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Exploring the Impact of AI Technologies on EFL Writing Proficiency

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ABSTRACT

With the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT in the classroom, the role and nature of writing instruction should be of utmost priority among educators. Exploring teachers' perspectives on the merits and challenges of using ChatGPT in writing classes is essential for promoting effective implementation and overcoming challenges. The present study investigates how Saudi EFL teachers perceive the role of ChatGPT in writing instruction and the obstacles they encounter while applying it. Using a descriptive survey design, the researchers developed a questionnaire that served as the principal instrument for data collection. Participants were chosen through convenience sampling and comprised Saudi EFL teachers at King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. In total, 54 teachers agreed to participate and fill in the questionnaire. Some favorable aspects of ChatGPT in writing classes mentioned in the findings are personalized learning experiences, increased teacher comfort in applying AI in the curriculum, student collaborative writing, creativity in student writing, and feedback. By contrast, considerable challenges expressed by the teachers include misinformation or hallucinations generated by ChatGPT, the failure to fit into writing curriculum aims, struggles to judge student outputs affected by AI use, students developing undue reliance on ChatGPT, and a lack of facilitation of student writers varying needs. These insights suggest educators should set standards for independent writing and academic integrity, engage in professional development focused on effective AI use in learning, and structure assignments around critical thinking. The added solutions were recipes for better learning outcomes: monitoring student engagement and fostering collaboration via group exercises.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI); ChatGPT; EFL Teachers; Perceptions; Creativity in Writing; Critical Thinking

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1. Introduction

AI technology in educational contexts has been a popular topic of debate in recent years, especially in language learning settings^[1]. Among the many AI programs, ChatGPT is fast becoming an invaluable tool for improving writing among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students^[2]. Chat GPT was launched in 2022, and in a matter of months, it had accumulated millions of users due to its diverse functions^[3].

ChatGPT is a language model created by OpenAI that generates human-like text based on the input provided by the user^[4]. Its capabilities go far beyond simply generating text; it can offer feedback, suggest improvements, and assist learners in writing demands^[5]. The arrival of ChatGPT as a writing assistant has led teachers to search for its possible advantages in EFL settings^[6]. As Teng^[4] commented, EFL learners see ChatGPT as a companion rather than a competitor that supports them during the writing process, thus making their learning experience more efficient.

Writing presents numerous challenges to language learners, making the inclusion of ChatGPT within EFL writing classes an avenue that may alleviate such challenges^[7,8]. ChatGPT is interactive, meaning students receive instantaneous feedback, which enables them to iterate on their work. Some studies show that ChatGPT will help them in argumentative writing by assuming the role of a collaborator, promoting critical thinking, and enhancing the students' written language^[9].

Moreover, usage-based suggestions tailored to the specific context produced by ChatGPT might enable learners to understand further intricacies of language use, which are significant for EFL learners in a second language learning context^[10]. It is able to identify more mistakes by showing samples and other means of saying the same sentence, enabling students to build a better lexicon and feel extra proper with the language^[11]. This connection helps position this with the pedagogues' agendas in writing instruction of what writing instruction should do, not just in terms of mechanics but awareness of rhetoric^[12].

It has been proven in various studies that ChatGPT helps improve writing skills. For instance, Xu et al.^[5] found a significant enhancement in EFL students' writing performance following the usage of ChatGPT, particularly regarding grammatical accuracy and lexical range. There-

fore, maintaining this practice is consistent with what Song and Song^[6] observed on the connection between motivation, engagement, and the acquisition of written language through AI-assisted writing tools in the learning process.

Although there are clear benefits to using ChatGPT in writing courses, there are also challenges to consider. Over-reliance on the feedback provided by the AI chatbot can limit learners' capacity for developing independent writing skills^[13]. Moreover, Tsai, Lin, and Brown^[14] also pointed out that the practicality of integrating ChatGPT within writing instruction might differ in accordance with institutional resources and teacher training.

Although artificial intelligence tools like ChatGPT have attracted growing interest in language education, particularly in relation to writing instruction, the majority of empirical investigations have predominantly focused on students' perspectives, usage patterns, and learning outcomes. While such research provides valuable insights into learner engagement with AI, it offers only a partial understanding of the pedagogical implications of AI integration. In contrast, the present study addresses a critical gap in the literature by examining the perceptions of Saudi EFL university instructors, who are key stakeholders in the implementation of AI tools in academic writing curricula. By foregrounding the experiences, challenges, and attitudes of teachers, this study offers a novel and timely contribution to the discourse on AI in EFL education, particularly within the under-explored context of Saudi Arabia.

The way teachers perceive these AI tools is very important in the success of the integration in the classroom. While some educators view ChatGPT as having the ability to improve writing proficiency, Nouara and Dehbia^[3] found that others are skeptical about the reliability and efficacy of the tool. Fulfilling these needs with professional development and training can help move their classroom practice closer to what is possible with technology. Thus, this study investigates the perceptions of Saudi EFL teachers toward employment of ChatGPT in writing classes. It particularly explores how ChatGPT is used to enhance writing instruction and investigates the challenges Saudi EFL instructors at King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, have faced in using ChatGPT.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

With the educational landscape increasingly populated with AI tools like ChatGPT, there has naturally been a great deal of interest in their applicability to the foreign language classroom, mainly in writing instruction. However, there is still a significant lack of insight into how EFL teachers perceive using ChatGPT in writing classes, particularly in the Saudi context. This study aims to fill the gap by examining Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions of implementing ChatGPT in their classrooms.

Although ChatGPT has its advantages —immediate feedback and increased motivation among students— integrating this technology in the Saudi EFL context comes with challenges. Through students' perspective, Alqahtani^[15] identifies two starkly contrasting attitudes towards AI-aided writing; while some students readily open up to the use of technology, it should come as no surprise that students also voice skepticism regarding its accuracy and effectiveness.

In addition, the spectrum of EFL learners' experiences while interacting with ChatGPT, documented in the literature, would provide an idea of how teachers should view ChatGPT. According to Alshammri^[16], students acknowledge the instant feedback recognized in ChatGPT but do not know whether the AI suggestions are good or correct. Moreover, as noted by Jamshed et al.^[17], There are vast opportunities for student learning by using ChatGPT (2024), but the challenges in the teaching and learning context overshadow them. The discrepancy between AI capabilities and the classroom is problematic as teachers struggle to incorporate AI tools into their pedagogical frameworks^[12]

Moreover, the limited studies on EFL teachers' perceptions of ChatGPT in writing classes indicate the necessity of this research.^[18] Teachers' perspectives are essential to maximize the benefits of AI tools in developing students' writing skills. As such, this study seeks to delve into the perceptions of Saudi EFL teachers regarding the use of ChatGPT, with special interest in the related challenges they face and their implications on writing instruction at the tertiary level.

1.2. Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How do Saudi EFL teachers perceive ChatGPT's

role in writing classes?

2. What are the Challenges of using ChatGPT in writing courses as perceived by Saudi EFL teachers?

1.3. Research Significance

This study adds to the literature on artificial intelligence in language education. It fills a significant gap by examining the pedagogical implications of AI tools, especially ChatGPT, in EFL contexts. The results will contribute to the theory of technology acceptance, mainly the coins of Davis's^[19] Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which states that the perceived usefulness and ease of use affect technology adoption. Understanding Saudi EFL teachers' attitudes about the use of AI can shed light on how these attitudes impact the role of implementing AI in language instruction in this sector, enhancing TAM's applicability in different educational contexts.

From a practical perspective, this research has valuable implications for different stakeholders. EFL teachers can learn about their peers' perceptions of ChatGPT and help improve the practice as they can integrate practical ways for AI tools in their writing instruction to create new contexts for students with motivation and efficacy. These findings will ultimately help educational policymakers and curriculum developers in Saudi Arabia appreciate the scope and challenges of ChatGPT use while informing the establishment of enabling frameworks to facilitate the integration and utilization of AI in language education.

It is also intended to inform EFL teachers of professional development programs that equip them with the skills and knowledge to help them confront the complexities of integrating AI into their classrooms. This will help promote a more representative correspondence between technology and the teaching of the language, ultimately improving the quality of teaching technology in Saudi Arabian English as a foreign language.

1.4. Literature Review

ChatGPT is an elitist data nomenclature of Artificial Intelligence (AI) based advanced across the product based on the hypothesis of human interaction and assisting users to perform^[1]. ChatGPT utilizes the Generative Pre-trained Transformer (GPT) architecture, which uses deep learning

techniques to understand and produce contextually relevant and coherent text^[20]. Its machine-learning approach has made it specialized for generative applications. It has been used for tasks ranging from writing to coding^[9], including automated customer service representatives and tutors. In education, especially in language learning, ChatGPT has become a groundbreaking tool, given how much it enhances a class and learning experience^[21].

While the adoption of AI tools like ChatGPT, especially in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing instruction, presents a unique set of challenges to experienced EFL educators^[22] as well as the EFL students, The ChatGPT has multiple benefits but one of which is its ability to provide immediate explanatory and personalized feedback at scale, which enhances the academic writing skills of individuals. Teng^[4] adds that this instantaneous feedback motivates students to explore their writing even more deeply. Writing skills can also be advanced, and goals achieved through ChatGPT, are fluency and coherence^[23]. The interactive dimension of ChatGPT adds to students' motivation and leads to a more enjoyable writing process^[11].

Moreover, Baskara and Mukarto^[10] highlighted the functionality of ChatGPT as a personalized instruction for various learning styles. Collaborative writing scenarios can also invite epistemic and socioemotional conversation^[9]. However, challenges still exist, especially concerning students' potential overreliance on technology, which may discourage masterful command of basic writing skills^[5].

As concerns grow about the quality of AI-generated content, the role for educators is to teach students to critically assess what feedback AI provides^[24]. One additional major concern in relation to the new generative AI text technologies is questions around originality and plagiarism since this new ease of text generation could tempt students to submit such text as their own^[1]. Furthermore, teachers' preparedness and acceptance to adopt new technologies is critical for properly integrating ChatGPT, whereas teachers fail to have sufficient training^[25].

Two key pillars underpin this study: Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory^[26] and Davis' Technology Acceptance Model^[19]. Social Cognitive Theory of Bandura states that people learn behavior through observation of their world and mimicry of the behavior they see. Such ways of thinking suit the notion that EFL teachers might shift their

teaching behaviors following insights from observing peers using AI tools, ChatGPT included.

Davis^[19] Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is primarily concerned with the elements affecting users' acceptance of technology and suggests that users' acceptance of technology will be mainly determined by their perceptions of its usefulness and ease of use. This model aims to help analyze the attitudes of Saudi EFL teachers toward ChatGPT and how these attitudes are likely to impact their readiness to adopt AI in their writing instruction.

Several studies have investigated the role Chatgpt in EFL writing. Nguyen^[25] explored the views of EFL instructors on employing ChatGPT in writing classes, with special attention on its use in Vietnam. In the study, 20 EFL instructors from Van Lang University integrated ChatGPT into their writing courses. The study collected quantitative and qualitative data through an online survey and structured interviews. The results showed that instructors were generally positive about using ChatGPT in their lesson plans. In the same vein, Alsofyani and Barzanji^[18] examined the effects of ChatGPT-generated feedback versus teacher feedback on the writing abilities and perceptions of Saudi EFL university learners. Having adopted a mixed-method approach, the researchers controlled 102 participants in an experimental group receiving ChatGPT feedback and a control group receiving feedback from the teacher. The results showed that on posttest scores, there was no statistically significant difference between the two methods, discovery made that ChatGPT feedback works as well as the traditional way. Moreover, students showed a broadly positive demeanor toward employing ChatGPT for academic writing.

In a similar study, Alsalem^[27] investigated Saudi EFL learners' views on using ChatGPT to enhance their English-speaking skills. Using the five-point Likert scale, a questionnaire was implemented with 74 students from three public universities after six weeks of implementing oral tasks with the AI ChatGPT. The results of this work indicate that this kind of technology could help improve English learning and teaching. In 2024, Alshammri^[16] investigated the experiences of Saudi EFL students using ChatGPT for their writing tasks and conducted semi-structured interviews with five female English major students at the University of Hail. The study said the benefits included assistance with structuring content and individualized

feedback. However, it also raised issues harnessing academic misconduct, shortcutting, and ensuring the accuracy of references generated by ChatGPT.

Jamshed et al.^[17] investigated Saudi learner's attitudes toward ChatGPT challenges and opportunities in EFL classes. Based on a simple random selection method, 235 respondents from different undergraduate programs were collected across two universities. The global approach revealed that students were enthusiastic about ChatGPT as a useful L2 acquisition tool to address the problems of traditional language teaching. Such enthusiasm notwithstanding, the study found barriers such as the potential suppression of innovative thinking and the fact that ChatGPT cannot fully understand idioms and social nuances.

Alharthi^[28] examined the views of EFL students about ChatGPT at three Western Saudi universities. A questionnaire was developed and distributed to 299 students, and it was concluded that the tool was ranked moderately positive from the student's perspective regarding effectiveness in understanding and communication in enhancing their learning of English. Ease of use strongly predicted the frequency of continued ChatGPT use, and many students reported using it every week. Besides, Alqahtani^[15] leaned on students' and teachers' perceptions of using ChatGPT in writing courses in Saudi universities. An online survey revealed a slightly positive overall disposition towards the tool, with the participants acknowledging its potential to enhance creativity and learning experiences. However, teachers also highlighted concerns around plagiarism and the lack of a personal touch, and they expressed more concern—compared to students—about the potential ethical issues.

Using a mixed-methods design, Algraini^[29] explored the implications of ChatGPT for vocabulary enrichment among Saudi female EFL students, collecting quantitative questionnaire data alongside qualitative interview insights. The participants noted several advantages, like accurate definitions and contextual alternatives, that helped their vocabulary development. On the downside: repetitive suggestions and accuracy concerns. Li et al.^[30] analyzed essays written by Chinese non-majors of English, comparing feedback from ChatGPT versions 3.5 and 4 to input from human instructors. The findings revealed that both versions of the writing AI offered more pertinent feedback about language, content, and organization than teacher raters,

which proves that ChatGPT is an essential tool for EFL writing assessments.

ChatGPT In EFL Writing Classes In Indonesia Harunasari^[24] A study published by researchers in New Zealand found that designing clear usage policies and tracking student interactions with the tool are essential for responsible usage. Mun^[31] explored AI-assisted feedback in EFL writing and reported significant gains in content and organization for students who utilized ChatGPT. However, there were also concerns about potential overreliance on the tool.

Likewise, Rahma and Fithriani^[13] examined the teachers' perceptions regarding ChatGPT's contribution to EFL writing in Indonesia. They concluded that, in general, teachers support the implementation of ChatGPT to refine the quality of writing and facilitate language development. Additionally, Nouara and Dehbia^[3] investigated first-year master's student's and teachers' perceptions of ChatGPT's role in developing writing competency. The findings revealed that students utilized the tool for various purposes beyond homework, and teachers had mixed opinions about its usage.

A review of recent studies reveals a strong emphasis on student experiences with ChatGPT, including their attitudes, perceived benefits, and challenges in using AI for writing tasks^[15,16]. While this body of work is informative, it tends to overlook the equally significant role of educators responsible for designing, facilitating, and assessing writing instruction within AI-integrated environments. In this regard, the current study distinguishes itself by shifting the focus from learners to instructors, specifically Saudi EFL teachers at the tertiary level. This teacher-centered lens is essential for understanding how educators perceive AI tools like ChatGPT and identifying the institutional, pedagogical, and ethical challenges that may arise from their use. This research extends and enriches the existing literature by situating teacher perspectives at the center of inquiry, offering practical implications for curriculum design, professional development, and AI policy implementation in EFL contexts.

Together, these studies underscore the heightened interest in ChatGPT across various educational contexts—from the general population, particularly in Saudi Arabia. Although there is excitement about the potential benefits of ChatGPT for language learning, ethical implications, over-

reliance, and the quality of content generated underscore the need for thoughtful integration and professional development for teachers. Whereas the studies above targeted the EFL students' view of the use of Chatgpt in their writing classes, especially in Saudi Arabia, this study explores the role of ChatGPT in writing courses from the perspective of Saudi EFL university teachers.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

This study uses the descriptive survey approach in its quantitative dimension. This research approach allows for the systematic collection and analysis of data to understand the participants' characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors related to the research topic. The study aims to gather a broad range of responses using a paper survey, enabling a comprehensive overview of the subject matter.

2.2. Participants

The participants of this study included Saudi EFL teachers working at King Saud University in Riyadh City, Saudi Arabia. The study used the convenience sampling method to select the research participants. Some (54) Saudi EFL teachers participated in the study and consented to complete the questionnaire. All participants held Ph. D and Master's Degrees in English language teaching, applied linguistics, or related fields, ensuring a solid foundation in EFL pedagogy. Additionally, the participants in this study are well acquainted with AI tools, particularly ChatGPT. They all actively use it in their regular EFL classes as part of the university curriculum. This familiarity indicates that the teachers have integrated ChatGPT into their instructional practices, enhancing their teaching methodologies

and providing students with innovative learning experiences.

Before data collection, each participant was provided with a written consent letter outlining the purpose of the study, procedures, the voluntary nature of participation, and assurances of anonymity and confidentiality. Participants were informed that they could withdraw without any consequences, and no identifying information (e.g., names or institutional IDs) was collected or disclosed.

2.3. Data Collection

The researcher used a questionnaire as the data collection instrument for this study. The questionnaire was designed by referencing established instruments in previous studies and validated by applied linguistics experts. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section comprised (20) statements that checked EFL teachers' perspectives toward the role of Chatgpt in writing classes. The second section comprised (10) statements that checked EFL teachers' perspectives on the challenges of using ChatGPT in writing classes. The five-point Likert scale is used as the response scale in the questionnaire with the following five options: strongly agree (5), agree (4), neutral (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). The researcher distributed the questionnaire to EFL teachers in person and got responses from (54) teachers.

The researcher ensured the content validity of the questionnaire by submitting it to several experts in Applied Linguistics from the Department of English Language and Literature at King Saud University. Feedback from these experts was carefully considered, and their remarks and suggestions were incorporated to produce a final version of the questionnaire. Additionally, the reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, with the findings presented in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Cronbach's Alpha for Questionnaire Reliability

Sections	Number of Statements	Cronbach's Alpha
The role of Chatgpt in writing classes	20	0.821
The challenges of using ChatGPT in writing classes	10	0.876
Overall	30	0.847

Table 1 indicates that the overall reliability coefficient for the questionnaire sections is 0.847, reflecting a robust reliability score. This result demonstrates that the questionnaire is a reliable instrument for this study.

Participants were briefed on the purpose of the questionnaire and provided their consent to participate. The questionnaire, composed in English, was administered to EFL teachers during regular office hours at the university. After the participants had completed the questionnaire, the researcher analyzed the data collection results.

2.4. Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Pack-

age for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, employing various statistical tools to interpret the results. Specifically, percentage and frequency analyses were utilized to present the distribution of each data point, while Standard Deviation (SD) was used to assess the degree of variation in participants' responses. Additionally, the Mean (M) score was calculated to evaluate the relative importance of specific items about the study outcomes.

3. Results

The below part presents the results of the study. The responses of the teachers to the questionnaire sections are shown in **Table 2** and **Table 3** below:

Table 2. The Role of Chatgpt in Writing Classes as Perceived by Saudi EFL Teachers

S	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	ChatGPT enhances my students' writing skills.	24	21	1	6	2	4.09	1.04
2	I find ChatGPT to be a useful tool for teaching writing.	18	21	8	5	2	3.88	0.95
3	Using ChatGPT in writing classes makes lessons more engaging.	20	22	7	3	2	4.01	0.99
4	ChatGPT provides helpful feedback on students' writing.	20	26	6	1	1	4.16	1.12
5	I believe that ChatGPT can assist students in generating ideas for writing tasks.	20	23	7	2	2	4.05	1.01
6	I feel comfortable integrating ChatGPT into my writing curriculum.	22	24	6	1	1	4.20	1.07
7	ChatGPT helps students improve their grammar and syntax.	18	23	7	3	3	3.92	0.97
8	I am concerned about the potential for plagiarism when using ChatGPT.	26	17	6	4	1	4.16	1.09
9	ChatGPT allows for personalized learning experiences in writing classes.	29	17	4	2	2	4.27	1.13
10	I believe that ChatGPT can help students understand different writing styles.	12	30	4	6	2	3.81	1.03
11	Students are more motivated to write when using ChatGPT.	7	24	13	6	4	3.44	1.01
12	I have received positive feedback from students about using ChatGPT.	12	13	13	10	6	3.27	0.99
13	I think ChatGPT can replace traditional writing teaching methods.	18	24	7	3	2	3.98	1.06
14	ChatGPT supports differentiated instruction in my writing classes.	8	16	12	13	5	3.16	0.96
15	I find it easy to incorporate ChatGPT into my lesson plans.	8	20	11	8	7	3.25	0.98
16	I am aware of the limitations of using ChatGPT in writing instruction.	11	14	9	10	10	3.11	0.94
17	ChatGPT encourages collaborative writing among students.	20	28	2	4	0	4.18	1.17

Table 2. Cont.

S	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
18	I believe that using ChatGPT can foster creativity in student writing.	19	30	1	4	0	4.18	1.23
19	I would recommend the use of ChatGPT to other EFL teachers in writing classes.	16	31	3	4	0	4.09	1.07
20	ChatGPT offers a valuable resource for professional development in teaching writing.	18	28	5	3	0	4.12	1.09
Overall							3.86	1.04

The findings presented in **Table 2** indicate that Saudi EFL teachers play a significantly positive role in writing classes, with an overall mean score of ($M = 3.86$). Notable positive aspects of ChatGPT in these writing classes include its ability to facilitate personalized learning experiences ($M = 4.27$), the comfort level of teachers in integrating ChatGPT into their writing curricula ($M = 4.20$), its encouragement of collaborative writing among students ($M = 4.18$), its capacity to foster creativity in student writing ($M = 4.18$), and its provision of constructive feedback on student writing ($M = 4.16$).

The responses indicate a range of perspectives regarding using ChatGPT in writing instruction. Concerns about the potential for plagiarism are reflected in a mean score of (4.16), highlighting the importance of addressing academic integrity. Conversely, the perception of ChatGPT as a valuable resource for professional development in teaching writing is evident with a score of (4.12).

The belief that ChatGPT enhances students' writing skills received a favorable score of (4.09) and recommen-

dations for its use among EFL teachers in writing classes, also at (4.09). Additionally, participants feel that ChatGPT can assist students in generating ideas for writing tasks, with a score of (4.05) and making lessons more engaging, indicated by a score of (4.01).

While there is a positive outlook on ChatGPT's role, the opinion that it can replace traditional teaching methods is slightly lower at (3.98). Other benefits include improvements in grammar and syntax (3.92) and overall utility as a teaching tool (3.88). Also, the belief that ChatGPT helps students understand different writing styles scored (3.81).

Motivation levels among students while using ChatGPT received a score of (3.44), and positive feedback from students was noted at (3.27). A score of (3.25) indicated challenges such as the ease of incorporating ChatGPT into lesson plans, while support for differentiated instruction scored (3.16). Lastly, awareness of the limitations of using ChatGPT in writing instruction received the lowest mean score of (3.11), suggesting an area for further exploration and discussion among educators.

Table 3. The Challenges of Using ChatGPT in Writing Classes as Perceived by Saudi EFL Teachers.

S	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	I find it challenging to assess student work generated with the help of ChatGPT.	16	29	6	3	0	4.07	1.04
2	Students may over-rely on ChatGPT instead of developing their own writing skills.	15	25	8	4	2	3.87	1.01
3	ChatGPT sometimes provides inaccurate or misleading information in writing tasks.	17	31	4	2	0	4.16	1.14
4	I worry that ChatGPT may not align with the learning objectives of my writing curriculum.	21	23	8	2	0	4.16	1.12
5	ChatGPT may lead to a decrease in students' critical thinking and analytical skills.	18	21	5	7	3	3.81	1.15

Table 3. Cont.

S	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
6	I find it challenging to integrate ChatGPT seamlessly into my lesson plans.	14	17	6	13	4	3.44	0.93
7	I believe that relying on ChatGPT can hinder students' confidence in their writing abilities.	14	22	12	3	3	3.75	0.97
8	ChatGPT does not adequately support the diverse needs of my students in writing classes.	22	13	10	7	2	3.85	1.17
9	I find it difficult to monitor student engagement when using ChatGPT in writing tasks.	15	25	6	5	3	3.81	1.07
10	I believe that the use of ChatGPT can complicate my role as a writing instructor.	14	24	9	5	2	3.79	1.03
Overall							3.78	1.06

Table 3 illustrates that Saudi EFL teachers perceive several challenges associated with using ChatGPT in writing classes. The most significant challenges identified by the teachers include the concern that ChatGPT occasionally provides inaccurate or misleading information in writing tasks ($M = 4.16$) and that it may not align with the learning objectives of the writing curriculum ($M = 4.16$). Additionally, teachers expressed difficulties in assessing student work generated with the assistance of ChatGPT ($M = 4.07$). Other challenges noted include the potential for students to over-rely on ChatGPT rather than developing their writing skills ($M = 3.87$) and the perception that ChatGPT does not adequately support the diverse needs of students in writing classes ($M = 3.85$).

The responses emphasize other difficulties connected to using ChatGPT in writing instruction. The mean (3.81) indicates that educators believe that critical thinking and analytical skills will also suffer a potential decline. Likewise, the challenge of tracking students' engagement while writing with ChatGPT also scored (3.81), elucidating difficulty in giving active engagement and attention.

In addition, during these statements, teachers indicated that if students used ChatGPT, it might be challenging to write a teacher's score (3.79), which can affect instructional strategies and teachers' communication with students. Additionally, using ChatGPT may threaten these students' self-confidence in their writing skills, as demonstrated by a score (3.75). Lastly, finding a way to integrate ChatGPT into lesson plans effectively earns a score of (3.44), meaning educators struggle to weave this technology into their lessons effectively.

4. Discussion

Results indicate that Saudi EFL teachers recognize ChatGPT usage in writing classes as a big advantage in enhancing various components of the learning process. Most importantly, ChatGPT's ability to provide personalized learning experiences means that teachers will be able to utilize this technology to provide instruction that caters to the individual needs of their students. This aligns with previous studies that suggest personalized learning as an optimal learning structure to maximize language development skills, and technology is significantly used for this purpose^[25,30]. In addition, writing was a significant focus area for teachers with ChatGPT, an essential aspect for implementing integration effectively^[28,15]. A source of this comfort with the tool is the tool's ability to facilitate collaborative writing among students, which brings about interesting engagement on record. As our writing-based instruction supports student engagement and increases writing course outcomes, it makes good sense that ChatGPT serves as a tool that can help students^[16].

The findings also indicate that ChatGPT promotes creativity in student writing and provides constructive feedback, both critical aspects of effective writing instruction. Scholars have previously investigated the use of AI tools to encourage creativity. They concluded that it could help produce creative written content as it provides insights by presenting varied discussions and suggestions, which can aid creativity while writing^[24]. Furthermore, the supply of feedback is essential for student growth, as it assists learners in discovering where they need to improve and

improving their writing abilities^[18]. However, of course, some negative perceptions were raised about the possibility of plagiarism and the quality of the output based on the sources the model had been trained on, impacting the integrity of each office. This concern aligns with the results of another study regarding using AI tools in the classroom that found it essential for educators to address issues of academic dishonesty^[11]. Moreover, though teachers acknowledge that ChatGPT can aid in improving writing skills, its potential to substitute traditional teaching practices is met with skepticism. This aligns with a broader discourse within the literature around technology's role in education, wherein a consensus deems (at least at this stage of development) that AI should supplement human instruction, not replace it^[5].

The challenges Saudi EFL teachers face in using ChatGPT in writing classes, as determined by the results of this study, affect both the teaching processes and the learning outcomes significantly. One of the most pressing concerns is the fear that ChatGPT sometimes generates incorrect or misleading text for writing assignments. This is essential because students can form misconceptions while learning content, as Teng^[4] and Su^[29] demonstrated. Also, teachers have said ChatGPT may not even support the specific learning objectives of the writing curriculum. Such a contrast is significant in describing the alignment of instruction, which can limit the quality of teaching and prohibit learners from meeting learning objectives^[7]. These concerns are reinforced by previous research suggesting that the use of AI tools can occasionally have precisely the contrary effect when it comes to learning in language teaching^[25].

Beyond concerns related to accuracy and alignment, educators reported challenges in evaluating student work produced with ChatGPT's help. This challenge, confirmed by Alharthi^[28] and Li et al.^[30], is urgent because AI-generated content may fail to accurately capture a student's unique writing capabilities, making it difficult to assess progress and provide constructive feedback. Studies indicate that AI's incorporation into educational environments can be so seamless, its generative capacities so harmonizing, that it becomes evident for educators to measure authentic proficiency^[30].

Another primary concern is that students may over-rely on ChatGPT. Teng^[4] makes a similar finding, reporting

that teachers are concerned that this dependence could hinder students' ability to learn fundamental writing skills, resulting in a deficit of confidence regarding students' writing abilities. One problem with AI tools is that they reduce students' motivation for genuine writing. Research suggests that although AI tools help students learn, they also create dependencies that weaken both critical thinking and analytical skills^[11,32,7]. Such dependence may ultimately stifle students' self-efficacy development, which is required for independent writing.

The landscape is made more complex by concerns that students could lose critical thinking and analytical skills and challenges in monitoring how much students engage in writing activities using ChatGPT. According to Alqahtani^[15], the concern raised is that the use of AI tools could result in passive learning experiences, with students being less engaged in the process of writing. Such findings are consistent with the general literature suggesting that being actively involved in ongoing learning is essential for enhancing knowledge development in a particular context or domain^[24]. When learners are unengaged, their ability to critically analyze and process the materials presented to them will decrease, which, in turn, hoses the quality of writing they produce^[32].

Educators explained that using ChatGPT is challenging what it means to be a writing teacher, which is likely to work against their teaching practices and relationships with their students. As educators search for new models of technology integration that continue to foster student engagement and skill development, the adoption of AI into lesson plans creates additional hurdles^[4]. This complexity has resonated in the literature, which details that educators call for straightforward guidelines and training on integrating AI tools into their teaching practice^[16]. Without appropriate support, the technology can leave teachers ill-prepared to harness AI's advantages while minimizing its drawbacks^[7].

5. Limitations

One key limitation of this study is the relatively small sample size, restricted to 54 Saudi EFL teachers from a single institution—King Saud University. While the findings offer valuable insights into teacher perceptions of ChatGPT in EFL writing instruction, the limited scope may

affect the generalizability of the results. To enhance external validity, future research should consider expanding the sample to include a larger and more diverse group of teachers from multiple institutions across different regions in Saudi Arabia or internationally.

This study employed a purely quantitative, survey-based approach, which, while valuable for identifying broad trends in teacher perceptions, limits the depth of insight into participants' individual experiences and reasoning. We acknowledge that the absence of qualitative data such as interviews or open-ended responses restricts the interpretive richness of the findings. To address this, we recommend that future research adopt a mixed-methods design that combines quantitative surveys with qualitative methods—such as semi-structured interviews or focus groups—to gain a more nuanced understanding of teachers' attitudes, implementation strategies, and classroom experiences with AI tools like ChatGPT.

6. Conclusions & Recommendations

This study revealed the multifaceted roles of ChatGPT in Saudi EFL writing classrooms, indicating its potential roles in personalized learning, collaboration, and improved writing. But they see serious challenges that educators must deal with, especially regarding academic integrity issues and integrating technology into teaching. Although these chances delivered are useful for teaching writing in a classroom context using ChatGPT, it's fat in the concerns of the Saudi EFL teachers, who suggested that extreme caution is cautioned against introducing it into a pedagogical context. We will play a key role in reversing such practice failures before we adopt the educator-empowering potential of employing AI tools to enhance student learning within an environment conducive to writing effectively and independently. While we can use AI appropriately in a suitable classroom space, we must also integrate AI into instructional practices.

Nonetheless, given the nature of the challenges indicated and the results of using ChatGPT in Saudi EFL writing courses, several practical, useful, and actionable suggestions could be made to maximize its pros. Teachers could set standards for ChatGPT use in writing assignments. Well-designed guidelines will make it clear to students when they may use A.I. tools for brainstorming,

drafting, and peer review. However, they should also stress the dangers of “over-reliance” on chatbots and how independent writing and academic integrity count. Moreover, teachers need to be trained in professional development sessions to use ChatGPT in their teaching methodologies. That training should provide best practices for using generative AI tools, assessing AI-generated content, tips for keeping students engaged — and ensuring educators have the confidence and skills necessary to use technology well. Against a backdrop of anxiety over critical thinking, writing assignments must be crafted to ensure students analyze their ideas against what an A.I. produces or highlight their own decisions on how to write. That could help minimize the potential to develop too heavily a lean on AI.

Furthermore, we also need to devise ways to track students' engagement in writing tasks by ChatGPT. Regular check-ins, peer reviews, or reflective journals can assess students' engagement and decide if additional support is needed. Finally, collaborative learning environments where students work with each other as though doing a group-writing exercise using ChatGPT as a common resource will promote teamwork, ideation, and peer learning. Discussions of AI-generated text can inspire critical reflection and deepen students' understanding of the principles of good writing.

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Institutional Review Board Statement

Ethical review and approval were waived for this study due to its non-invasive nature; participants signed a written consent letter, were informed of their right to withdraw at any time, and no personal identifiers were collected. This study did not seek formal ethical approval from an institutional review board, as it involved no clinical procedures, personal health data, or vulnerable populations. However, moral principles were rigorously observed. All participants were provided with a written consent letter explaining the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. No personal identifiers were collected, ensuring complete anonymity and confidentiality. The data were used exclusively

for academic purposes and securely stored.

Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all participants through a signed consent letter outlining the study's purpose, anonymity, and their right to withdraw at any time.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. Data sharing is limited to ensure participant confidentiality and in accordance with ethical research standards.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest.

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