

EFL Students' Perception of Character AI as a Tool to Improve Their Writing Skills: A Qualitative Study

Fadhila¹, Farida Repelita Waty Br. Kembaren¹

¹State Islamic University of North Sumatra, Medan, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

Purpose – This article aims to explain students' perspectives toward Character AI and how Character AI helps them develop their writing skills and confidence in writing.

Method – This article employs a qualitative case study to gather data through questionnaires and interviews, aiming to understand the respondents' perspectives on the application.

Findings – The participants concluded that Character AI aids in writing skills by helping them learn new sentences, improve grammar, and understand context, ultimately boosting self-confidence. Survey results show that 33.3% found Character AI significantly contributed to their English sentence acquisition, while 66.7% experienced some linguistic benefits. In terms of grammatical improvement, 33.3% rated it highly effective, 44.4% noted moderate efficacy, and 22.2% reported minimal enhancement. Regarding writing confidence, 33.3% experienced a significant decline, 55.6% a moderate decrease, and 11.1% a marginal drop.

Research Implications – This study highlights the potential of artificial intelligence in education, particularly in enhancing students' writing skills. Through questionnaires and interviews, it was found that character AI significantly impacts students' ability to learn new sentences, correct grammar, and understand context, while also boosting their confidence in writing. The research utilized a quantitative methodology with a larger participant group to validate these findings. However, further studies are necessary to explore the real effects of character AI on students' writing, as this technology is still new to them.

 OPEN ACCESS

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: 13-03-2025

Revised: 14-04-2025

Accepted: 16-04-2025

KEYWORDS

character ai, efl students, language acquisition, writing improvement, qualitative study

Corresponding Author:

Fadhila

State Islamic University of North Sumatra, Medan, Indonesia

Email: fadhila0304212093@uinsu.ac.id

Introduction

One of the important skills in English, or even learning a language in general, is writing. Writing skills refer to the ability to express oneself effectively and concisely (Hyland, 2015). A skilled writer is someone who can communicate their message clearly to their audience, avoiding unnecessary embellishments and ensuring that the content is easily understood (Bezbaruah, 2025). These skills extend beyond merely putting words on paper; the writing process involves crucial abilities such as research, planning and outlining, editing, revising, spelling, punctuation, and organization (Faraj, 2015). So, the ability to create a message is a way to prove that the learner understands rather than just remembering the form of a language.

Here, Character Ai, as a conversational-based application, gives learners access to depend on their understanding of how to use certain terms in English that are understood and used by the native speakers, rather than just literally translating the sentence from the mother tongue into English. This application serves as a valuable resource for English learners seeking to enhance their language skills through interactive chat and voice call features with an AI bot. This engagement provides users with the opportunity to practice both their writing and speaking abilities. The bot offers immediate feedback, enabling learners to identify and correct writing errors effectively. Character AI presents a modern alternative for individuals who wish to improve their English skills independently, without the necessity of traditional courses or instructors. Furthermore, this tool allows users to practice at their convenience, accommodating their learning schedules and preferences. The incorporation of character AI can significantly aid adults in developing their English language proficiency. This study aims to explore the experiences of users utilizing AI text-based tools as a means of enhancing their English language skills. By gaining insights into user experiences, this research aspires to contribute to the creation of more effective language learning applications in the future.

Recent research has highlighted the role of AI in the field of education, indicating that learning with technologies such as artificial intelligence can transform instructional approaches in various (Chen et al., 2021; Holmes et al., 2022; Hwang et al., 2020; Kohnke et al., 2023; Ouyang & Jiao, 2021). As noted by (Alaqlobi et al., 2024) in their study AI tools like ChatGPT can facilitate learning in connected linguistics through the data they gather. Other studies by (Jennings, 2019) demonstrate how AI has become an integral part of human life and is contributing positively to education. In their work, (Bridgeman & Giraldez-Hayes, 2024) discuss the use of AI-enhanced video feedback for interactive practice in teacher development, emphasizing that participants generally found it beneficial to receive insights alongside the videos. These insights, akin to artificial intelligence feedback, can help both students and in-service teachers improve their skills. Overall, these articles illustrate that AI-driven learning enables students to pursue education in a manner that aligns with their learning styles, despite potential concerns

regarding the misuse of such technology. Duong & Chen (2025) in their research also found that A chatbot with artificial intelligence improved EFL students' writing results and was rated as useful, with different usage patterns for higher and lower proficiency levels, which opens the possibility that Chatarcet Ai as a new Artificial intelligence based application can also help in the development of students writing skills, especially by giving more exposure for ELF students in developing their English sentence knowledge throughout written expression.

This research aims to explore the impact of the character Ai, particularly how this application assists individuals, specifically EFL students, in building their confidence and indirectly improving their sentence structure for clearer global understanding. With this objective in mind, we can conclude that the research offers valuable insights into how various applications can enhance our skills, even when they are not explicitly designed for educational purposes. By employing qualitative experimental studies, this research provides a deeper understanding of participants' experiences, although the results may not be widely generalizable due to the limited number of suitable participants in the researcher's area. Importantly, this study should inspire further research into other AI tools that could enhance students' English language skills.

Methods

This study employed a qualitative case study methodology to investigate non-native English speakers' perceptions regarding the use of Character AI in their language acquisition, with a specific focus on writing skills. The theoretical framework guiding this research is rooted in social constructivism, which emphasizes the construction of meaning through individual experiences and interactions with both technology and peers. The case study approach offers valuable insights into participants' perspectives (Yin, 2014), making it particularly suitable for examining students' interpretations and engagement with Character AI in the context of language learning. The participants in this research comprised 10 college students who engaged with Character AI for a minimum duration of 10 to 15 minutes. They were granted the opportunity to explore various features of the application before completing a questionnaire via Google Forms. This questionnaire was designed to record participants' initials (to ensure anonymity), academic status, specific features utilized, and their responses regarding the app's utility.

Data collection was operationalized through a Google Form containing nine questions that addressed multiple aspects of the participant's interactions with the application. Key inquiries focused on the app's effectiveness in facilitating English sentence construction and grammar. Additionally, participants provided evaluations on whether the app enhanced their writing confidence. Among the participants, five individuals who extensively utilized Character AI were further interviewed to gather their broader opinions about the application.

For data analysis, the researcher applied thematic analysis, which is regarded as a foundational method for all qualitative analyses (Clarke & Braun, 2016). As noted by Braun and Clarke (2006), "thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data," making it particularly suitable for examining the perceptions of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students who utilized Character AI and assessing the benefits or limitations of the application in enhancing their writing skills.

Result

In the questionnaire, the researcher asked 5 questions regarding the impression from students of character AI as tools for improving their writing skills. The data gathered is as below:

Table 1. Students' perspective about how character AI helps develop their writing skills

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral
Character AI helped me learn English sentences	33.3 %	66,7%	None
Character AI helped me fix my grammar	33,3%	44,4%	22,2%
Character AI busts my writing confidence	33,3%	55,6%	11,1%
I recommend Character AI as an application/website that helps me train my English skills	55,6%	33,3%	11,1%

To explore the benefits and potential limitations of character AI, a questionnaire was administered to assess students' perceptions of character AI. This questionnaire included a total of 9 questions, with 5 specifically aimed at examining its role as a support tool for English language learning among university students in the English department, who are learning English as a foreign language through character AI. Besides that, the researcher did interviews to see further perspectives by the students regarding the character AI as explained below.

1. Character AI improves Students' writing skills

The survey results indicate that a significant majority of respondents (66.7%) believe that Character AI has effectively aided their learning of English sentences, while an additional 33.3% express strong agreement with this assessment. This perspective is further corroborated by the insights gathered during the interviews, in which participants conveyed their positive experiences. *"Character AI presents significant potential for language acquisition, as it enables learners to engage in conversational practice across diverse contexts. This interactive approach facilitates the development of linguistic skills by simulating real-life scenarios, thereby enhancing the learning experience."*

Then, in the context of grammar enhancement, 44.4% of participants reported that Character AI contributed positively to their grammar skills, with an additional 33.3% expressing strong agreement with this assessment. Meanwhile, 22.2% of participants

remained neutral on the matter. The responses from the fifth and third participants further support these findings. *"The application plays a significant role in enhancing my writing abilities, as it can exert a beneficial impact contingent upon how it is utilized."*

Furthermore, participants, as revealed in the interviews, indicated that Character Ai facilitated their comprehension of sentence context, as noted by Participant 2 during the interview process. *"This application enhances writing skills and promotes a deeper understanding of language contexts through interactive engagement."*

2. Character AI increases students' self-confidence

In the questionnaire, it was found that 55.6% of respondents believe that Character AI adversely affects their writing confidence, while an additional 33.3% express strong agreement with the notion that Character AI boosts their confidence in writing. This data shows how character AI can be used to enhance students' confidence in their writing skills. As stated by some of the participants during the interview. *"With pressure learning process, I like how Character AI responds to what I write, as if I'm texting with someone, learning while enjoying the story I made with the character I like."* Also, *"I feel more confident after I get complimented by the character I chat with there."*

Despite the noted improvements in specific aspects of their writing and an increase in confidence, participants' primary concern regarding Character AI is its rigidity and lack of human-like qualities in responses, a sentiment echoed by many respondents. *"The feedback provided by the bots tends to lack a human touch, resulting in responses that feel rigid."* State one of the Participants regarding the limitation of Character AI during the interview.

Discussion

As noted in the introduction, Character AI, as a non-educational tool, is anticipated to assist students and individuals learning English as a foreign language in expanding their vocabulary and improving their grammar. This is particularly beneficial due to the personalized learning experience it offers, especially through the variety of characters users can interact with. However, there are limitations to consider, such as the disparity in the vocabulary levels used by the bot and occasional responses that may seem nonsensical. Therefore, it is crucial to be selective and creative when utilizing AI, as its effectiveness is diminished without clear ideas of what to discuss. Nonetheless, based on its common usage around the world, AI can be a valuable resource for story writers and fan fiction creators, helping them generate ideas for their next projects. It was in line with the research done before that state. In qualitative evaluations, students commented that AI-powered tools made their learning experiences more dynamic and less repetitive. Educators saw that students were more inclined to finish assignments on time and participate actively in discussions, thanks to AI-powered platforms that could propose materials based on individuals' preferences and strengths. However, a few students

reported feeling overwhelmed by the volume of adaptive material recommendations, highlighting the necessity for a balance in AI interventions to avoid information overload (Silva & et al., 2024).

The paper emphasizes the advantages of incorporating AI into grammar instruction, particularly in terms of enhancing student learning, streamlining teaching processes, and making the learning experience more dynamic and engaging. Ultimately, it concludes that AI-driven tools significantly enhance education by rendering it more innovative, effective, and enjoyable for both teachers and students, even though there are some limitations, such as restricted access to certain applications without a subscription (Kuznietsova & et al., 2024). It is also found in this article that Character AI is an artificial intelligence-based application that helps students with learning or fixing their grammar according to the participants' experience. Another article that talks about the usage of artificial intelligence in English grammar, as stated by (Kucuk, 2024) in his articles, states that the findings in the articles are divided into three main areas: pre-test, post-test, and interviews. Experiments were conducted to see how students' grammar learning can be improved by using artificial intelligence tools. The differences between traditional teacher-led classes and those that utilize artificial intelligence were also intended to be shown. It is suggested by the results that the addition of artificial intelligence technologies to grammar teaching helps both teachers and students.

Compared to other articles on artificial intelligence, this analysis reveals several commonalities that highlight the benefits of AI in educational contexts, despite its diverse applications beyond education. However, notable differences are also evident, particularly concerning the user-friendliness of various AI tools. Character AI, for instance, proves advantageous for users seeking to build confidence and understand the context of certain word usage. The conversations or texts generated by the AI are tailored to the user's inputs and can be refined to enhance the responses.

The review highlights that the use of AI and technology tools can enhance students' speed and accuracy in academic writing in English. Integrating technology with students' writing skills is essential for effective learning. These tools streamline activities and provide valuable insights that improve academic writing abilities. By leveraging AI and technology, students can produce academic English writing that benefits society while simultaneously fostering self-awareness, self-directed learning, and confidence. Losi., et al (2024) in his study illustrates how students who utilize AI in their writing develop a better understanding of sentence structure, benefit from AI's contextual guidance, and experience accelerated writing processes.

Michos et al., (2020) in their book published by Springer, highlight that Conversational Agents (CAs) in computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL) have demonstrated positive effects on student performance and learning outcomes. However,

there has been limited research exploring the relationship between the configuration of CA behavior, the type of learning task, and student behavior in real educational settings. In this paper, we outline a pedagogical design framework for CAs in collaborative learning, encompassing three dimensions: task design, domain model, and agent intervention techniques. This framework supports the findings of the article that specific technologies, such as artificial intelligence-like—like character AI, can enhance writing skills when utilized effectively. In their recent article, (Qiao & Zhao, 2023) examined the impact of centered coaching on self-confidence. The findings indicated that participants who received centered coaching demonstrated significant improvements in their second language communication skills compared to the control group. Additionally, the experimental group exhibited a higher level of self-control. Those articles strengthen the point of perception of those who use Chatbot AI that usage of Chatbot in general and Character AI specifically in this case can have a significant impact and improvement in writing skills and self-confidence, even with certain limitations, because this application is still in development and could be better in the future.

Conclusion

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly being utilized to enhance teaching and learning by creating personalized educational experiences, with that in mind researchers want to discover the point of view of college students regarding the usage of certain AI tools for students' Writing skills, and in this case, researcher uses an application that quite new, which is character ai. This study aimed to investigate how AI tools can assist adults in improving their English language skills. Adopting a case study approach, the research sought to identify common patterns and evaluate the premise that AI can be beneficial for learning, particularly given the significant role technology plays in our lives. The focus was on how Character AI is perceived by students learning English as a foreign language (EFL students). The findings highlight two main aspects of students' perspectives on Character AI: how it has improved their writing skills by enhancing their understanding of sentence structure, context, and grammatical rules, and how it has bolstered their self-confidence.

Overall, the study indicates a positive perception of the utilization of non-educational AI within the educational sphere. AI is useful for education, as shown in this research. Character AI develops students' writing skills, especially in understanding the context of sentences, the correct use of grammar, and learning new terms in English. Further research is required to deepen the perspective about the benefits of Character AI and other types of AI, especially in education, and by actually paying attention to the usage of the technology to provide fun and creative ways of learning that are effective and efficient. It is anticipated that by the conclusion of this research, we will have established how certain applications—despite being primarily for entertainment—can effectively

improve English writing skills. Limitations of time and participants are the main disadvantages of this research; further research on the actual effect can be done related to the usage of Character AI rather than just talking about students' perspectives on the usage of this type of artificial intelligence-based application.

References

- Alaqlobi, O., Alduais, A., Qasem, F., & Alasmari, M. (2024). Artificial intelligence in applied (linguistics): A content analysis and future prospects. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, *11*(1), 2382422.
- Bezbaruah, R. (2025). *Effective Writing and Style: An Introduction*. Chyren Publication.
- Bridgeman, J., & Giraldez-Hayes, A. (2024). Utilizing artificial intelligence-enhanced video input for intelligent practice in teacher development: Benefits and potential downsides. *Journal of Teacher Education and Development*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00218863241283919>
- Chen, X., Zou, D., Xie, H., & Cheng, G. (2021). Twenty years of personalized language learning. *Educational Technology & Society*, *24*(1), 205–222.
- Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2016). *Thematic analysis*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2016.1262613>
- Duong, T.-N.-A., & Chen, H. (2025). *An AI Chatbot for EFL Writing: Students' Usage Tendencies, Writing Performance, and Perceptions*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07356331241312363>
- Faraj, A. K. A. (2015). Scaffolding EFL Students' Writing through the Writing Process Approach. *Journal of Education and Practice*, *6*(13), 131–141.
- Holmes, W., Porayska-Pomsta, K., Holstein, K., Sutherland, E., Baker, T., Shum, S. B., & Koedinger, K. R. (2022). Ethics of AI in education: Towards a community-wide framework. *International Journal of Artificial Intelligence in Education*, 1–23.
- Hwang, G. J., Xie, H., Wah, B. W., & Gašević, D. (2020). Vision, challenges, roles and research issues of Artificial Intelligence in Education. *Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence*, *1*, 100001.
- Hyland, K. (2015). *Teaching and researching writing*. Routledge.
- Jennings, C. (2019). *Artificial Intelligence: Rise of the lightspeed learners*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Kohnke, L., Moorhouse, B. L., & Zou, D. (2023). ChatGPT for language teaching and learning. *Relc Journal*, *54*(2), 537–550.
- Kucuk, T. (2024). AI Integrated Grammar Teaching in Language Preparatory School. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies*, *11*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.23918/ijsses.v11i1p1>
- Kuznietsova & et al. (2024). Integration of AI tools in teaching grammar. *Humanities*

Science Current Issues, 2, 225–230. <https://doi.org/10.24919/2308-4863/75-2-35>

Losi, R. V. & et al. (2024). Using Artificial Intelligence (ai) to Improve EFL Students' Writing Skill. *IJEAL (International Journal of English and Applied Linguistics)*.

Michos, K. & et al. (2020). *Design of Conversational Agents for CSCL: Comparing Two Types of Agent Intervention Strategies in a University Classroom*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57717-9_16

Ouyang, F., & Jiao, P. (2021). Artificial intelligence in education: The three paradigms. *Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence*, 2, 100020.

Qiao, H., & Zhao, A. (2023). Artificial intelligence-based language learning: Illuminating the impact on speaking skills and self-regulation in Chinese EFL context. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1255594>

Silva, G. & et al. (2024). The Impact of AI on Personalized Learning and Educational Analytics. *International Transactions on Education Technology (ITEE)*, 3(1), 36–46. <https://doi.org/10.33050/itee.v3i1.669>

Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.