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Exploring ChatGPT as a Virtual Assistant for Personalized Writing Experience: EFL Students' Insights

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Abstract

Despite the growing adoption of ChatGPT in language learning, there is a lack of research examining EFL students' perceptions of its usefulness, ease of use, and overall impact—particularly in relation to variables such as gender and usage duration within the Saudi educational context. This study explores how EFL students view ChatGPT as a virtual assistant for personalized writing experiences. It assesses the app's usefulness, support, and usability, as well as how these opinions differ by gender and usage frequency. Using a descriptive-inferential design, data were collected from 140 students through a questionnaire, followed by semi-structured interviews with 20 participants. Quantitative results show moderate perceptions, with longer users (7–9 months) and females reporting considerably more positive opinions than shorter users (0–3 months) and males. Regarding qualitative insights, ChatGPT is seen as helping to improve grammar, vocabulary, and confidence when writing emails, essays, and research assignments. However, they also point to obstacles such as restricted access, language barriers, inadequate internet, and concerns about over-reliance. These results reveal that ChatGPT enhances writing abilities, yet its ethical and practical limits must be addressed by guided integration. The findings have implications for EFL pedagogy, highlighting the importance of careful monitoring and targeted training to ensure the effective integration of AI tools.

Keywords: *EFL Students' Insights, Personalized Writing, ChatGPT as a Virtual Assistant.*

Introduction

Writing in the English language is one of the most difficult skills for EFL students to acquire (Fodil-Cherif, 2021). Since writing is a complex process that involves organization, grammar, vocabulary, and coherence, students frequently rely on teacher input to highlight their drafts' errors and strengthen them (Yang, 2022). For students, especially beginners, to generate written work that is correct, coherent, and appropriate for the setting, teachers must provide them with continuous feedback (Wei, 2020). However, in classrooms with large enrollments, providing customized feedback becomes a challenging and time-consuming task, which frequently degrades the overall quality of support and annoys students (Lee, 2009). This challenge has prompted the search for innovative resources and methods to facilitate writing. The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) has opened new avenues for educational assistance, particularly in the teaching of writing. In academic settings, the usage of AI-assisted tools has increased recently (Suleymanova et al., 2023). OpenAI's ChatGPT is a well-known generative AI system that can produce rational, contextually appropriate dialogue. Scholars note that it alleviates writer's block and aids in the iterative process of developing and reworking texts (Jarrah et al., 2023; Lingard, 2023; Marzuki et al., 2023). In addition to its correctness and fluency of output, ChatGPT's capacity to save writing time has led to its increasing popularity (Cotton et al., 2023; Shahriar & Hayawi, 2023; Shen et al., 2023). Research has demonstrated that ChatGPT can help both beginner and expert learners learn how to write in English by increasing confidence, productivity, and providing a friendly environment (Bibi & Atta, 2024). Based on these findings, it appears that the use of AI-powered tools is beginning to alter how students approach writing assignments.

Nonetheless, some critics highlight the risks associated with an excessive reliance on AI tools. Although issues with writing authenticity remain significant concerns, continuous usage of AI may lead to a decline in critical thinking and creativity (Zhang & Aslan, 2021). Academics stress the need for maintaining a distinct personal voice in EFL settings, where students must strike a balance between

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their cultural identity and language competencies (Mageira et al., 2022; Nazari et al., 2021; Vall & Araya, 2023).

Therefore, based on these divergent opinions, it is essential to look at ChatGPT adoption from the students' standpoint. The perceived usefulness, ease of use, and overall impact of ChatGPT may be influenced by factors such as gender and duration of use. However, the relationship between these variables remains unclear due to a noticeable gap in research on ChatGPT adoption within the Saudi EFL setting. This study addresses this gap by exploring EFL students' perceptions of ChatGPT's usefulness as a virtual assistant for personalized writing support. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in addition to survey responses to provide a better understanding of students' perspectives, experiences, and concerns regarding ChatGPT. The study's objective is to deeply grasp ChatGPT's role in encouraging English writing by combining quantitative and qualitative data and examining how opinions vary by gender and usage frequency. In addition to offering helpful guidance on how to integrate ChatGPT into EFL writing instruction, the findings should assist teachers in assessing the benefits and possible drawbacks of the tool.

Research Questions

1. What are EFL students' perceptions of using ChatGPT in the writing classroom?
2. Is there any correlation between students' perceptions of using ChatGPT in writing and their actual use of GPT and gender?
3. What are students' experiences of using ChatGPT as a personalized writing AI tool?

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in two interrelated theoretical frameworks: Genre-Based Theory (GBT) and Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL). Together, these perspectives provide a comprehensive insight for understanding how EFL learners develop writing skills and how digital tools such as ChatGPT can enhance language learning experiences. GBT conceptualizes writing as a socially situated practice shaped by communicative purposes, target audiences, and disciplinary conventions. Rooted in systemic functional linguistics, Martin and Rose (2008) emphasize that genres serve as organized frameworks guiding learners in constructing and interpreting meaning. These structured pathways allow students to navigate language use in specific contexts and to engage effectively with diverse communicative tasks. Hyland (2004, 2007) further reinforces the role of genre pedagogy in enabling students to participate in academic discourse communities. Swales (1990) introduced the notion of move analysis, which demonstrates how academic texts are organized into functional stages that fulfill specific rhetorical purposes. Johns (1997) highlighted the empowering nature of genre instruction, noting that it equips learners with greater awareness of audience expectations and communicative intent. Similarly, Badger and White (2000) argued that genre-based pedagogy successfully integrates form, meaning, and context, an approach particularly valuable for EFL learners who often struggle with both linguistic accuracy and rhetorical organization. Because writing tasks correspond to distinct genres, each imposes its own conventions and demands. For example, email writing requires pragmatic awareness, politeness strategies, and formulaic expressions (Bhatia, 1993). Paragraph writing emphasizes topic sentence development, cohesion, and unity. Essay writing demands a clear thesis, logical argumentation, and coherent progression of ideas (Hyland, 2009). Research reports, meanwhile, follow disciplinary norms and are typically structured into introduction, methods, results, and discussion (Swales & Feak, 2004). Genre pedagogy supports mastery of these conventions by explicitly modeling the rhetorical features of each genre, providing scaffolding essential for success in academic and professional contexts.

Beyond GBT, the study also draws upon CALL, which explores how technology can support learners in acquiring genre conventions. CALL promotes the use of digital tools to design authentic tasks, enhance engagement, and foster self-directed learning (Chapelle, 2001). It also emphasizes timely feedback, realistic writing scenarios, and strategies for autonomous learning (Hampel & Stickler, 2005; Warschauer, 1996). Within this framework, ChatGPT functions as an AI-powered writing assistant that bolsters linguistic accuracy, fluency, and learner confidence (Huang et al., 2023). By generating drafts, suggesting revisions, and modeling genre-specific structures, ChatGPT allows learners to practice writing in meaningful, context-rich ways with immediate and personalized guidance. Taken together, GBT and CALL highlight the complementary dimensions of this study. While GBT focuses on the social and rhetorical aspects of writing, showing how texts are shaped by audience, purpose, and

context. CALL underscores the role of technology in supporting the acquisition of these conventions. Students' improvements in coherence, topic sentence development, and genre-specific organization illustrate how ChatGPT fosters awareness of academic discourse genres. This, in turn, aligns with Hyland (2004) and Swales (1990), who argue that genre pedagogy helps learners engage with the conventions and expectations of disciplinary writing.

By integrating GBT and CALL, this study positions ChatGPT not merely as a tool for grammar and vocabulary correction, but as a pedagogical resource that immerses learners in authentic genre-based writing. This combined framework captures both the rhetorical complexity of academic writing and the technological support needed to navigate it, offering a comprehensive approach to helping EFL students develop proficiency across diverse genres, including emails, paragraphs, essays, and research reports.

AI and EFL Writing Skill Development

The impact of AI on enhancing EFL writing skills has been assessed in several research. For instance, Allehyani et al. (2025) investigated the use of AI tools by EFL learners and discovered that students used these tools to learn new vocabulary words, complete assignments, develop new ideas and concepts, punctuate and spell, and fix grammar issues. Furthermore, AbdAlgane et al. (2026) investigated the use of AI generative tools by Saudi SFL learners. The results showed that university students were familiar with AI and its applications, with the most common uses being for brainstorming, grammar checking, paraphrasing, and improving coherence. Similarly, Mohammad et al. (2025a) employed ChatGPT for drafting, editing, and providing feedback to improve the essay-writing abilities of EFL students. The findings confirmed the effectiveness of AI tool, showing statistically significant improvements in content, organization, vocabulary, coherence and cohesion, and mechanics. The writing skills and cognitive barriers of students were successfully enhanced by an AI-assisted language learning program developed by Gayed et al. (2022). When AI-supported tactics were used instead of traditional education, writing performance, self-efficacy, and self-regulation all significantly improved (Liu et al., 2022). According to Abdullayeva and Musayeva (2023), ChatGPT improved student performance by offering writing prompts that were thought-provoking, real-time feedback, and revision suggestions. According to Nazari et al. (2021), as compared to regular classes, AI-assisted writing classes yielded better results in terms of accuracy, engagement, and inventiveness. The usefulness of AI in improving writing results is supported by this research, but they do not provide much insight into how students, who are the actual users, assess its benefits and assess its risks. This is particularly true for students at PY Najran University.

Students' Perceptions and Experiences with ChatGPT in Writing Instruction

The features of ChatGPT have drawn the attention of educationalists because to their prospective advantages for educational institutions (Rebolledo & Gonzalez, 2023). ChatGPT is not only a powerful search engine that may help students improve their research skills, but it also gives them the information they need. In a 2020 study, Han demonstrated the effectiveness of voice-based AI chatbots by demonstrating that, after ten weeks of chat sessions, the speaking proficiency of forty-four EFL learners increased dramatically. The findings demonstrated how strongly students felt about the usage of AI chatbots in EFL lessons. The study by Sumakul et al. (2021) examined how students in writing classes perceived artificial intelligence. The study sought to comprehend students' perspectives toward the use of AI and the continuing discussion about whether it can improve teaching methods. It was based on semi-structured interviews with eight EFL students from an Indonesian institution. Students have positive feelings about using the AI app, according to the study's qualitative analysis of the data collected. A study on ChatGPT's essay writing features was carried out by Fitria et al. (2024), who concentrated on the tool's efficacy in event ordering, writing organization, and linguistic diversity. According to the study, using primary and explanatory phrases, a conclusion, and both active and passive voice can help ChatGPT become more cohesive. Researchers, scientists, and experts in scientific communication could find it useful. According to Huang and Tan (2023), ChatGPT can improve scientific writing by streamlining the writing process, producing comprehensive outlines that include important details, and refining writing styles. They concluded that ChatGPT facilitates the faster generation of scientific information, including outlines, coherence, and crucial details. To avoid plagiarism, they stress how crucial it is to comprehend its limitations and use it wisely. ChatGPT, an AI-powered English writing helper, can generate work that seems human, but it also could provide inaccurate, biased, and misleading information. When integrating ChatGPT into language learning exercises, design, implementation, and ethical considerations are crucial (Baskara, 2023). The research review emphasizes ChatGPT's transformative potential as a virtual assistant in EFL writing instruction, stressing how it may boost student confidence and productivity, provide personalized

feedback, and enhance writing quality. However, problems with over-reliance, a lack of originality, and preserving an authentic voice in EFL writing persist, particularly in situations that are culturally specific like Saudi Arabia. Few studies have examined how demographic and experience characteristics, such as gender and usage duration, impact EFL students' perceptions in the Saudi setting, despite prior research illuminating ChatGPT's technical capabilities and general perceptions. To address this knowledge gap, this study examines the personal experiences of PY Najran University students using a descriptive- inferential methodology. The results of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews are merged to examine how ChatGPT facilitates customized writing help and to identify strategies for effectively integrating it into EFL instruction while reducing any possible risks.

While CALL accounts for the technological support offered by ChatGPT, the study's findings also affirm the relevance of GBT, demonstrating that students developed stronger command over genre conventions in writing tasks such as essays, paragraphs, emails, and research reports. This suggests that combining GBT with CALL enhances the instructional impact of AI tools, reinforcing their value in EFL writing pedagogy.

Methodology

Research design

In addition to the CALL framework, this study's research design is also guided by GBT, ensuring that writing tasks, such as essays, emails, and research reports reflect authentic genre conventions. Together, these frameworks provide a dual lens: CALL offers technological scaffolding, while GBT emphasizes rhetorical and genre awareness. This integration aligns the study's methodology with practical pedagogical needs in EFL instruction. Moreover, the study employed a descriptive-inferential research approach to explore how Saudi EFL students at Najran University perceive ChatGPT as a virtual assistant for personalized writing support. Quantitative data were collected using a 15-item questionnaire, administered to 140 participants (72 male and 68 female) with varying durations of ChatGPT usage (0–3, 4–6, and 7–9 months). The questionnaire measured learner engagement, support and feedback, and writing improvement across three domains using a five-point Likert scale. To complement this, qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with 20 students, focusing on their opinions and perceived improvements. Data analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step thematic approach. Prior to full deployment, the instruments were piloted with 300 students and validated for internal and face consistency, yielding an overall Cronbach's alpha of 0.86. Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS 23, including descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and inferential tests such as t-tests for gender differences, ANOVA, and Scheffe's post-hoc tests for usage duration. The integration of quantitative and qualitative data through triangulation provided a comprehensive understanding of ChatGPT's role in supporting EFL writing development.

Population and Sample of the Study

The survey included 200 participants, covering the entire population of EFL students enrolled in various College of Languages units. The study consisted of 140 male and female students from Najran University's College of Preparatory Year, Language Skills Unit, and College of Languages. Purposive sampling was used to select students with different usage durations (0-3 months, 4-6 months, and 7-9 months) and genders (72 males and 68 females) to ensure diversity of opinions. Twenty out of the 140 participants who had also taken a ChatGPT course were chosen to participate in qualitative interviews. The study, with the ethical approval reference number 0076-00076-DS, included teachers who were asked to participate willingly and had the choice to opt out or not. They were informed that participation would not result in any benefits and that all information would be kept confidential. The study sample consisted of 140 students, including 72 males and 68 females, representing 70% of the total population.

Table 1. Gender Distribution

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	72	51.4	51.4	51.4
	Female	68	48.6	48.6	100.0
	Total	140	100.0	100.0	100.0

The sample's gender distribution reveals that, of the 140 participants, 72 (51.4%) were male and 68 (48.6%) were female. The percentages that are valid are the same as the total percentages because

no data were missing. Indicating a roughly balanced distribution with a slight majority of male participation, the cumulative proportion reached 51.4% after males and 100% after females.

Table 2. Duration of use

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-3 Months	48	34.3	34.3	34.3
	4-6 Months	48	34.3	34.3	68.6
	7-9 Months	44	31.4	31.4	100.0
	Total	140	100.0	100.0	

Out of 140 participants, 48 (34.3%) reported using the tool for 0–3 months, another 48 (34.3%) for 4–6 months, and 44 (31.4%) for 7–9 months, according to the duration of use table. The valid percentages match the overall percentages precisely because there are no missing numbers. According to the cumulative percentages, 31.4% of users had been using the tool for 7–9 months, while 68.6% had been using it for up to 6 months. With significantly fewer participants in the 7–9-month group, the distribution is generally even across the three categories.

Instruments

To address the research questions, the researchers employed two instruments: questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire included 15 items, grouped into three categories: AI Writing Enhancement (Statements 7–9), AI Writing Support and Feedback (Statements 10–12), and AI Writing Tool Effectiveness and Usability (Statements 13–15). These categories reflected core CALL concepts such as linguistic development, instructional scaffolding, learner engagement, and autonomy (Chapelle, 2001; Hampel & Stickler, 2005; Warschauer, 1996). To ensure the items accurately represented CALL constructs, experts in technology-assisted language learning reviewed the questionnaire. Revisions were made based on the researchers' teaching experience, the CALL theoretical framework, and insights from previous studies (Fitria et al., 2024; Han, 2020; Huang & Tan, 2023; Rebolledo & Gonzalez, 2023; Sumakul et al., 2021). Beyond CALL, the questionnaire was also shaped by GBT, which views writing as a socially embedded activity driven by specific communicative goals and contexts (Hyland, 2004; Martin & Rose, 2008). The item design reflected genre expectations commonly found in academic and professional writing tasks, such as emails, paragraphs, essays, and research reports. Each requiring distinct structural, rhetorical, and linguistic features (Swales, 1990; Johns, 1997; Bhatia, 1993; Swales & Feak, 2004). For instance, prompts related to organization and coherence were tailored to essay and report writing, while items addressing tone, clarity, and formality were aligned with email writing conventions. By integrating GBT with CALL, the questionnaire not only assessed students' perceptions of AI as a technological aid but also captured their understanding of how ChatGPT supported the rhetorical and structural demands of different writing genres. The Likert scale used in the questionnaire offered five response options: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree), and 5 (strongly agree). As Creswell (2012) notes, surveys are effective in "discovering important ideas and attitudes of individuals" (p. 6), making the questionnaire an appropriate tool for investigating students' insights into ChatGPT's role in EFL writing. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted to provide richer qualitative data on how students experienced ChatGPT in their writing practices. The interviews explored improvements across different genres, challenges encountered, and the ways students perceived ChatGPT's contribution to both linguistic development and genre-specific performance.

Instrument Validity

The questionnaire's face validity was tested by presenting its first version to eight academics with understanding of the relevant issue. Their feedback and suggestions were considered, including the inclusion of new items, the removal or modification of inaccurate items, the assignment of objects to their appropriate dimensions, terminology clarity, and language accuracy. Table 3 presents the questionnaire before and after modifications.

Table 3. Experts' review

Area of Revision	Before Modifications	After Modifications
Item Wording	Items are expressed briefly and sometimes vaguely (e.g., "ChatGPT provided personalized feedback"; "ChatGPT demonstrated to be a highly user-friendly AI application").	Items presented in clearer, student-focused language (e.g., "ChatGPT provided personalized feedback based on my writing style and requirements"; "ChatGPT and other AI writing tools were extremely useful in educational settings").
Skill Coverage	The emphasis was mostly on surface-level improvements in grammar, vocabulary, structure, and task ease.	Expanded to encompass higher-level elements such as self-assurance, academic assignment utility, time savings, customization, and general improvement of writing experiences.
Questionnaire Scope	Likert-scale items emphasized overall utility and ease of use, whereas open-ended tests only addressed areas (structure, grammar, and vocabulary) and popular writing exercises.	Incorporate open-ended inquiries concerning enhancements, locations for input, and usage scenarios to enable students to report on both the technical and practical facets of using ChatGPT
Redundancy	Certain components were similar (for example, "My work was enhanced" and "ChatGPT improved my writing output"), which could have resulted in comments that were repeated.	Task ease, confidence, personalization, usability, suggestion, and academic utility are the constructs that each statement highlights due to the condensed nature of the items.

In addition, a pilot sample of twenty male and female students who were not part of the main study population were given the study instrument. The items and their respective domain's overall score were compared using Pearson's correlation coefficient. This is demonstrated in Table 4:

Table 4. Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Items and Total Scores

Items	AI Writing Enhancement	AI Writing Support and Feedback	AI Writing Tool Effectiveness and Usability	Total
1. Using Chat GPT as a helper significantly enhanced my writing output.	0.756**			0.604**
2. I found it easier to do my task when I used ChatGPT as an AI writing assistant.	0.881**			0.781**
3. My work was enhanced by employing ChatGPT as an AI writing assistant.	0.747**			0.678**
4. ChatGPT offered personalized feedback based on my writing style and requirements		0.584**		0.467*
5. ChatGPT, an AI writing assistant, provided confidence in		0.816**		0.595**

completing writing assignments.				
6. ChatGPT could be recommended as an AI writing helper tool to others.		0.816**		0.625**
7. ChatGPT proved to be a highly user-friendly AI application that surpassed other similar applications.			0.880**	0.859**
8. ChatGPT and other AI writing tools were highly beneficial in educational settings.			0.840**	0.724**
9. ChatGPT demonstrated to be a useful tool for writing university assignments, as it significantly reduced the time spent on these tasks.			0.946**	0.940**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The three characteristics of AI writing enhancement, assistance and feedback, and tool efficacy and usability are represented by the Pearson correlation coefficients between individual items and total scores in Table 4. Every correlation, from modest to very strong, is positive and statistically significant. Strong relationships exist between the items under AI writing enhancement (a1–a3) and the overall score, especially between a2 (0.881**). Items a4–a6 in the support and feedback category likewise show substantial connections, with a5 and a6 (0.816**) showing the strongest associations. Item a9 is the largest contributor in terms of effectiveness and usability, showing very significant correlations with both its construct (0.946**) and the overall score (0.940**). Overall, the findings support the strong alignment of each question with its corresponding construct, demonstrating the instrument's validity and reliability. Pearson correlation coefficients were also calculated between the domains and the overall total score, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Pearson correlation coefficients between the domains and the overall total score

Domain	Person correlation
1. AI Writing Enhancement	0.871**
2. AI Writing Support and Feedback	0.763**
3. AI Writing Tool Effectiveness and Usability	0.947**

The Pearson correlation coefficients between the three domains and the final score are shown in Table 5. Strong and statistically significant positive correlations are seen across all domains, suggesting that each one makes a major contribution to the construct. Domain 1 has the strongest alignment with the overall score, with a very high correlation (0.871**), Domain 2, a strong connection (0.763**), and Domain 3 the highest correlation (0.947**). These findings support the validity and reliability of the instrument by demonstrating how well the domains are integrated.

Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine the domains' reliability coefficients. The reliability coefficients are shown Table 6.

Table 6. Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficients

Domain	Cronbach's Alpha
1. AI Writing Enhancement	0.71
2. AI Writing Support and Feedback	0.78
3. AI Writing Tool Effectiveness and Usability	0.82

Total	0.86

The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the three domains and the total scale are shown in Table 6. All domains show acceptable to high levels of internal consistency, according to the results. With a value of 0.71, Domain 1 satisfies the reliability threshold. With a reliability score of 0.78, Domain 2 is more reliable than Domain 3, which has an even higher dependability value of 0.82. The scale's total Cronbach's alpha is 0.86, indicating a high degree of internal consistency. These results imply that each domain's items consistently assess the expected constructs and that the instrument is dependable.

Data analysis

The data were analyzed using SPSS version 26. To assess the validity of internal consistency, the Pearson correlation coefficient was employed, while Cronbach's Alpha was used to confirm the reliability of the study instrument. Additionally, means, standard deviations, and ranks were calculated. The gender variable was analyzed using an independent samples t-test, whereas the duration of use variable was examined through a one-way ANOVA. The criteria for interpreting mean values on the five-point Likert scale. A mean score between 4.20 and 5.00 is classified as very high, while a score from 3.40 to 4.20 is considered high. Scores ranging from 2.60 to 3.40 indicate a medium level of agreement, whereas values between 1.80 and 2.60 reflect a low level. Finally, mean scores from 1.00 to 1.80 are categorized as very low. These criteria provide a clear framework for evaluating respondents' levels of agreement when analyzing Likert-scale survey data. Based on the range equation, this scale was applied to assess the level of agreement with the study instrument's statements and domains, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Criteria for Interpreting the Mean Values According to the Five-Point Likert Scale

Degree of Agreement	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
Mean Score	From 1.00 to 1.80	Greater than 1.80 to 2.60	Greater than 2.60 to 3.40	Greater than 3.40 to 4.20	Greater than 4.20 to 5.00

Study Results

Research Q1: What are EFL students' perceptions of using ChatGPT in the writing classroom?

The researcher calculated the means, standard deviations, and ranks of the responses of the study sample. Table 8 shows the results.

Table 8. Descriptive statistics of EFL students' perceptions of using ChatGPT in the writing classroom

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
Domain 1	2.85	1.560	Medium
1. Using Chat GPT as a helper significantly enhanced my writing output.	2.74	1.853	Medium
2. I found it easier to do my task when I used ChatGPT as an AI writing assistant.	2.66	1.691	Medium
3. My work was enhanced by employing ChatGPT as an AI writing assistant.	3.14	1.798	Medium
Domain 2	2.65	1.551	Medium
4. ChatGPT offered personalized feedback based on my writing style and requirements	2.61	1.599	Medium
5. ChatGPT, an AI writing assistant, provided confidence in completing writing assignments.	2.45	1.768	Medium

6. ChatGPT could be recommended as an AI writing helper tool to others.	2.90	1.710	Medium
Domain 3	2.86	1.571	Medium
7. ChatGPT proved to be a highly user-friendly AI application that surpassed other similar applications.	2.96	1.766	Medium
8. ChatGPT and other AI writing tools were highly beneficial in educational settings.	2.76	1.540	Medium
9. ChatGPT demonstrated to be a useful tool for writing university assignments, as it significantly reduced the time spent on these tasks.	2.88	1.765	Medium
Total	2.79	1.492	Medium

According to Table 8, the instrument's overall mean score is 2.79 (SD = 1.492), falling into the medium level of agreement. Domain 1's items (a1–a3) ranged from 2.66 to 3.14, all in the medium level, with a mean of 2.85 (SD = 1.560). All items (a4–a6) stayed in the medium group, however item a5 had the lowest mean score (2.45), with Domain 2 displaying the lowest mean of 2.65 (SD = 1.551). Domain 3's item scores ranged from 2.76 to 2.96, also at the medium level, with a mean of 2.86 (SD = 1.571). According to the findings, participants generally showed a moderate level of agreement with all items and domains, with no area achieving high or extremely high levels.

Research Q2: Is there any correlation between students' perceptions of using ChatGPT in writing and their actual use of GPT and gender?

First: The gender variable following confirmation that the data is normally distributed, the significance of the variations in the mean answers of the study sample members was assessed using the (t) test for independent samples, as shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Independent Samples Test

Domains	gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
1. AI Writing Enhancement	male	72	2.17	1.441	5.906	138	0.000
	female	68	3.56	1.353			
2. AI Writing Support and Feedback	male	72	2.06	1.355	5.089	138	0.000
	female	68	3.28	1.501			
3. AI Writing Tool Effectiveness and Usability	male	72	2.47	1.504	3.133	138	0.002
	female	68	3.28	1.544			
Total	male	72	2.23	1.355	4.895	138	0.000
	female	68	3.38	1.411			

A comparison of male and female participants across the three domains and the overall score is shown in Table 9 using an independent samples t-test. The mean for Domain 1 was 2.17 (SD = 1.441) for males (N = 72) and 3.56 (SD = 1.353) for females (N = 68); the difference was statistically significant (t = 5.906, df = 138, p <.001). In Domain 2, there was a significant difference between the mean scores of males and females (t = 5.089, df = 138, p <.001), with males scoring 2.06 (SD = 1.355) and females 3.28 (SD = 1.501). With males at 2.47 (SD = 1.504) and females at 3.28 (SD = 1.544; t = 3.133, df = 138, p =.002), Domain 3 likewise revealed a significant gender difference. The total score reflected this pattern, with males' average 2.23 (SD = 1.355) and females 3.38 (SD = 1.411), with a significant difference (t = 4.895, df = 138, p <.001). Overall, the results show that female participants reported considerably higher mean scores than male participants in all domains and the overall score.

Table 10. Means, and standard deviations of responses based on usage.

Domains	Period	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. AI Writing Enhancement	0-3 Months	48	1.83	1.038
	4-6 Months	48	3.13	1.806
	7-9 Months	44	3.64	1.115
	Total	140	2.85	1.560
2. AI Writing Support and Feedback	0-3 Months	48	1.67	.753
	4-6 Months	48	3.08	1.828
	7-9 Months	44	3.26	1.354
	Total	140	2.65	1.551
3. AI Writing Tool Effectiveness and Usability	0-3 Months	48	2.13	1.378
	4-6 Months	48	3.38	1.602
	7-9 Months	44	3.11	1.461
	Total	140	2.86	1.571
Total	0-3 Months	48	1.87	.963
	4-6 Months	48	3.19	1.720
	7-9 Months	44	3.34	1.235
	Total	140	2.79	1.492

Table 10 presents the arithmetic means and standard deviations of students' responses across three Domains: AI Writing Enhancement, AI Writing Support and Feedback, and AI Writing Tool Effectiveness and Usability. It also includes the overall total score. The data are grouped into three categories based on how long students had used ChatGPT: 0–3 months, 4–6 months, and 7–9 months. For domain 1, AI Writing Enhancement, students with 0-3 months of usage reported the lowest mean score (M = 1.83, SD = 1.038), while those with 7-9 months of usage reported the highest (M = 3.64, SD = 1.115). The 4–6-month group likewise had relatively good perceptions (M = 3.13, SD = 1.806). The overall mean for this domain was 2.85 (standard deviation = 1.560), showing moderate agreement.

In AI Writing Support and Feedback, perceptions followed a similar pattern, with the 0–3-month group ranking the lowest (M = 1.67, SD = 0.753) and the 7–9-month group scoring the highest (M = 3.26, SD = 1.354). Perceptions among the 4–6-month group were remarkably identical (M = 3.08, SD = 1.828). The domain mean was 2.65 (SD = 1.551), indicating moderate agreement overall. For AI Writing Tool Effectiveness and Usability, students with 0-3 months of use reported a mean of 2.13 (SD = 1.378), while those with 4-6 months reported the highest perceptions (M = 3.38, SD = 1.602). Interestingly, the 7-9 months group scored somewhat lower (M = 3.11, SD = 1.461) than the 4-6 months group, but it still outperformed the 0–3-month group. The domain mean was 2.86 (SD: 1.571).

The cumulative ratings across all dimensions indicate that students' perceptions of ChatGPT improved with longer usage. Participants with 0–3 months of experience reported the lowest overall mean score (M = 1.87, SD = 0.963), while those with 7–9 months of use showed the highest mean (M = 3.34, SD = 1.235). Students in the 4–6-month group also expressed positive views, with a mean score of 3.19 (SD = 1.720). The overall average across all participants was 2.79 (SD = 1.492), reflecting a moderate evaluation of ChatGPT effectiveness as a CALL tool.

Table 11. One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1. AI Writing Enhancement	Between Groups	80.975	2	40.488	21.554	0.000
	Within Groups	257.338	137	1.878		
	Total	338.313	139			
2. AI Writing Support and Feedback	Between Groups	71.668	2	35.834	18.700	0.000
	Within Groups	262.525	137	1.916		
	Total	334.194	139			
3. AI Writing Tool Effectiveness and Usability	Between Groups	41.490	2	20.745	9.423	0.000
	Within Groups	301.598	137	2.201		
	Total	343.088	139			
All	Between Groups	61.269	2	30.635	16.903	0.000
	Within Groups	248.298	137	1.812		

	Total	309.568	139			

Table 11 shows the results of a one-way ANOVA to compare mean scores in the three usage groups (0-3 months, 4-6 months, and 7-9 months) for the three domains and the total score. In Domain 1, AI Writing Enhancement, the between-groups sum of squares is 80.975 with a F value of 21.554 ($p < .001$), showing a statistically significant difference in mean scores among usage groups. Domain 2, AI Writing Support and Feedback, has a between-groups sum of squares of 71.668 and an F value of 18.700 ($p < .001$), indicating significant differences among groups. In Domain 3, AI Writing Tool Effectiveness and Usability, the F value is 9.423 ($p < 0.001$), indicating a considerable difference in mean scores based on usage length. Similarly, the overall total score (all domains) showed a significant F value of 16.903 ($p < .001$). These results indicate that the duration of usage has a statistically significant effect on participants' perceptions across all domains and the total score, with longer usage associated with higher mean scores. Table 11 shows statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level between the mean responses of the study sample individuals based on usage.

To identify the statistically significant differences, post-hoc multiple comparisons using Scheffe's method were employed, and Table 12 illustrates the results.

Table 12. Post-hoc multiple comparisons

Dependent Variable	(I) use	(J) use	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.
1. AI Writing Enhancement	0-3 Months	4-6 Months	-1.292-*	0.000
		7-9 Months	-1.811-*	0.000
	4-6 Months	0-3 Months	1.292*	0.000
	7-9 Months	0-3 Months	1.811*	0.000
2. AI Writing Support and Feedback	0-3 Months	4-6 Months	-1.417-*	0.000
		7-9 Months	-1.591-*	0.000
	4-6 Months	0-3 Months	1.417*	0.000
	7-9 Months	0-3 Months	1.591*	0.000
3. AI Writing Tool Effectiveness and Usability	0-3 Months	4-6 Months	-1.250-*	0.000
		7-9 Months	-.989-*	0.007
	4-6 Months	0-3 Months	1.250*	0.000
	7-9 Months	0-3 Months	.989*	0.007
Total	0-3 Months	4-6 Months	-1.319-*	0.000
		7-9 Months	-1.463-*	0.000
	4-6 Months	0-3 Months	1.319*	0.000
	7-9 Months	0-3 Months	1.463*	0.000

Table 12 shows the results of post-hoc multiple comparisons using Scheffe's approach to determine statistically significant differences across usage groups. The results show substantial differences at the 0.05 level across all areas and the overall score.

For Domain 1, participants with 0-3 months of use had significantly lower mean scores than those with 4-6 months (mean difference = -1.292, $p = 0.000$) and 7-9 months (mean difference = -1.811, $p = 0.000$). Similarly, Domain 2 revealed that the 0–3-month group performed considerably worse than the 4–6-month group (-1.417, $p = 0.000$) and the 7–9-month group (-1.591, $p = 0.000$). In Domain 3, the 0–3-month group performed worse than the 4–6-month group (-1.250, $p = 0.000$) and the 7–9-month group (-0.989, $p = 0.007$).

The total score followed a similar pattern, with the 0–3-month group scoring considerably lower than the 4–6-month group (-1.319, $p = 0.000$) and the 7–9-month group (-1.463, $p = 0.000$). These findings demonstrate that extended usage is associated with considerably higher mean scores across all domains and the overall scale, indicating that participants' perceptions improve as they gain experience.

Research Q3: What are students' experiences of using ChatGPT as a personalized writing AI tool?

To analyze the interview data addressing research question 3, Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step thematic analysis was employed. For confidentiality, participants were coded as S1, S2, S3, and so on. First, familiarization with the data was achieved by transcribing and repeatedly reviewing the semi-structured interviews, during which preliminary notes captured early insights into students' perceived improvements in writing and their opinions about ChatGPT. In the second stage, inductive coding was applied to identify recurring patterns, such as improvements in email writing, essay and paragraph development, and research-related support. The third stage involved generating themes by clustering related codes into broader categories, which led to two main themes "Improvements in Writing Practices" and "Students' Opinions and Experiences" with subthemes including confidence-building, language development, timesaving, and accessibility, alongside challenges such as limited usage, internet instability, and English proficiency barriers. In the fourth stage, the themes were reviewed for coherence and distinctiveness, with inter-coder reliability ensured through independent checks and consensus discussions. During the fifth stage, themes were defined and refined to capture their scope and meaning, highlighting positive outcomes like improved structure, clarity, and confidence, as well as concerns about over-reliance, occasional inaccuracies, and the need for teacher guidance. Finally, the sixth stage involved writing up the findings, presenting a coherent narrative that illustrates how students perceive both the benefits and limitations of ChatGPT in supporting their English writing development.

Improvements in Writing Practices

The findings revealed that Saudi EFL students at Najran University experienced significant improvements in their academic writing skills using ChatGPT, particularly in essay writing, paragraph development, email composition, and research report writing. All responses are retained in their original form, preserving spelling and grammatical errors, with minor spelling adjustments made by the researcher solely to enhance clarity and readability.

In the area of essay writing, students highlighted multiple benefits. S1 stated, *"Well, ChatGPT helped me simplify complex sentences without losing the main idea… my essays became clearer, more coherent, and more direct."* Similarly, S3 noted, *"Whenever I made mistakes with mechanics or tenses, um, ChatGPT would highlight them and give corrections, so I could improve my writing skills."* In addition, S17 emphasized vocabulary development, remarking, *"ChatGPT assisted me in expanding vocabulary by giving me a list of relevant words on a topic… and that helped me write better content with more advanced vocabulary."*

For paragraph writing, students also described meaningful improvements. S6 shared, *"I wasn't sure how to paraphrase words formally in a paragraph, but, you know, ChatGPT showed me effective ways to improve my tone and language."* Likewise, S15 admitted, *"Sometimes I wasn't sure if my paragraphs made sense… but ChatGPT helped me write a relevant topic sentence and improve the clarity and flow of my ideas."* Reinforcing this, S20 added, *"Before finalizing my paragraphs, I always asked ChatGPT to, well, double-check for any grammatical or structural errors."*

In terms of email composition, ChatGPT proved especially useful in enhancing structure and tone. S7 explained, *"ChatGPT helped me improve the tone of my emails, like writing clear subject lines and introducing the writer. It suggested formal greetings, closings, and how to phrase requests politely."* Along the same lines, S8 commented, *"Well, ChatGPT made it easier for me to write relevant body content. Now I feel more comfortable handling different email situations… and writing closing lines, sign-offs, and a signature."* Similarly, S19 reflected, *"When I wasn't sure if my email sounded clear, um, ChatGPT helped me simplify complex phrases to make my message more concise."*

Finally, in research report writing, students acknowledged ChatGPT's role in strengthening coherence, technical precision, and mechanics. As S4 reported, *"ChatGPT helped me stay focused on the main points in my research report… it made sure all my sections were relevant and coherent."* Complementing this, S10 observed, *"I used to struggle with choosing the right words and fixing my mechanics, but, well, ChatGPT suggested better vocabulary and helped correct my punctuation and grammar."* In addition, S14 emphasized, *"When writing my research report, um, ChatGPT made sure my technical language was clear and appropriate for an academic audience."*

Students' Positive Experiences and Challenges

The students' responses, drawn from S1 to S20, are organized into two categories: Positive Experiences and Challenges. All responses are presented in their original form, with only slight spelling

adjustments made by the researcher to improve clarity and understanding. One irrelevant response concerning the blackboard was excluded. Overall, most students expressed favorable impressions of ChatGPT, particularly in how it supported their academic writing practices across four key categories: essay writing, paragraph writing, email writing, and research report writing. However, some challenges were also noted, reflecting the complexity of integrating AI tools in EFL writing contexts.

In the Essay Writing component, students appreciated ChatGPT's role in enhancing clarity, coherence, and mechanics. S3 remarked, *"Well, ChatGPT kind of helped me simplify complex sentences without losing the main idea… my essays became clearer and more direct."* Similarly, S4 noted, *"Whenever I made grammar mistakes, um, ChatGPT would just highlight them and offer corrections, so I could improve my writing."* Despite these benefits, challenges also emerged. For example, S5 expressed concern about over-reliance, saying, *"Hmm, to be honest, ChatGPT blocked my thinking skills and affected my creativity."*

For Paragraph Writing, students reported that ChatGPT enriched their vocabulary, improved tone, and supported coherence and flow. As S13 explained, *"I wasn't sure how to phrase things formally in a paragraph, but, well, ChatGPT showed me how to improve my tone and language."* Likewise, S15 admitted, *"Sometimes I wasn't sure if my paragraphs made sense… but ChatGPT helped me with a topic sentence and the flow of my ideas."* However, difficulties were also evident, as S16 shared, *"Um, sometimes I wasn't sure about the meanings of the words… they were just too difficult to understand."* This reflects a broader issue among EFL learners who sometimes struggle with AI-generated language that exceeds their proficiency levels.

When it came to Email Writing, students felt more confident and capable after receiving ChatGPT's guidance. S7 noted, *"ChatGPT really helped me improve the tone of my emails. Like, it suggested formal greetings, closings, and how to phrase requests politely."* In line with this, S8 explained, *"Well, ChatGPT made it easier for me to practice writing emails… now I feel more comfortable handling different situations."* Yet, not all experiences were straightforward. S9 pointed out, *"Hmm, ChatGPT gave me email templates and phrasing that sometimes didn't match the textbook. Useful, yes, but not always the same."* This highlights a common challenge for learners—navigating differences between AI-suggested models and prescribed academic conventions.

Finally, in Research Report Writing, students emphasized ChatGPT's role in supporting organization, coherence, and mechanics. S6 stated, *"ChatGPT helped me stay focused on the main points… it kept all my sections relevant and coherent."* Likewise, S12 added, *"I used to struggle with word choice and mechanics, but, well, ChatGPT suggested better vocabulary and fixed my punctuation and grammar."* However, concerns about dependency again emerged, with S17 reflecting, *"Honestly, I was always dependent on ChatGPT… I just stopped making efforts on my own."*

Discussion

Beyond the CALL framework, the study's findings align closely with GBT. Participants reported improvements in coherence, topic sentence development, register control in email writing, and organizational structure in research reports, skills that directly reflect GBT principles such as rhetorical "moves" and genre-specific stages (Hyland, 2004; Swales, 1990;). ChatGPT acts as a genre-sensitive scaffold by generating model texts, proposing logical move sequences, and offering conventional phrasing that learners can examine and replicate. While this support fosters procedural understanding of genre conventions, it also presents a potential drawback: without explicit metalinguistic instruction, students may mimic surface features without grasping the deeper rhetorical intentions behind them. Therefore, integrating GBT with CALL calls for pedagogical strategies that combine AI-generated examples with teacher-led move analysis, structured prompt design, and reflective tasks that require learners to explain and justify their genre choices. This approach transforms modeled output into lasting genre competence. This study examined students' experiences and challenges in using ChatGPT for English writing, and the discussion below interprets these findings in relation to existing literature and broader pedagogical implications.

Q1: What are EFL students' perceptions of using ChatGPT in the writing classroom?

According to the results, Saudi EFL students' opinions of ChatGPT as a virtual assistant for customized writing assistance are largely moderate. Although they agree that it can help with tasks and improve structure, their opinions are not compelling enough to imply great satisfaction or a strong recommendation. Triangulated evidence supports this balanced position: literature reflected both benefits (increased confidence, accuracy, and engagement) and risks (reduced creativity, ethical

concerns, and overreliance); the quantitative results showed a medium overall mean with domain scores and the qualitative interviews highlighted improvements in academic writing (emails, essays, research support, and paragraph writing). These findings collectively contribute to the explanation of the moderate perceptions shaped by both noticeable progress and persistent concerns. According to Baqir and Nayab (2024), ChatGPT improved student motivation and engagement while simplifying second language acquisition and enhancing self-esteem by simulating a virtual classroom. This is consistent with the qualitative reports from the current study, where students emphasized the advantages of time savings and boosted confidence. Corroborating the grammar and vocabulary increases seen in this study, Syahnaz and Fithriani (2023) also showed positive opinions toward AI systems for strengthening linguistic proficiency, reducing grammatical errors, and improving content quality. Numerous research demonstrates ChatGPT's ability to assist with structured writing. Studies have demonstrated that AI technologies enhance email writing and essay coherence and organization while enabling genuine, customized writing environments (Dong, 2023; Hwang & Nurtantyana, 2022; Nazim, 2025). Previous research has also demonstrated AI's effectiveness in improving speaking proficiency in EFL classes and its involvement in error remediation (Woo et al., 2023; Yang, 2007). Wider pedagogical viewpoints support these findings. Researchers highlight how AI can help with student autonomy, intelligent writing support, and grammar and vocabulary development in EFL situations (Alharbi, 2023; Godwin-Jones, 2022; Mushthoza et al., 2023). Extensive research confirms these patterns, demonstrating that opinions about ChatGPT are influenced more by its utility than by its usability and that favorable sentiments transcend EFL into domains like education (Abdaljaleel et al., 2024; Liu & Ma, 2024; Sallam et al., 2024). However, not every result is consistently positive. Although classes using AI frequently outperform traditional methods in terms of accuracy, engagement, and creativity (Nazari et al., 2021), there are still concerns that an excessive dependence on AI could stifle critical thinking and creativity (Mohammad et al., 2025c; Zhang & Aslan, 2021). These cautions are in line with the issues raised by the study's participants. When combined, these results contribute to the explanation of the medium-level perceptions found in the quantitative data. Consistent adoption was hampered by contextual factors such inadequate internet connectivity and a lack of training (e.g., S13, S14, S25). Confidence was further undermined by ethical concerns regarding dependency and occasional errors (e.g., S1, S8, S29). Finally, many students still face a high learning curve because of Saudi Arabia's continuing digital transformation, which prevents universally strong perceptions. This is consistent with calls for guided integration of AI into EFL pedagogy (Liu & Ma, 2024; Mohammad et al., 2025b; Rahayu et al., 2025).

Q2: Is there any correlation between students' perceptions of using ChatGPT in writing and their actual use of GPT and gender?

The study also investigated attitudes based on duration of ChatGPT use and gender. Females often voiced more positive opinions than males, and students with greater experience reported more positive opinions than those with less experience. The results are further clarified by triangulating them. Qualitative interviews revealed advantages like increased self-assurance and time savings, as well as disadvantages like inadequate internet connectivity and over-reliance hazards. Despite not specifically addressing gender or time, the interviews suggested that perceptions may be influenced by access concerns. Regarding gender, literature presents conflicting findings. According to research by Yeh et al. (2021) and Yilmaz et al. (2023), women tend to view ChatGPT more favorably, with explanations relating to cooperative tendencies and receptivity to AI in education. Bouzar et al. (2024), on the other hand, discovered that men had more positive views, which are frequently linked to their improved technological knowledge. While Rahayu et al. (2025) highlighted the significance of balanced tactics in AI integration, they did not find any significant gender disparities. When it comes to usage length, the literature is more reliable. Both Romero-Rodríguez et al. (2023) and Zou and Huang (2023) connected easier use and acceptance to earlier experience. Likewise, Panagiotarou et al. (2020) and Antonietti et al. (2022) linked more IT competency to greater adoption of instructional technologies. Studies that contradicted the positive effect of duration of use were not found. According to the study, Saudi EFL students' perceptions of ChatGPT's value, usefulness, and support within a CALL framework are strongly shaped by both gender and duration of use. Although the results vary, they highlight the importance of considering cultural, methodological, and contextual factors when interpreting these patterns. Overall, female students and those with longer experience using ChatGPT tend to express more favorable attitudes.

Q3: What are students' experiences of using ChatGPT as a personalized writing AI tool?

According to interviews with Saudi EFL students, ChatGPT is viewed to help improve grammar, vocabulary, and confidence while writing emails, essays, and research assignments. Research report structuring, particularly for new themes, essay development with stronger topic sentences, organization, and coherence, and improved email content, including salutations and closings, were all observed by the students. ChatGPT helped with vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure, tenses, rephrasing, summarizing, and mechanics like spelling and punctuation. Additionally, it helped with lecture comprehension and assignment advice. Students valued its ease of use, effectiveness in saving time, and ability to boost formal writing confidence. But obstacles restrict their efficacy. Some students mentioned that they used it infrequently, had trouble with their English, had little practice time, had unreliable internet, and needed instruction. The requirement for instructor supervision, errors, and over-reliance are among the issues.

In line with these mixed experiences, the quantitative data reflects moderate perceptions, and the findings are supported by existing literature. While over-reliance is a problem, Stojanov (2023) emphasizes ChatGPT's importance in active learning by offering instances of coherent paragraphs. Grammar gains are confirmed by Song and Song (2023) and Mahapatra (2024), whereas Kim et al. (2024) highlight the advantages of proofreading, particularly for students who are shy. Sumakul et al. (2022) and Bouzar et al. (2024) confirm improvements in self-efficacy, creativity, and structure. In contrast, Massoud and Zhang (2025) noted plagiarism challenges and unusual phrases as reasons for not seeing any significant rises in self-efficacy in paraphrasing. Moreover, Mohammad et al. (2025d) and Uğraş et al. (2024), who favor the use of AI as a helpful tool, caution that in the absence of explicit policies, AI may compromise integrity.

Contextual variations give rise to disparities, such as Saudi Arabia's emphasis on students in their preparation years with varying levels of technology availability in contrast to more general ESL contexts. The mixed-methods technique used in this study contrasts with other studies that rely mostly on quantitative data by obtaining nuanced student viewpoints. While internet problems in Saudi Arabia exacerbate restrictions, workshop-trained participants might enhance positive perspectives. Although ChatGPT greatly improves EFL writing overall, it needs to be integrated under supervision to overcome real-world obstacles like training and access as well as moral dilemmas like correctness and over-reliance, guaranteeing that it stays a useful tool rather than a substitute for skill development.

Conclusion

Viewed through the lens of GBT, the study’s findings indicate that ChatGPT offers more than basic language correction—it actively supports learners in internalizing genre conventions by modeling rhetorical moves across various writing tasks, including essays, paragraphs, emails, and research reports. The integration of GBT with CALL leads to a clear pedagogical recommendation: pair AI-driven writing practice with explicit genre instruction. This involves teaching students how to design genre-specific prompts, guiding them in analyzing AI-generated exemplars for rhetorical structure and purpose, and applying rubrics that assess genre moves and register. For future research, it is essential to embed ChatGPT within a structured genre-based curriculum to examine its long-term impact on genre transfer, creativity, critical thinking, and academic integrity.

The present study conducted at Najran University investigated how Saudi EFL students viewed ChatGPT as a virtual assistant for personalized writing training. The results show a balanced opinion of its usefulness, with a mean score on the questionnaire indicating a moderate overall evaluation. While qualitative data show a mixed response, showing ChatGPT's capabilities in improving vocabulary, linguistic accuracy, and confidence across writing tasks, it also highlights its drawbacks, including inconsistent internet, a lack of training, and the possibility of over-reliance and mistakes. These findings support the use of technology to facilitate independent and contextualized learning, which is in line with the concepts of CALL (Chapelle, 2001). Saudi Arabia's continuous digital transformation, varying access to technology, and the requirement for organized AI integration to meet ethical and practical difficulties are some of the contextual elements contributing to the moderate and mixed perceptions. Despite these findings, the study's narrow focus on a single institution and brief length limits its generalizability and capacity to capture long-term effects. Future research should use larger, more diverse samples from other universities, as well as a longer study period, to assess long-term benefits. The descriptive-inferential technique may also generate methodological biases, whereas randomized controlled trials could improve causal certainty. Furthermore, the study's emphasis on academic writing assignments leaves genre-specific effects unexplored, necessitating research into various writing styles such as creative or professional texts. Potential disadvantages, such as impaired creativity or critical thinking because of overreliance, necessitate additional quantitative and qualitative research (Zhang &

Aslan, 2021). To maximize ChatGPT's function in EFL writing, instructors should provide specific training on ethical AI use and prompt design, guaranteeing that students can successfully utilize its benefits. To prevent plagiarism and sustain academic integrity, institutions should upgrade their technology infrastructure and implement appropriate AI policies (Uğraş et al., 2024). Assessment frameworks should balance AI-assisted and autonomous tasks to encourage skill improvement. Future research should investigate the long-term impacts on writing skill, genre-specific applications, and how ChatGPT affects creativity and critical thinking in a variety of EFL contexts. These efforts will ensure that ChatGPT remains a helpful additional tool for writing training while resolving practical and ethical concerns.

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