

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN INTEGRATING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION: LECTURERS' PERSPECTIVES IN ACADEMIC WRITING INSTRUCTION

Muhammad Zaini^{*1}, Maria Arina Luardini¹, Akhmad Fauzan¹

¹*Magister of English Language Education, University of Palangka Raya, Indonesia*
^{*}mhmmadzaini31@gmail.com

Abstract

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has transformed educational practices, particularly in English Language Teaching (ELT) and academic writing instruction. This study investigates the challenges and opportunities associated with integrating AI into academic writing instruction in higher education. Employing a qualitative descriptive phenomenological approach, the research involved eleven lecturers from the English Education Study Program at Universitas Islam Kalimantan Muhammad Arsyad Al Banjari (UNISKA MAB), Banjarmasin, Indonesia. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis framework. The findings revealed four major challenges, namely academic integrity concerns, student dependency on AI, limited AI literacy among lecturers, and the absence of institutional policies regarding AI usage. Conversely, four significant opportunities emerged, including immediate feedback, personalized learning, increased student confidence, and reduced lecturer workload. The study demonstrates that AI possesses considerable potential to improve academic writing instruction when implemented responsibly and supported by pedagogically sound strategies. However, successful AI integration requires adequate professional development, ethical guidelines, and institutional support. The findings suggest that AI should be viewed as a complementary educational tool rather than a substitute for human instruction. Universities are encouraged to establish clear frameworks that promote ethical, critical, and meaningful use of AI in higher education writing contexts.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Academic Writing, Higher Education, English Language Teaching, AI Integration

INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as one of the most influential technological innovations in contemporary education, fundamentally transforming teaching and learning practices across various disciplines. In English Language Teaching (ELT), AI-based applications such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, and QuillBot have become increasingly integrated into instructional activities, particularly in supporting language learning and academic writing development. According to Daulay and Ginting (2024), AI has reshaped English language teaching by enabling more interactive, adaptive, and technology-enhanced learning environments. Similarly, Crompton et al. (2024) argue that

AI offers significant pedagogical affordances in ELT, including automated feedback, personalized learning, and improved accessibility to learning resources.

Academic writing is one of the core competencies expected of university students because it enables them to develop critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and effective scholarly communication. However, producing academically appropriate texts remains challenging for many learners. Students often struggle with grammatical accuracy, academic vocabulary, text organization, and maintaining coherence throughout their writing. In response to these challenges, AI-assisted writing applications have emerged as alternative learning tools

capable of providing immediate feedback, automated language correction, and personalized writing support. Aljabr et al. (2025) explain that AI technologies can enhance English writing instruction by assisting students throughout the writing process, from drafting and revising to improving linguistic accuracy. Likewise, Cui and Alias (2024) emphasize that AI has considerable potential to improve higher education by supporting more efficient, individualized, and learner-centered instructional practices.

Despite these pedagogical benefits, the integration of AI into academic writing instruction also raises several educational and ethical concerns. One of the most widely discussed issues relates to academic integrity. The ability of generative AI systems to produce coherent and sophisticated academic texts has complicated the evaluation of originality, authorship, and students' genuine writing abilities. Wahyuningsih (2024) argues that AI-assisted writing presents ethical challenges for higher education institutions, particularly regarding plagiarism, transparency, and responsible AI use. In addition, lecturers have expressed concerns that students may become overly dependent on AI-generated content, reducing opportunities to develop critical thinking and independent writing skills. These concerns are further reinforced by Crompton et al. (2024), who note that excessive reliance on AI may shift students' focus from the writing process to merely producing acceptable outputs.

Another challenge concerns lecturers' readiness to integrate AI into instructional practice. Although AI technologies continue to evolve rapidly, many educators still possess limited technological literacy and insufficient pedagogical knowledge regarding the effective use of AI in writing instruction. According to Ofosu-Ampong (2024), AI literacy has become an essential competency for higher education instructors, yet formal professional development opportunities remain limited. Furthermore, many higher education institutions have not yet established

comprehensive policies governing AI usage in teaching and assessment. Wayan et al. (2024) report that inadequate institutional readiness often results in inconsistent classroom practices, varying assessment standards, and uncertainty regarding acceptable AI use among both lecturers and students.

On the other hand, AI offers transformative opportunities for improving academic writing pedagogy. AI-assisted systems provide immediate feedback that allows students to revise their work independently and engage in continuous writing improvement. These technologies also facilitate personalized learning by adapting recommendations according to learners' language proficiency and learning needs. Liando et al. (2025) explain that AI-supported personalized learning enables students to receive individualized assistance while encouraging greater learner autonomy. Similarly, Mun (2024) found that AI-assisted writing tools positively influence students' confidence by reducing writing anxiety and providing continuous support throughout the writing process. From the lecturers' perspective, AI can also reduce the time spent correcting mechanical writing errors, allowing greater emphasis on higher-order writing skills such as argumentation, coherence, and critical analysis. Such findings support the argument of Aljabr et al. (2025) that AI should function as a pedagogical assistant rather than as a replacement for the role of educators.

Although previous studies have extensively discussed the benefits and challenges of AI-assisted writing, most have focused primarily on students' learning outcomes or on the technical capabilities of AI applications. Comparatively fewer studies have explored AI integration from the perspectives of university lecturers, particularly regarding how they negotiate pedagogical opportunities alongside ethical and institutional challenges in academic writing instruction. Understanding these perspectives is important because lecturers play a central role in determining how AI is

implemented, monitored, and integrated into classroom practice.

Therefore, this study explores lecturers' perspectives on the challenges and opportunities of integrating Artificial Intelligence into academic writing instruction in higher education. Specifically, it seeks to identify the barriers experienced by lecturers while examining the pedagogical opportunities that AI offers for supporting effective and responsible academic writing instruction.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive phenomenological approach to investigate lecturers' experiences in integrating Artificial Intelligence into academic writing instruction.

The research was conducted within the English Education Study Program at Universitas Islam Kalimantan Muhammad Arsyad Al Banjari (UNISKA MAB), Banjarmasin, Indonesia. Eleven lecturers participated in the study through purposive sampling. Participants were selected based on their familiarity with AI technologies and experience teaching academic writing courses.

Data collection involved semi-structured interviews lasting approximately 45–60 minutes. Interview questions focused on lecturers' experiences, perceptions, instructional practices, challenges, and perceived benefits related to AI-assisted writing instruction.

Data analysis followed Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis framework. The process consisted of familiarization with the data, coding, theme generation, theme review, theme definition, and interpretation. Thematic analysis enabled the identification of recurring patterns concerning lecturers' perspectives on AI integration.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The thematic analysis of the interview transcripts identified two overarching categories regarding lecturers' perspectives

on the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in academic writing instruction. The first category concerns the challenges encountered during AI implementation, while the second highlights the opportunities perceived by lecturers in utilizing AI to support writing instruction. The themes were developed through an iterative coding process following the procedures proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006).

Challenges in AI Integration *Academic Integrity Concerns*

One of the most prominent themes emerging from the interviews was lecturers' concern regarding academic integrity. Most participants reported that the increasing use of generative AI applications, such as ChatGPT, made it difficult to determine whether students genuinely produced the submitted work or relied extensively on AI-generated content. Lecturers explained that AI-generated texts often demonstrate high levels of grammatical accuracy and coherence, thereby complicating the evaluation of originality, authorship, and students' actual writing competence.

These findings are consistent with Wahyuningsih (2024), who argues that AI-assisted academic writing introduces significant ethical issues related to plagiarism, transparency, and authorship in higher education. Similarly, Crompton et al. (2024) emphasize that generative AI creates new challenges for educators because conventional assessment methods are no longer sufficient to verify students' authentic learning processes. Rather than recommending a complete prohibition of AI, participants in the present study suggested redesigning assessment practices by emphasizing writing drafts, revision histories, reflective journals, and process-oriented evaluation. This indicates that lecturers tend to perceive AI not merely as an ethical threat but as a technology requiring more adaptive assessment strategies.

Overall, the findings indicate that concerns regarding academic integrity are not solely directed at the presence of AI itself but

rather at how it is used within academic writing practices. While lecturers acknowledged the pedagogical potential of AI, they emphasized the need for clear ethical guidelines and assessment strategies that prioritize students' writing processes over final products. This suggests that maintaining academic integrity in the era of generative AI requires a balanced approach that encourages responsible AI use while preserving students' originality, critical thinking, and academic accountability.

Student Dependency on AI

Another challenge identified during the interviews was students' increasing dependence on AI applications when completing academic writing tasks. Participants observed that many students relied on ChatGPT and similar tools not only for language correction but also for generating ideas, organizing paragraphs, and producing complete written responses. Such practices were perceived as potentially reducing students' opportunities to develop independent thinking and essential writing skills.

This finding supports the observations of Aljabr et al. (2025), who reported that although AI facilitates writing development, excessive dependence may weaken learners' engagement in brainstorming, drafting, revising, and critical reflection. Likewise, Cui and Alias (2024) argue that higher education institutions should encourage the responsible use of AI by positioning it as a learning assistant rather than a replacement for students' intellectual effort. Therefore, participants consistently emphasized the importance of fostering students' critical awareness so that AI functions as a complementary learning resource instead of becoming the primary producer of academic work.

Overall, these findings indicate that while AI offers valuable support throughout the academic writing process, excessive dependence on its capabilities may hinder the development of students' independent writing

skills and critical thinking. Therefore, lecturers emphasized that AI should be integrated as a supportive learning tool rather than a substitute for students' cognitive engagement. Promoting responsible AI use through appropriate guidance and instructional strategies is essential to ensure that students remain active participants in constructing their own knowledge and developing their academic writing competence.

Limited AI Literacy and Institutional Readiness

The interviews also revealed that lecturers experienced challenges related to limited AI literacy and institutional support. Most participants reported that they acquired knowledge about AI independently because structured professional development opportunities were still limited. Consequently, many lecturers expressed uncertainty regarding effective pedagogical strategies, classroom implementation, and assessment methods involving AI-assisted writing.

This finding is consistent with Ofosu-Ampong (2024), who identifies AI literacy as one of the major challenges faced by higher education instructors during the rapid expansion of AI technologies. Furthermore, participants highlighted the absence of comprehensive institutional policies governing AI usage. Without clear regulations, lecturers established individual standards regarding acceptable AI practices, resulting in inconsistent expectations across courses. Similar concerns were reported by Wayan et al. (2024), who found that institutional readiness remains one of the primary determinants of successful AI integration in higher education. Collectively, these findings suggest that effective AI implementation depends not only on technological availability but also on institutional governance and educators' professional preparedness.

Overall, these findings highlight that the successful integration of AI in academic writing instruction depends not only on the

availability of AI technologies but also on lecturers' preparedness and institutional commitment. Participants emphasized that improving AI literacy through continuous professional development, together with the establishment of clear institutional policies, is essential for ensuring consistent and ethical AI implementation. Without adequate training and well-defined guidelines, the pedagogical potential of AI may not be fully realized, despite its growing presence in higher education.

Opportunities in AI Integration ***Immediate Feedback and Personalized Learning***

Despite these challenges, participants consistently acknowledged the considerable pedagogical benefits offered by AI-assisted writing applications. One of the most frequently mentioned advantages was the provision of immediate feedback, allowing students to identify grammatical inaccuracies, vocabulary problems, and organizational weaknesses instantly. Participants believed that such immediate responses enabled students to revise their work more efficiently while encouraging greater independence throughout the writing process.

These findings support Daulay and Ginting (2024), who argue that AI has transformed English language teaching by providing continuous feedback that enhances students' writing development. Similarly, Aljabr et al. (2025) found that AI-assisted writing systems promote more efficient revision practices because learners receive instant recommendations without waiting for instructor feedback. In addition, participants observed that AI applications were capable of adapting feedback according to students' different proficiency levels. This observation aligns with Liando et al. (2025), who explain that personalized learning represents one of AI's greatest contributions to EFL instruction by accommodating learners' diverse linguistic needs and learning progress.

Overall, these findings suggest that immediate feedback and personalized

learning are among the most significant advantages of integrating AI into academic writing instruction. By providing timely and individualized support, AI enables students to identify their writing weaknesses, revise their work more effectively, and develop greater autonomy throughout the learning process. Consequently, when integrated appropriately into instructional practices, AI can complement lecturers' feedback and contribute to a more responsive and student-centered writing environment.

Increased Student Confidence and Reduced Lecturer Workload

Another opportunity identified by participants concerned the positive influence of AI on students' confidence during academic writing activities. Lecturers observed that students became more willing to experiment with language use because AI provided immediate support whenever they encountered linguistic difficulties. As a result, students appeared less anxious about making grammatical mistakes and demonstrated greater participation during writing activities.

This finding is consistent with Mun (2024), who reported that AI-assisted writing tools contribute to increased learner confidence by reducing writing anxiety and providing continuous support throughout the writing process. Besides benefiting students, participants also acknowledged the practical advantages of AI for lecturers. AI applications reduced the time required to correct mechanical errors, such as grammar, spelling, punctuation, and formatting, enabling lecturers to devote more attention to higher-order aspects of writing, including argument development, coherence, and critical engagement with academic sources. These findings reinforce the conclusions of Crompton et al. (2024) that AI functions most effectively as a pedagogical assistant that complements, rather than replaces, the instructional role of educators.

Overall, the findings indicate that lecturers perceive AI as both a challenge and an opportunity within academic writing

instruction. While concerns regarding academic integrity, student dependency, AI literacy, and institutional policies remain significant, participants also recognized AI's potential to enhance feedback quality, promote personalized learning, increase students' confidence, and improve instructional efficiency. These results suggest that the successful integration of AI into higher education requires a balanced approach that combines technological innovation with ethical guidelines, institutional support, and appropriate pedagogical practices.

CONCLUSION

Artificial Intelligence has become an increasingly significant component of contemporary higher education, particularly within academic writing instruction. This study identified both challenges and opportunities associated with AI integration from lecturers' perspectives. The major challenges include concerns regarding academic integrity, student dependency, limited AI literacy among educators, and the absence of institutional policies. Meanwhile, opportunities encompass immediate feedback, personalized learning, increased student confidence, and reduced lecturer workload. The findings indicate that AI possesses considerable potential to enhance academic writing instruction when integrated responsibly and strategically. Successful implementation requires institutional support, professional development initiatives, and clear ethical frameworks. Ultimately, AI should not be regarded as a replacement for lecturers but rather as a collaborative educational partner capable of enriching learning experiences and supporting writing development in higher education.

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