

# EFL Learners' Attitudes Towards Utilizing ChatGPT for Acquiring Writing Skills in Higher Education: A Case Study of Computing Students

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**Abstract**—The rapid technological advancements have recently paved the way for a new era of language instruction. Amongst the technological tools which have emerged recently is ChatGPT. This study explores students' attitudes towards utilizing ChatGPT for acquisition of writing skills in English as a foreign language (EFL). Conducted during the first semester of the academic year 2023-2024, the study involved fifty-two students at a private university in Sharjah who were taking an English language course during the implementation of this study. The study used a mixed-methods design to investigate students' attitudes and quantify the findings. Two study tools were employed: a questionnaire and a semi-free interview. Comprising ten items, the questionnaire measured students' attitudes towards using ChatGPT for acquiring writing skills whilst at the same time focusing on higher-order thinking skills as they are related to effective writing. The semi-free interview, on the other hand, included the advantages and drawbacks of utilizing ChatGPT-based essay writing versus self-dependent essay writing. The findings indicated that most subjects confirmed ChatGPT's effectiveness in saving time and ensuring language accuracy. However, the progress one could make in acquiring writing skills and enhancing higher-order thinking abilities could not be seen significant. The paper concludes with recommendations for researchers to consider.

**Index Terms**—ChatGPT, English as a Foreign Language, essay writing, higher education, higher-order thinking skills

## I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancements within the field of technology have paved the way for the emergence of various applications which can be implemented for various pedagogical purposes (Suleymanova et al., 2023). The end of the year 2022, for example, witnessed the emergence of a new artificial intelligence-based invention, namely, ChatGPT. Since then, ChatGPT has been attracting more and more users from around the globe. Nowadays, people use ChatGPT for different purposes such as writing (Kasneji et al., 2023). This could be due to several factors, amongst the most prominent of which is the fact that ChatGPT is capable of rapidly generating texts which are not only appropriate but are also error-free in terms of language (Cotton et al., 2023; Shahriar & Hayawi, 2023; Shen et al., 2023). In other words, it is not only the quality of writing that attracts people to use ChatGPT. Equally important could be the time factor as using ChatGPT would save a great deal of time.

Whether ChatGPT can be utilized as an effective pedagogical tool is currently being examined from different perspectives (Atlas, 2023). Concerned specifically with employing ChatGPT for learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), the current paper seeks to investigate EFL students' attitudes towards using ChatGPT for acquisition of writing skills. Additionally, the paper examines other areas which are also interrelated with foreign language acquisition such as higher-order thinking skills. It should be noted though that this study is excluded to higher-education contexts where English is taught as a general education requirement.

Comprised of seven sections, section two is a literature review of several studies which pertain to the topic this paper discusses. Section three presents the study's aims and questions, section four sheds light on the methodology adopted for research purposes, section five highlights the study's findings, and section six reflects on the findings. The paper concludes with section seven, highlighting the study's limitations and offering suggestions for future research studies.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Section two of the current paper presents a number of studies and opinions which pertain to the topic this paper delineates. To start with, ChatGPT is a robust language model the features of which make it possible for generating texts within different domains (Lund & Wang, 2023). ChatGPT can provide interactive experiences, generate texts, amend contents, answer questions, and correct language mistakes (George & George, 2023). The chatbot functions in a conversational way, whilst responding to the user's orders and prompts (David & Leticia, 2023).

The features of ChatGPT have grabbed educationalists' attention due to its potential benefits as regards educational facilities (Rebolledo & Gonzalez, 2023). Functioning as an effective search tool, ChatGPT can not only provide learners with the information they need to collect, but it can also assist them in fostering their research-related competencies.

Introducing ChatGPT to the field of natural language processing is a milestone within this field amongst others (Baskara & Mukarto, 2023). The features ChatGPT has allow for offering applications that are capable of both comprehending and producing natural language. Hong (2023) also argues that ChatGPT can provide instructors with opportunities to enhance the teaching and assessment of a foreign language.

Although ChatGPT can generate language materials for students to learn, it still has its limitations. Generating a text and submitting it for assignment writing purposes is a plagiarized work. This is evident by the many misconduct and cheating cases which instructors have detected (Muskat, 2023). Some institutions and departments in some countries such as the United States and France have imposed a ban on accessing ChatGPT for submission of written projects and assignments as it could encourage learners not to abide by the institution's academic integrity regulations (Reuters, 2023; Zhang, 2023). Moreover, the texts ChatGPT generates may sometimes include inappropriate content, biased information, or misleading ideas (Borji, 2023; Hacker et al., 2023; Sallam, 2023).

To investigate the effectiveness of utilizing ChatGPT for pedagogical purposes, several studies have been conducted recently. For example, Kim et al. (2023) examined several technical aspects of utilizing ChatGPT such as ChatGPT's features and explored its use considering two aspects: course design as regards what to include, and course instruction whilst adopting the method of task-based language instruction. The study took place in Korea where the subject was an intermediate-level ESL student who was required to design a course for business English writing purposes. During the study implementation, Kim et al. (2023) requested ChatGPT to teach Business English writing via methods of task-based language learning. The study's results confirmed ChatGPT's capability of providing a conducive language learning environment.

Hsu et al. (2023) investigated the impact of utilizing artificial intelligence image recognition on English learners' vocabulary acquisition and self-regulation behaviors. The results showed that artificial intelligence image recognition technology assisted learners in improving their vocabulary learning. Zhai (2022) explored ChatGPT's capability of helping students in essay writing. The study's findings indicated the potential of ChatGPT to write essays using a formal register. Additionally, the study proposed utilizing technological advancements for fostering students' critical thinking and creativity skills.

Based on the opinions and studies outlined above, it can be concluded that ChatGPT is an advanced technological tool which can be of use to the educational field. However, there are several drawbacks which using ChatGPT would entail like plagiarism.

### III. THE CURRENT STUDY: AIMS AND QUESTIONS

The current study is an endeavor to explore EFL students' attitudes towards utilizing ChatGPT as a pedagogical means for acquiring writing skills, whilst considering related aspects. As mentioned earlier, this study is limited to higher-education contexts where English is taught as a foreign language and where students take English as a university requirement rather than a study major. Interested particularly in enhancement of language acquisition and how using ChatGPT would impact students' progress in writing, this study is also concerned with development of critical thinking skills and improvement of creative abilities as both are related to quality writing outcomes.

This study seeks transparent answers to the research questions below.

Question One: What are EFL students' attitudes towards utilizing ChatGPT for acquiring writing skills in higher-education contexts?

Question Two: What are EFL students' attitudes towards utilizing ChatGPT for acquiring higher-order thinking skills in the English writing classroom?

### IV. STUDY METHODOLOGY

This section of the paper reports on the study's methodology. To ensure comprehensiveness and transparency, this section covers the study's design, tools, participants, implementation, and ethics.

#### A. Design

This research is mainly concerned with measuring attitudes and quantifying the gathered data. To achieve the research aims, the author adopted a mixed-methods research design involving both qualitative and quantitative approaches. According to Hafsa (2019) amongst other researchers, combining quantitative and qualitative methods will enable the researcher to ensure more comprehensive and higher reliable research results.

#### B. Tools

The researcher implemented two study tools: a five-point Likert scale questionnaire including ten items, and a semi-free interview comprising two questions. To emphasize tool validity, the researcher consulted two colleagues regarding the questionnaire's items prior to distributing the questionnaire and took their suggestions into consideration. It is worth adding that one of the two colleagues works at the same institution where the researcher works and the other at a private university in Dubai, teaching English to non-native speakers as a university education requirement. In other words, the author's two colleagues also have the same categories of students under relatively similar circumstances.

In addition to including statements about the effect of using ChatGPT on writing and higher-order thinking skills, the questionnaire also includes statements about reading and vocabulary as these are interrelated with writing and higher-order thinking skills. Table one presents the study’s questionnaire, where value 1 refers to strong disagreement, value 2 disagreement, value 3 being unsure, value 4 agreement, and value 5 strong agreement.

TABLE 1  
THE STUDY’S QUESTIONNAIRE

No.	Item	1	2	3	4	5
1.	ChatGPT can assist me in becoming a smarter university student.					
2.	Using ChatGPT to write my university assignments can save the time I usually spend in assignment writing.					
3.	If used as a learning tool, ChatGPT would enable me to significantly improve my reading skills.					
4.	Submitting written assignments which are fully based on using ChatGPT would significantly enhance my knowledge of the subject matter.					
5.	Employing ChatGPT to write my assignments may hinder my creativity in the long run.					
6.	Relying on ChatGPT to write my assignments may negatively impact my critical thinking skills in the long run.					
7.	When applied as a vocabulary resource for assignment writing, using ChatGPT would enable me to build and expand my vocabulary.					
8.	Depending on ChatGPT to write my university assignments may negatively influence my knowledge about sentence structure in the long run.					
9.	Depending on ChatGPT to write my university assignments may negatively influence my knowledge about spelling in the long run.					
10.	Depending on ChatGPT to write my university assignments may negatively influence my knowledge about punctuation in the long run.					

The second study tool, semi-free interview, comprised the two questions below:

Question One: As per your information about and experience with using ChatGPT for essay writing, discuss one major advantage and one major disadvantage in terms of acquiring English writing skills.

Question Two: As per your information about and experience with using ChatGPT for essay writing in English, discuss one main advantage and one main disadvantage in terms of enhancing higher-order thinking skills.

C. Participants

This study comprised fifty-two students, all of whom were taught by the author at the time of implementing the study. The author did not use any criteria for the selection of participants. Instead, she included all the students who she was teaching an English language course while implementing this study. Table two below reflects the participants’ demographic data in brief.

TABLE 2  
SUBJECTS’ DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

University Major	Year of Study	Gender
School of Computing (Software Engineering)	First year	10 (Females) 16 (Males)
School of Computing (Information Technology)	First year	7 (Females) 15 (Males)
School of Computing (Artificial Intelligence)	First year	1 (Female) 3 (Males)

D. Implementation

As stated earlier, this study was implemented at a private university in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, during the first semester of the academic year 2023-2024. The author commenced study implementation by requesting the subjects to write an essay on one topic without receiving any help from any source, and then to write an essay on the same topic using ChatGPT. The subjects were given three topics to choose from; one of which was narrative, one descriptive, and one argumentative. Writing the two essays took place in the class. Surprisingly though, two students out of the whole sample stated that it was their first time to use ChatGPT for essay writing.

Having written two essays on the same topic, the author stated the aims of the study again and distributed the questionnaire, explaining the questionnaire’s items one by one. Responding to the questionnaire also took place in the class. In addition to using a questionnaire as a study tool, the author conducted a semi-free interview, involving the students who conveyed their willingness to be interviewed. The number of the interviewees was sixteen, and the duration of each interview was almost four minutes.

E. Ethics

Whatever the research type, research ethics must be adhered to throughout the process of conducting projects. Failure to consider and maintain research ethics would negatively impact the credibility of the study findings as it is unacceptable to trust a researcher’s work if the research approaches lack integrity (Al-Alami, 2015). As far as the current research is concerned, the nature of the research study did not entail any physical harm. Furthermore, the researcher ensured that all the subjects were aware of the study’s aims and that their participation in responding to the questionnaire’s items was made upon their willingness to participate.

Proceeding to the study’s interview, the participants were allowed the option of not being interviewed in case they did not have sufficient time or lacked the interest to take part in the interview. It was also made clear that the subjects’ responses, whether to the questionnaire’s items or to the interview’s questions, would not affect their end-of-semester grades neither positively nor negatively. Therefore, the subjects’ participation in this study was safe and flexible.

V. STUDY FINDINGS

This section of the paper delineates the findings the researcher arrived at, covering the two study tools used for research purposes. As explained earlier, the author distributed a questionnaire to a total of fifty-two students. Table three, chart one and chart two below reflect the findings with regard to the questionnaire.

TABLE 3  
SUBJECTS’ RESPONSES TO THE STUDY’S QUESTIONNAIRE

No.	Item	1	2	3	4	5
1.	ChatGPT can assist me in becoming a smarter university student.	20%	61%	17%	2%	0%
2.	Using ChatGPT to write my university assignments can save the time I usually spend in assignment writing.	0%	0%	2%	65%	33%
3.	If used as a learning tool, ChatGPT would enable me to significantly improve my reading skills.	15%	15%	31%	31%	8%
4.	Submitting written assignments which are fully based on using ChatGPT would significantly enhance my knowledge of the subject matter.	25%	27%	20%	15%	13%
5.	Employing ChatGPT to write my assignments may hinder my creativity in the long run.	0%	12%	18%	52%	18%
6.	Relying on ChatGPT to write my assignments may negatively impact my critical thinking skills in the long run.	0%	5%	21%	56%	18%
7.	When applied as a vocabulary resource for assignment writing, using ChatGPT would enable me to build and expand my vocabulary.	9%	27%	17%	42%	5%
8.	Depending on ChatGPT to write my university assignments may negatively influence my knowledge about sentence structure in the long run.	5%	15%	15%	48%	17%
9.	Depending on ChatGPT to write my university assignments may negatively influence my knowledge about spelling in the long run.	7%	12%	18%	46%	17%
10.	Depending on ChatGPT to write my university assignments may negatively influence my knowledge about punctuation in the long run.	7%	13%	18%	43%	19%

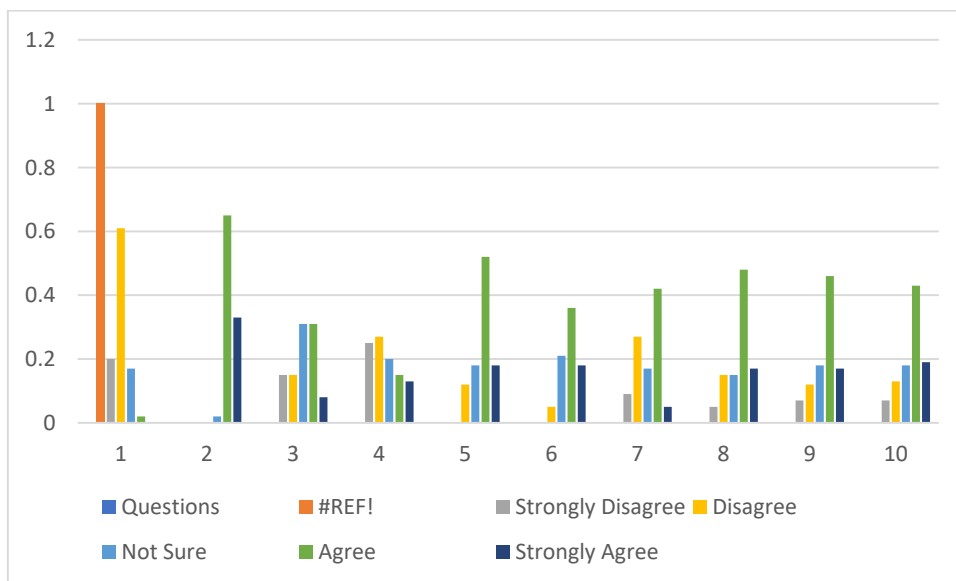


Chart 1. Subjects’ Responses to the Study’s Questionnaire

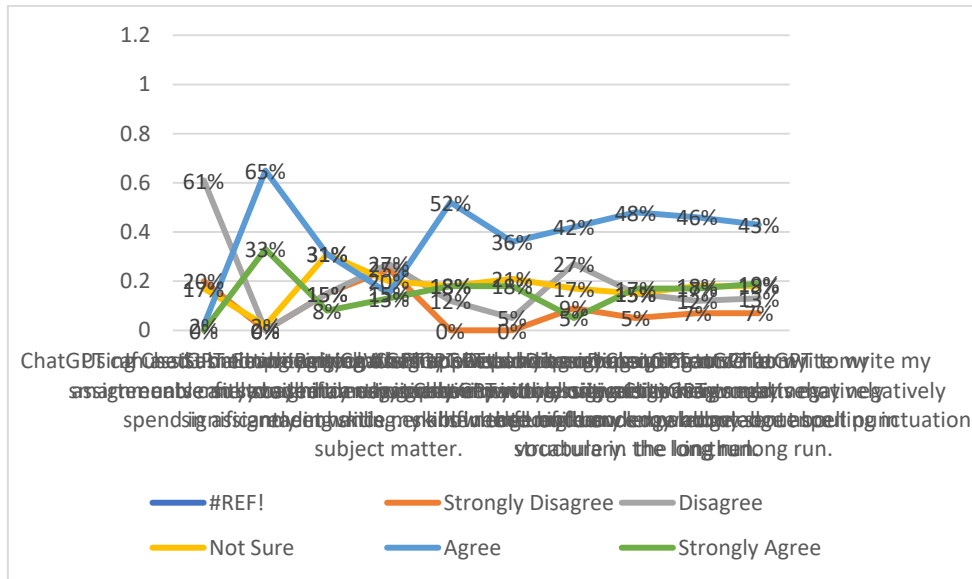


Chart 2. Subjects' Responses to the Study's Questionnaire

Starting with item one on whether ChatGPT can assist students in becoming smarter learners, 0% of the respondents indicated strong agreement, 2% agreement, 61% agreement, and 20% strong agreement, while 17% were not sure. Regarding item two on whether using ChatGPT to write university assignments could save the time spent on assignment writing, 33% of the respondents indicated strong agreement, 65% agreement, 0% disagreement, and 0% strongly disagreement, while 2% were not sure. Concerning item three on whether ChatGPT would enable learners to significantly improve reading skills when used as a learning tool, 8% of the respondents indicated strong agreement, 31% agreement, 15% disagreement, and 15% strong disagreement, while 31% were unsure. Regarding item four on whether submitting written assignments which are fully based on using ChatGPT would significantly enhance knowledge of the subject matter, 13% of the respondents indicated strong agreement, 15% agreement, 27% disagreement, and 25% strongly disagreement, while 20% were unsure. Concerning item five on whether employing ChatGPT to write assignments may hinder a learner's creativity in the long run, 18% of the respondents indicated strong agreement, 52% agreement, 12% disagreement, and 0% strong disagreement, while 18% were unsure. Regarding item six on whether relying on ChatGPT to write assignments may negatively impact a learner's critical thinking skills in the long run, 18% of the respondents indicated strong agreement, 56% agreement, 5% disagreement, and 0% strongly disagreement, while 21% were unsure. Concerning item seven on whether using ChatGPT as a vocabulary resource for writing assignments would build and expand a learner's vocabulary, 5% of the respondents indicated strong agreement, 42% agreement, 27% disagreement, and 9% strong disagreement, while 17% were unsure. Regarding item eight on whether depending on ChatGPT while writing university assignments may negatively influence a learner's knowledge about sentence structure in the long run, 17% of the respondents indicated strong agreement, 48% agreement, 15% disagreement, and 5% strong disagreement, while 15% were unsure. Concerning item nine on whether depending on ChatGPT while writing university assignments may negatively influence a learner's knowledge about spelling in the long run, 17% of the respondents indicated strong agreement, 46% agreement, 12% disagreement, and 7% strongly disagreement, while 18% were not sure. Finally, regarding item ten on whether depending on ChatGPT while writing university assignments may negatively influence a learner's knowledge about punctuation in the long run, 19% of the respondents indicated strong agreement, 43% agreement, 13% disagreement, and 7% strongly disagreement, while 18% were unsure.

Moving to the second study tool, table four and chart three demonstrate the findings regarding subjects' opinions on the main advantages of using ChatGPT in relation to essay writing, table five and chart four present the findings regarding subjects' opinions on the main disadvantages of using ChatGPT for essay writing, table six and chart five demonstrate the findings regarding subjects' opinions on the advantages of self-dependent essay writing, and table seven as well as chart six reflect the findings regarding subjects' opinions on the drawbacks of self-dependent essay writing.

TABLE 4  
SUBJECTS' OPINIONS ON THE ADVANTAGES OF CHATGPT FOR ESSAY WRITING

No.	Advantages	Percentage
1.	Saving time.	55%
2.	Ensuring language accuracy in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and spelling.	50%
3.	Facing no difficulty in performing the writing task.	25%
4.	Easy to use.	20%
5.	Offering new ideas.	20%
6.	Clear writing.	10%
7.	Getting to know new words easily.	10%
8.	Presenting structured responses.	10%
9.	Discussing relevant content.	10%
10.	Helping in getting an idea about how to write the essay.	5%

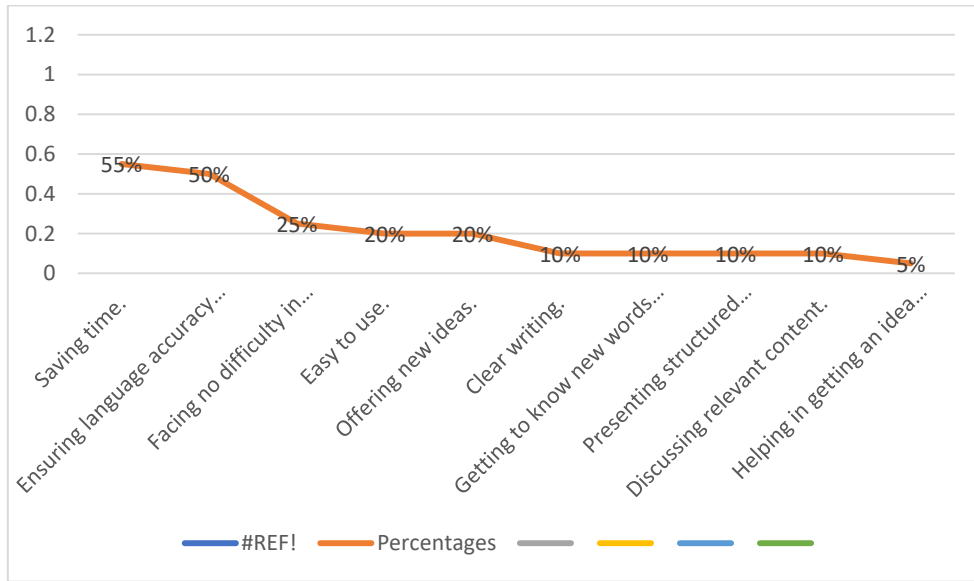


Chart 3. Subjects' Opinions on the Advantages of ChatGPT for Essay Writing

TABLE 5  
SUBJECTS' OPINIONS ON THE DISADVANTAGES OF CHATGPT FOR ESSAY WRITING

No.	Drawbacks	Percentage
1.	Submission of plagiarized work.	75%
2.	Gaining less writing experience.	50%
3.	Negatively affecting one's progress in writing skills.	45%
4.	Lacking personal touches and emotions.	45%
5.	Insufficient improvement of creativity.	35%
6.	Inadequate development of thinking skills.	30%
7.	Hindering effective learning practices.	15%
8.	Becoming a lazy learner.	15%
9.	Not learning new things.	10%
10.	Focus and concentration will not be needed while writing.	5%

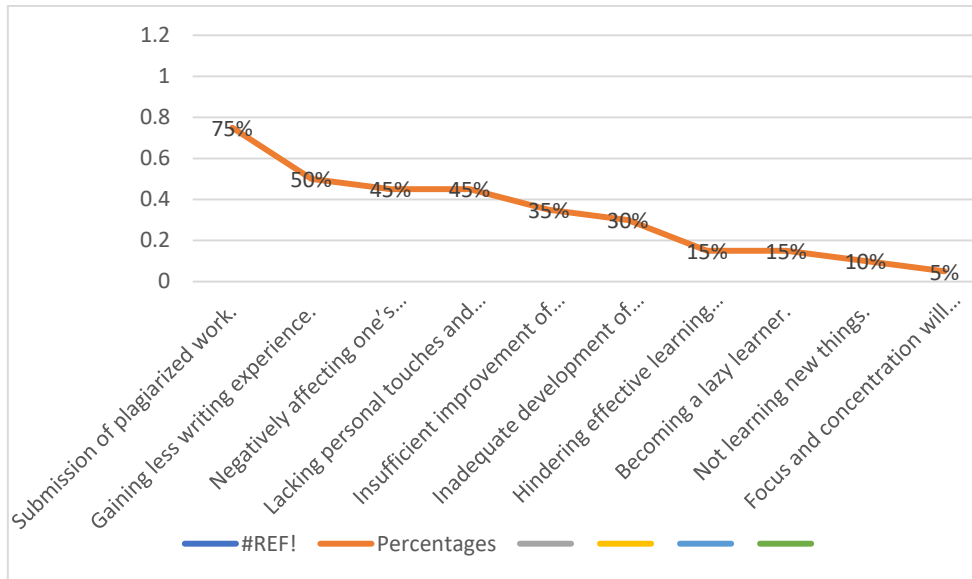


Chart 4. Subjects' Opinions on the Disadvantages of ChatGPT for Essay Writing

TABLE 6  
SUBJECTS' OPINIONS ON THE ADVANTAGES OF SELF-DEPENDENT ESSAY WRITING

No.	Advantages	Percentage
1.	Improving writing skills through genuine practices.	65%
2.	Discussing personal ideas, opinions, and touches.	55%
3.	Developing creativity.	50%
4.	Enhancing critical thinking skills.	45%
5.	Portraying authentic ideas.	30%
6.	Gaining confidence in conveying ideas and feelings.	30%
7.	Broadening ways of thinking and imagination.	25%
8.	Encouraging focused learning.	15%
9.	Making mistakes and learning from the mistakes one has made.	10%
10.	Practicing brainstorming while working in groups.	5%

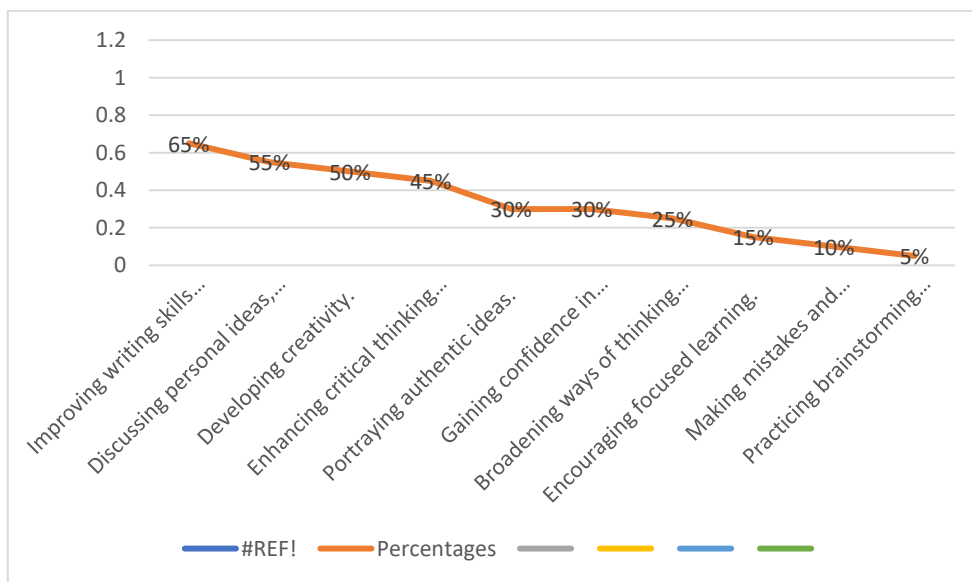


Chart 5. Subjects' Opinions on the Advantages of Self-Dependent Essay Writing

TABLE 7  
SUBJECTS' OPINIONS ON THE DISADVANTAGES OF SELF-DEPENDENT ESSAY WRITING

No.	Drawbacks	Percentage
1.	Time-consuming.	70%
2.	Facing challenges and difficulties while performing the writing task.	30%
3.	Lack of language accuracy.	20%
4.	Subjectivity in terms of expressing ideas, feelings, and opinions.	5%

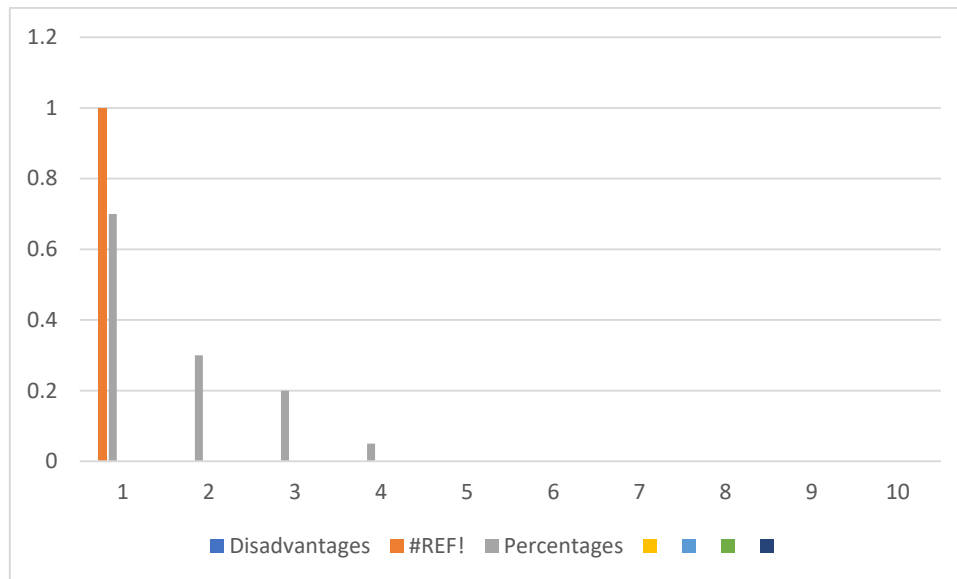


Chart 6. Subjects' Opinions on the Disadvantages of Self-Dependent Essay Writing

Regarding the advantages of using ChatGPT for essay writing, table four and chart five indicate that 55% thought that it would help in saving time, 50% in ensuring language accuracy, 25% in avoiding difficulties while writing, 20% in being easy to use, 20% in offering new ideas, 10% in ensuring clear writing, 10% in getting to know new words, 10% in presenting structured responses, 10% in discussing relevant content, and 5% in getting ideas about how to write the essay. Regarding the disadvantages of using ChatGPT for essay writing, table five and chart six show that 75% expressed their concerns about submitting plagiarized work, 50% about gaining less writing experience, 45% about negatively impacting writing progress, 45% about lacking personal touches and emotions, 35% about having insufficient development of creativity, 30% about having inadequate development of thinking skills, 15% about hindering effective learning practices, 15% about becoming lazy learners, 10% about not learning new things, and 5% about not requiring focus and concentration while writing.

Though different in ideas, using a self-dependent essay writing mode also has several advantages and drawbacks as seen by the subjects. Concerning the advantages, table six and chart seven reveal that 65% believed that it would improve writing, 55% that it would allow for discussing personal content, 50% that it would develop creativity, 45% that it would enhance critical thinking, 30% that it would portray authentic ideas, 30% that it would result in gaining confidence, 25% that it would broaden thinking and imagination, 15% that it would encourage focused learning, 10% that it would allow for learning from mistakes, and 5% that it would encourage brainstorming during group work. On the other hand, table seven and chart eight demonstrate that the drawbacks of self-dependent writing are time-consuming (70%), facing difficulties and challenges while performing the writing task (30%), lack of language accuracy (20%), and subjectivity in terms of expressing ideas; feelings; and opinions (5%).

## VI. DISCUSSION OF STUDY FINDINGS

In today's digital world, technological advancements play a significant role in shaping and reshaping humans' life at all levels and areas such as those of industrial, economic, educational, and social aspects amongst others. Though some of these advancements are supportive and practical, others may still entail some drawbacks. Artificial intelligence voice related tools, as an example, offer oral educational inputs which could be difficult for learners to comprehend due to their being fast or long (Chun & Park, 2021).

As highlighted earlier, this paper seeks to explore EFL undergraduate students' attitudes towards using ChatGPT for acquiring writing skills. To adequately address the study's research questions, the researcher designed and distributed a questionnaire to a sample of fifty-two students. The researcher also conducted a semi-free interview involving a sample of sixteen students.

With regard to the first research question on students' attitudes towards utilizing ChatGPT for acquiring writing skills, the findings proved that many respondents thought that ChatGPT might not be effective in enriching their language knowledge which would be required for effective writing. For example, 65% including the values of strongly agree and agree believed that depending on ChatGPT to write university assignments might negatively influence their knowledge about sentence structure in the long run, 63% including the values of strongly agree and agree felt that depending on ChatGPT to write university assignments might negatively influence one's knowledge about spelling in the long run, and 62% including the values of strongly agree and agree stated that depending on ChatGPT to write university assignments might negatively influence one's knowledge about punctuation in the long run. However, it should be



stated that 98% including the values of strongly agree and agree indicated that using ChatGPT to write university assignments could save the time spent on assignment writing.

Besides the specific points about the impact of using ChatGPT on students' writing progress, there are three related statements on using ChatGPT for language learning. First, regarding the point on whether ChatGPT as a learning tool would enable students to significantly improve reading skills, 39% of the responses including the values of strongly agree and agree are positive. Second, regarding the point on whether submitting written assignments which are fully based on using ChatGPT would significantly enhance one's knowledge of the subject matter, 28% of the responses including the values of strongly agree and agree are positive. Third, regarding the point on whether using ChatGPT would enable students to build and expand vocabulary, the agreement percentage including strongly agree and agree values is 47%. Though not low, such percentages may not be seen significant.

With reference to the second research question, it can be concluded from the findings that most subjects (81%) including the values of strongly disagree and disagree did not believe that ChatGPT would assist them in becoming smart university students. In addition, many subjects (74%) including the values of strongly agree and agree believed that employing ChatGPT to write university assignments might hinder one's creativity in the long run, and 70% of the subjects including the values of strongly agree and disagree thought that relying on ChatGPT to write university assignments might negatively impact one's critical thinking skills in the long run.

Relating the discussion to the second study tool, the findings as detailed in section five confirmed that, the main advantages of utilizing ChatGPT for writing purposes in the English classroom within higher-education contexts are: saving time, ensuring language accuracy, facing no difficulty in performing the writing task, being easy to use, offering new ideas, presenting clear writing, getting to know new words easily, offering structured responses, discussing relevant content, and helping in getting an idea about how to write the essay. The disadvantages, on the other hand, are submitting plagiarized work, gaining less writing experience, affecting one's progress in writing skills negatively, lacking personal touches and emotions, improving creativity insufficiently, developing thinking skills inadequately, hindering effective learning practices, becoming a lazy learner, not learning new things, and lacking concentration while writing.

By contrast, the advantages of self-dependent essay writing encompass improving writing skills through genuine practices, discussing personal ideas and opinions, developing creativity, gaining confidence in conveying ideas and feelings, portraying authentic ideas, enhancing critical thinking skills, broadening ways of thinking and imagination, encouraging focused learning, learning from the mistakes one makes while writing, and practicing brainstorming while working in groups. Seen from the drawbacks' perspective, the disadvantages of self-dependent essay writing include time-consuming, facing challenges and difficulties while performing the writing task, lack of language accuracy, and subjectivity in terms of expressing ideas; feelings; and opinions. It should be noted that the advantages and drawbacks of ChatGPT-based writing versus self-dependent based writing are mentioned as per frequency.

## VII. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study is an attempt to measure students' attitudes towards utilizing ChatGPT for acquiring writing skills at the university level. However, this study is limited to a sample of fifty-two freshmen, all of whom belong to one school (School of Computing) at one private university. Therefore, it is recommended that further research be conducted on the study issues this paper portrays involving larger samples and more categories of university students. Additionally, it is recommended that future studies investigate the potential uses of ChatGPT in a variety of instructional contexts and for different purposes. Conducting empirical studies in which experimental and control groups are involved to compare the impact of utilizing ChatGPT on students' writing skills as opposed to using other tools would be of use and interest. Designing a ChatGPT tool for foreign language students to facilitate and maximize language learning whilst ensuring that using ChatGPT for essay writing assignments maintains academic integrity would also be helpful. On a final note, though ChatGPT can assist students in writing better essays in terms of language accuracy, overall organization, and clear content, it is the author's conviction that ChatGPT needs to be utilized as a supportive means for writing improvement outcomes rather than as a main means for essay writing purposes in EFL higher-education contexts. Ultimately, it is through genuine practice and cognitive involvement that EFL learners in higher education will be able to attain learning targets and achieve quality outcomes.

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