of this technology.

Thus, the results of this study confirm that writing anxiety is not only influenced by technological aids, but also by psychological factors and individual experiences. Therefore, a more comprehensive approach is needed to overcome writing anxiety, such as more intensive academic guidance and training in more effective writing strategies for students. These results are in contrast to previous studies that have shown that ChatGPT can reduce writing anxiety. Other factors

such as self-confidence and writing experience may play a greater role in determining a student's anxiety level than the use of AI alone.

CONCLUSION

The results showed that the use of ChatGPT did not have a significant effect on student writing anxiety. Although students felt helped in the writing process, other factors such as self-confidence and writing experience were more instrumental in determining their anxiety levels. Therefore, students are advised to use ChatGPT as an auxiliary tool, not as a main dependency. In addition, lecturers are also expected to provide the right direction in the use of this technology so that students can still develop their writing skills independently. However, the study's limitations necessitate cautious interpretation. First, the reliance on self-reported interview data from a small sample of higher education lecturers may introduce response bias and limit generalizability to other educational contexts. Second, the focus on lecturers' perspectives excludes student voices, potentially overlooking disparities in ICT accessibility or engagement. Third, the study's scope was confined to specific ICT tools and institutional settings, warranting further exploration of socio-technical factors (e.g., digital infrastructure, training) that influence implementation. Future research should address these gaps.

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