

Integrating AI: Challenges and Opportunities in Teaching English Writing Skills

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Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) technology has the potential to provide personalized instruction for students and elevate administrative tasks for teachers. AI-driven tools can improve accessibility for students learning English as a second language (L2) or foreign language helping educators consider their use in teaching. This research study explores AI-enabled technology usage, challenges, and opportunities in the Arab World. Study data is gathered from semi-structured, in-depth, face-to-face, qualitative interviews with English language instructors at the University of Ha'il, KSA and Ajman University, UAE. Theoretically supported by sociocultural theory, results provided strong insights into AI technology in teaching. Results revealed that key challenges included plagiarism and the impact on students' skills development, highlighting concerns about academic integrity and overreliance on AI tools like ChatGPT. Despite AI's potential to improve learning experiences by offering personalized support, participants emphasize the need for balanced integration and ethical use. Effective implementation needs comprehensive training for educators and maintaining a balance between AI tools and traditional teaching approaches to preserve critical thinking and creativity while using AI's advantages. Thus, considering the findings, this study concludes that AI should supplement traditional teaching methods, ensuring that it enhances rather than replaces the crucial human aspects of education. Finally, study recommendations and implications are discussed accordingly.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, AI in Education, ChatGPT, Education, English Writing, Sociocultural Theory

1. Introduction

Integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies has the prospect of significantly transforming higher education in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. In their study Alotaibi and Alshehri (2023) witnessed that AI technology is rapidly adopted in the Arab World. For example, Saudi Arabian higher education institutions are paying more focus to AI technology, with the potential to address different educational challenges and improve progress towards goals specified under Saudi Arabia 2030's Vision for Higher Education. The United Arab Emirates, on the other hand, is also focusing on integrating AI technology at university level (Farhi et al., 2022). However, educational institutions also need digital skills and expertise. AI-enabled tools like ChatGPT are widely incorporated in Saudi higher education today. According to Faisal (2024), AI's ability to process large amounts of data and generate intelligent insights presents an opportunity to improve teaching methods, personalize learning experiences, and optimize institutional operations. Developed by OpenAI, ChatGPT exemplifies AI's potential in understanding and generating human-like text. Accordingly, Chinonso et al. (2023) stated that the presence of skilled teachers is important to ensure the success of the teaching process. However, the presence of AI is changing the role of teachers. AI mainly uses advanced analytics, machine learning, and advanced analytics to evaluate individual progress. As AI solutions are becoming more sophisticated, they help determine the gaps in teaching and learning, further enhancing educational effectiveness. As digitalization continues to reshape education globally, the higher education system in the Arab World can rely on AI technologies to offer innovative and personalized learning experiences. Integrating tools like ChatGPT can empower teachers with new teaching, learning, and research approaches. The promise of AI in higher education lies in its ability to improve teaching strategies, design new approaches, and streamline the educational process for learners in the best possible manner (Alqarni, 2015; Shegay & Krivosheeva, 2020). Mohite (2014) further argued that AI can improve efficiency, personalization, and streamline tasks, helping teachers to focus on providing understanding and adaptation that include qualities distinct to humans that machines cannot replicate.

The use of AI-enabled ChatGPT technology in higher education institutions in the Arab World is especially important for L2 learning method. As Kohnke et al. (2023) stated, ChatGPT has gained significant attention among language teachers due to their ability to engage learners in instant and realistic interactions in their target language. Providing rich input is critical for effective language teaching and

instruction. In this regard, ChatGPT provides linguistic input to its users. They can help teachers design approaches that may help learners improve their language learning skills by providing tailored teaching strategies to improve the traditional approaches (Meniado, 2023).

On the other hand, despite its potential to revolutionize teaching, assessment, and work productivity, ChatGPT faces several challenges. Since its launch in November 2022, the academic community has raised concerns about its impact on academic integrity, data privacy and security, information accuracy, soft skills development, intellectual property rights, and economic sustainability (Yan, 2023). There is a fear that over-reliance on AI might indeed affect personal growth, skills, and intellectual development over time among teachers, so the complex process of reading, writing, and revising could be overly simplified to text and relation and post-editing, potentially reducing language competencies and writing skills besides AI might perpetuate violence and stereotypes, generating unwanted discriminatory tax related to racism, violence, and other considerable phenomena (Barrot, 2023). Considering the growing importance of ChatGPT, its prospects and challenges, this paper aims to explore the opportunities and concerns of teaching English writing among the instructors at two Public Sector Universities in the Arab World, Ha'il University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Ajman University, United Arab Emirates. Specifically, it strives to identify the particular challenges teachers face, understand the impact of AI tools on teaching methodologies, and gather insights into how these tools can improve teaching effectiveness. By focusing on teachers' perspectives, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the practical implications of incorporating AI into English writing instruction.

Notably, this research is based on a significant empirical gap. During COVID-19, the reliance on digital technology for educational purposes significantly increased (Abed et al., 2022; Alshaikh et al., 2021; Alsmadi et al., 2021); this indicates a clear difference regarding technology usage for educational purposes before and after the pandemic. The relevant technological gap enhances the significance of this research in the post-pandemic era. Also, the significance of this research lies in its potential to inform educators, policymakers, and the academic community about AI's practical implications and applications in higher education. This study provides practical insights for developing effective teaching strategies integrating AI and enhancing educational outcomes. Furthermore, the findings can contribute to developing training programs for educators, ensuring they are well-equipped to use AI tools to their full potential, eventually leading to a more effective and innovative educational environment at Ha'il University, Ajman University, and beyond.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Impact of ChatGPT on the English Teaching Process

ChatGPT plays a critical role in teaching English by assisting teachers with different tasks. Existing literature shows that the relevant technology helps create lesson plans and design activities to serve the students' individual needs, styles, and proficiency levels. Also, ChatGPT generates new lesson ideas on a broad range of topics, ensuring that lessons are educational, meet the learning goals, and are engaging (Meniado, 2023). A study by Mohamed (2024) also shows that ChatGPT supports personalized teaching and learning by providing immediate responses to questions and provides designed feedback. This personalized support helps ensure students have enhanced language use and increases their motivation to learn writing. According to Thanh and Loan (2024), ChatGPT helps teachers check grammar mistakes, provide meanings for difficult words, and recommend useful reading sources to help students construct ideas. It can produce dialogue scripts, short stories, and sample sentences suitable for learners' needs. ChatGPT creates passages consistent with the learners' proficiency levels for testing or reading practice purposes. ChatGPT also works as a teaching assistant, virtual writing tutor, or virtual tutor, facilitating the teaching-learning process inside and outside the classroom. It helps teachers find and develop appropriate teaching material, saving time and effort and further making their work burdensome (Thanh & Loan, 2024). Thus, existing studies (Alshaikh et al., 2021; Juan et al., 2023; Mukarto, 2023) support English language teachers in effectively performing their key roles and responsibilities.

Kohnke et al. (2023) further witnessed the positive, constructive impacts of ChatGPT on the English language teaching process using systematic review. Results suggested that ChatGPT can be a valuable tool for language teaching, providing practical uses of learning activities for teachers. As argued, teachers can improve the language teaching process by stimulating real communicative interactions. It can identify the contextual meaning of words, correct and explain language mistakes, generate texts in different genres, help create quizzes, annotate text, and provide dictionary definitions, translations, and example sentences. As noted by Rane (2023), ChatGPT offers several benefits as it provides teachers with an efficient way to generate diverse content, including essay prompts and problem sets, saving significant time and effort. The relevant technology can also help design assignments to meet the distinct needs of each student, promoting personalized learning experiences. Besides, its ability to analyze student performance data helps educators identify areas where students may struggle, enabling them to adjust their teaching strategies accordingly (Barton et al., 2023).

2.2 Ethical Concerns Regarding ChatGPT Use

According to Almarzouqi et al. (2024), ChatGPT can work as a virtual tutor, providing tailored answers to students' queries. However, not all teachers share this optimism and highlight some limitations and challenges regarding ChatGPT use. This raises a significant concern among researchers about the impact of Artificial Intelligence-enabled technology on the teaching process. As a result, the research emphasizes that teachers should be careful about the primary limitations and drawbacks of integrating ChatGPT into the teaching process to ensure its appropriate use. In this context, a study by Stepanechko and Kozub (2023) examined the challenges and implications of ChatGPT use across higher education in Ukraine. Employing the mixed-method approach revealed that teachers have significant concerns regarding ChatGPT use to hinder essential skills among the educational sector workers. Yet, despite these challenges, it is important to integrate emerging technologies in teaching, reinforcing a re-evaluation of teaching approaches to use ChatGPT's benefits effectively. In

their quantitative study, Kohnke et al. (2023) highlighted both positive and negative aspects of ChatGPT use concerning English language teaching. These concerns may involve ethical issues, plagiarism, fake sources, wrong use of references, and their potential effects on assessment results. These results implied that language teachers should have advanced digital skills to effectively use digital technologies while managing their possible challenges and shortcomings. Existing literature on teaching primarily addresses the harms of misinformation and human-computer interaction issues, especially in incorporating AI into university teaching and assessments. A study by Latif et al. (2023) emphasizes the risk of AI perpetuating social bias related to gender nationality derived from its training data, which could negatively impact the fairness and integrity of educational applications. This highlights the need for caution in relying on AI for evaluations, as it may not accurately reflect student abilities. The integration of AI in education also necessitates a re-evaluation of the educator-student relationship. Concerns about possible over-reliance on AI-generated content suggest that it might harm the traditional roles of teachers, possibly detracting from their unique contribution to creating engaging and innovative lesson plans and learning activities. Therefore, a balanced approach to integrating AI in teaching is important to ensure it complements rather than diminishes the value of human instruction. For example, ChatGPT supports tailored learning experiences and improves student support, language tutoring, content generation, and career guidance (Farhi et al., 2022). However, developing a new program or providing personalized teaching requires universities to collect and process extensive student data, often without explicit consent. This raises concerns about data privacy and security, highlighting the need for stringent data protection measures to protect sensitive information from unauthorized use (Busch et al., 2023; Stahl & Eke, 2024).

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study is supported by sociocultural theory, explaining how social and cultural contexts shape an individual's behaviours and perceptions. The relevant theory is usually applied in education to examine and understand the effects of social and cultural elements on human development and actions (Daneshfar & Moharami, 2018). When applied to education, sociocultural theory helps explain a certain subject's characteristics and prospects, enhancing attention and consideration. In the current research study, the relevant subject is ChatGPT use for English language teachers in Ha'il University and Ajman University. Sociocultural theory provides a strong framework for understanding the integration of ChatGPT in teaching English writing skills at Ha'il University and Ajman University by highlighting the significant role of social and cultural contexts in shaping educational practices. Notably, the relevant theory proposes that learning is inherently a social process deeply influenced by interactions within a cultural environment (Marginson et al., 2017). Consistent with the current research, sociocultural theory supports exploring the integration of ChatGPT for English language teaching among teachers at Ha'il University and Ajman University, along with their educational and cultural settings. By analyzing the social interaction between teachers and learners, and the broader cultural influences of the university and the Arab World, the relevant theory provides a prospect for comprehensively studying how certain factors affect the adoption and effectiveness of AI in teaching English writing skills.

Furthermore, sociocultural theory's concept of cultural tools and mediation (Baskara, 2023) is relevant to the current study. AI-enabled tools like ChatGPT can be deemed cultural artefacts mediating the teaching process. This theory helps explore how teachers use this AI tool to improve their instructional approaches and support the student learning process. By focusing on the zone of proximal development (ZPD), this research can provide further insights and recommendations regarding how the ChatGPT provides scaffolding that helps students enhance their writing skills. Therefore, sociocultural theory supports the current study by providing in-depth details to understand the complex process and link between social interactions, cultural contexts, and the use of AI in English language teaching (Hatmanto & Sari, 2023).

3. Research Methodology

This research uses a qualitative research design, aimed at exploring the experiences, perceptions, and behaviors of English language teachers at the University of Ha'il in Saudi Arabia. Qualitative research is suitable for addressing "how" and "why" questions, allowing for an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study, as noted by Creswell et al. (2007). This approach enables a comprehensive exploration of the opportunities and challenges related to AI-enabled teaching, specifically focusing on the use of ChatGPT in English language instruction.

3.1 Data Collection Approaches

Data was collected through semi-structured, face-to-face interviews, which allowed for flexibility in responses while ensuring consistency across core topics. The data collection period spanned from May 23rd, 2024, to July 21st, 2024. A qualitative interview protocol guide was designed to facilitate the interviews, covering various aspects of ChatGPT usage in English language teaching. The guide consisted of two sections: the first section gathered demographic details (i.e., name, age, gender, and qualifications), while the second section included five main questions addressing participants' perspectives on ChatGPT's use, impact, prospects, challenges, and recommendations for effective integration. The interviews were conducted with English language instructors at the undergraduate level and were audio-recorded for accuracy. Table one provides an overview of the interview protocol guide used in the current study.

Table 1. Interview Protocol Guide

Serial No.	Questions
1.	What are the challenges faced by teachers in teaching English writing skills?
2.	What are the impacts of AI tools on the teaching process?
3.	In your opinion, what are the ethical concerns regarding AI use in the teaching process?
4.	How can AI improve the current teaching approaches?
5.	What do you recommend regarding AI use in the teaching process?

3.2 Population and Sampling

The population for this research consists of English language instructors currently teaching at Ha'il University in Saudi Arabia and Ajman University in the United Arab Emirates. According to recent data, the Department of English at Ha'il University has over a hundred faculty members, while the Languages and Culture Department at Ajman University has nine faculty members. Given the research focus and feasibility considerations, a purposive sampling approach was selected to select participants who have direct experience and knowledge of teaching English within these specific educational contexts. A sample size of 10 participants was determined to be appropriate, with five instructors from each institution. This choice aligns with Bekele and Ago's (2022) guideline suggesting 5 to 25 participants for qualitative studies, as well as Creswell's (2018) recommendation of 10 to 50 participants for in-depth qualitative research.

The sample includes a diverse group of instructors with varying years of teaching experience and backgrounds, allowing for a more comprehensive exploration of AI usage, challenges, and opportunities in English language instruction. Each participant consented to participate in a 35- to 40-minute interview, during which they shared their insights on the integration of AI in language teaching. Data collection was conducted through semi-structured, face-to-face interviews, which allowed for in-depth discussions guided by open-ended questions. These interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed thematically. The thematic analysis involved coding the data, identifying patterns, and organizing themes to address the study's research questions. Notably, ethical considerations were strictly followed, with informed consent obtained from each participant. Data confidentiality and privacy were maintained throughout the research process to protect participants' identities and ensure ethical integrity.

3.3 Data Analysis Approach

The study employed thematic analysis to identify and interpret patterns within the data. Thematic analysis, as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), involves a systematic approach comprising familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, and defining and naming themes. This process was conducted to aid in the organization and coding of data. First, the researchers familiarized themselves with the data through repeated readings of transcripts. Next, coding was conducted to highlight significant statements and phrases, followed by the organization of codes into broader themes, reflecting the key insights shared by participants regarding AI usage in teaching. The themes were then validated through cross-checking to ensure accuracy and consistency (Tomaszewski et al., 2020).

4. Data Analysis and Results

The data analysis in current studies comprises two stages. First, the personal details of the participants are enlisted to determine their affiliations, age, gender, and qualifications. Names of the participants are further kept confidential as a primary research ethic. Instead, they are identified and represented with their serial numbers. The participants' ages range from 30 to 62 years, while most of the participants are females (7). Finally, five respondents from Ajman University and Ha'il University have a doctorate (PhD), while the other five have a master's degree (MA). Table 2 represents the demographics of study participants.

Table 2. Participants' Demographics

Participant Code	Age (in years)	Gender	Qualification
Participant 1	62	Female	MA
Participant 2	38	Female	MA
Participant 3	52	Male	PhD
Participant 4	38	Female	MA
Participant 5	60	Female	MA
Participant 6	45	Female	MA
Participant 7	50	Male	PhD
Participant 8	43	Female	PhD
Participant 9	47	Female	PhD
Participant 10	42	Male	PhD

4.1 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis in the current research further allowed the determination of the participants' prevalent themes and responses. Table 3 provides an overview of the themes and codes generated from the gathered data.

Table 3. Themes and Codes

Serial No.	Questions	Themes	Codes
1.	What are the challenges faced by teachers in teaching English writing skills?	Plagiarism and academic integrity	C1
2.	What are the impacts of AI tools on the teaching process?	Students' skills development	C2
3.	In your opinion, what are the ethical concerns regarding AI use in the teaching process?	Enhanced learning experience	C1
4.	How can AI improve the current teaching approaches?	Dependency and motivation	C2
5.	What do you recommend regarding AI use in the teaching process?	Data privacy and security	C1
		Professional training	C2
		Professionalization and efficiency	C1
		Curriculum development	C2
		Ethical use and training	C1
		Balanced integration	C2

1. The challenges faced by teachers in teaching English writing skills.

The first study question aims to explore the participants' opinions about the potential challenges faced by teachers in teaching English writing skills among their respective faculty. Data gathered from the first question further reveal the acquisition of prominent themes, including plagiarism, academic integrity, and students' skills development, as primary concerns among the participants.

Theme 1. Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

The first theme generated from the gathered data indicated the participants' concerns about plagiarism and academic integrity. According to Shiri (2023), the emergence of AI has sparked significant concerns about academic integrity among the educational and academic community. Universities are now reconsidering how to design assessments, exams, and tests to prevent plagiarism, given AI's capability to generate text for various tasks and projects, which could lead to academic dishonesty. Key issues include the potential misuse of charge CPT for writing, term projects, and scholarly articles, which might compromise academic and research standards. Also, academics are growing concerned about the potential adverse effects of AI tools like ChatGPT on students' critical thinking, learning experiences, research skills, and creativity. In the relevant context, the current study participants highlighted plagiarism and academic integrity as looming issues regarding ChatGPT usage. For example, participant 1 from Ajman University argued that.

"With the advent of AI tools like ChatGPT, there is a growing concern about plagiarism. Students may use these tools to generate essays and assignments, making it difficult for teachers to assess the originality of their work. This undermines academic integrity and hinders the development of students' thinking and writing skills. We need more sophisticated plagiarism detection software to counter this issue."

Consistent with Participant 2, participant 7 from Ha'il University opined that

"Academic integrity is a significant challenge in the age of AI. The ease of access AI-generated content tempts students to submit work that is not their own. As educators, we have to be vigilant and educate our students about the significance of originality and honesty in their academic pursuits. Furthermore, institutions need to implement strict policies and use advanced tools to detect and deter plagiarism effectively."

Overall, these responses show plagiarism and academic integrity as major concerns for the teachers, necessitating a need for the implementation of effective measures to counter and educate students about the ChatGPT use in Ajman University and Ha'il University.

Theme 2. Students Skill Development

Yang (2023) stated that the use of AI technology in education can negatively affect additional English teaching and learning activities. Students might prefer online learning resources and self-learning tools over traditional face-to-face instruction. Besides, advancements in machine translation technology could lead to a decline in students language expression and grammar skills. Consequently, it is essential to thoroughly address the negative effect of AI on English teaching to understand its specific impact and devise appropriate strategies. In the relevant context, the second theme generated from the question one indicated a growing concern about students' skill development regarding ChatGPT use. The study participants review the dichotomous nature of Chat GPT use for academic purposes. According to participant four from Ajman university

"AI tools can be a double-edged sword when it comes to students' skill development. On the one hand, they provide personalized feedback and instant help, which can support the learning process. On the other hand, there's a risk that students might rely too much on these tools, hindering their ability to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills independently. It is crucial to find a balance where AI helps learning without replacing the students' own efforts."

Respondent 7 from Ha'il University argued that.

"The integration of AI in education has raised concerns about its impacts on student skill development. While AI can help in understanding complex topics and provide additional practices to both teachers and students, there's a fear that overreliance may result in not fully developing essential skills like writing, analysis, and research. Also, teachers can have a bulk of information that might not be accurate and misleading, that further necessitates the effective and positive use of AI in teaching process.

However, Alqahtani et al. (2022) argued that ChatGPT use in academia could redirect the focus of education towards fostering critical thinking and exploring important questions. Since it can summarize arguments, knowledge, and concepts, there is significant potential for

it to assist with formative assessments, especially in scenarios where teachers have limited time.

2. *The impacts of AI tools on the teaching process.*

The second question aimed to explore the opinions about perceived impacts of AI tools on the teaching process. The study participants indicated both positive and negative aspects of AI in teaching and learning. The relevant question further led to generate two teams including enhanced learning experiences and dependency and motivation.

Theme 1. Enhanced Learning Experiences

Regarding the impacts of AI tools on the teaching and learning process, the study participants provided their constructive opinion. As noted by Rahman and Watanobe (2023), AI has demonstrated impressive capabilities across different application areas, search engine rating coherent content and essays, acting as a chat bot, translating languages, answering questions, and assisting with programming code. Research shows that developers are highly focused on fine-tuning these language models for specific tasks and exploring their potential for transfer learning and teaching in new areas. Consequently, both teachers and students can use this technology for diverse academic and research purposes. Students can use AI technology to solve complex problems, answer questions, write essays, and grasp specific topics, further enhancing their learning process. Also, this technology can assist with programming related inquiries, helping students to improve their programming skills (Fang et al., 2023). In this regard, current study participants mutually agreed that these AI tools are significant addition in the academia today. Participant 3 from Ajman University argued that.

“AI tool significantly improve the learning process by providing personalized support. They help with brainstorming, and identifying issues in writing, making the teaching process more streamlined and focused. In my opinion AI’s ability to generate initial content for a flipped classroom model allows students to engage more deeply with the material while receiving individualized feedback.

Participant 9 from Ha’il University further opined that.

“AI save instructors time by automating task including grading and providing instant feedback. This immediate response help students quickly understand and correct their mistakes, which accelerates their learning. I believe that AI customizes educational content to fit individual student needs and learning styles, which improves the overall effectiveness of teaching practices.

Participant 3 from Ajman University contributed to the conversation by emphasizing that AI supports personalized learning, nothing that.

“These advanced technology-based tools offer tailored feedback and insights that is consistent with each students’ progress. This method helps handle specific learning gaps and also supports the skill development processes. One of the most notable benefits of AI in teaching is resource recommendation and time saving, which contributes to a more efficient teaching process.

Theme 2. Dependency and Motivation

The second theme generated from the question two indicated both positive and negative aspects of AI technology in education. For instance, participant five from Ajman university argued that.

“AI tools can create a dependency where students depend too much on technology for completing their assignments. Their overreliance can diminish their motivation to develop their own skills. Teachers, on the other hand, can also face the same situation where their critical thinking abilities can be undermined by overreliance. This dependence can be lethal for their professional teaching and critical thinking abilities. While AI provides valuable support in teaching process, it’s crucial for both teachers and students to balance its use with their own efforts to maintain motivation and critical thinking abilities.

In line with the gathered data, Farhi et al. (2023) stated that AI has significantly transformed education in various ways. Language models like ChatGPT are becoming increasingly popular due to their features and advantages. However, critics view them as a threat to educational integrity. They can enhance teaching and learning experiences by providing personalized assistance, providing easy access to information, and promoting critical thinking skills. Teachers can effectively use this technology to help students improve their writing, research, and problem-solving abilities. But potential over reliance on AI also raises concerns that it might hinder originality, creativity, and the development of critical thinking skills. According to participant 10 from Ha’il University,

“Integration of AI in teaching raises concerns about how it might affect teachers’ performance and students’ motivation and skill development. While AI can assist in acquiring an understanding of complex topic and provide additional practice, there is a risk that both teachers and students might not fully engage with the material develop essential skills like critical thinking and problem solving. In my personal opinion, excessive dependence on AI can lead to reduced intrinsic motivation, as the users might not feel the same sense of satisfaction and accomplishment from their work if they rely heavily on these tools.

3. *The ethical concerns regarding AI use in teaching process.*

The third study question aims to explore the participants’ opinion about ethical concerns concerning AI in teaching process. The aim of the relevant question is to analyze what the prevalent concerns are related to technology usage for the professional purposes. Data analysis helped create two prominent themes including data privacy and security and professional training.

Theme 1. Data privacy and security

Team one from the question 3 indicated data privacy and security as prevailing ethical issues for the teachers in both institutions. According to Huang (2023), the ethical risks of AI have acquired attention from governments, organizations, and academics worldwide,

leading to deep reflection on the relationship between human and technology. AI relies on the collection of vast amounts of data across its various subfields. Ensuring that we handle data processing and usage in accordance, with privacy and security guidelines is vital to avoid the internet from lengthening the time we hold onto information significantly. This in turn makes it essential that AI systems handle data collection, use, sharing, storage, and diligent in compliance with information security standards posters legal frameworks and ethical norms should protect personal information throughout the AI life cycle. Also, personal data must not be collected, used, or disclosed without the informed consent of the data subjects (Baidoo-Anu & Owusu Ansah, 2023). Thus, the study participants shared their concerns regarding data privacy and security and emphasized a critical consideration. According to participant 3 from Ajman University,

“One major ethical concern is ensuring the privacy and security of institutional data. I believe that these tools often collect and process large amounts of personal information, which might be safeguarded against unauthorized access and breaches. I suggest that there's a critical need for strong data protection measures to ensure the sensitive information remains secure and confidential.

Participant 6 from Ha'il University further added that.

“The use of airing education brings up serious issues regarding data privacy stop ensuring that AI systems handle institutional data, employee records, their online activities, student information which security is the need of the day. There is always a risk of data being mishandled or exposed if proper security protocols are not in place. So, when we are talking about the positive and constructive outcomes of AI in professional teaching, we also need to highlight the possible issues associated with this usage.

Theme 2. Professional training

Team two generated from the gathered data highlights the need for teachers to receive sufficient training to effectively integrate AI tools into their teaching practices. According to participant 4 from Ajman University,

“One of the challenges is ensuring that instructors are properly trained to use AI tools effectively. Without adequate information and professional development, teachers might struggle to incorporate these tools into their lessons in a way that improves learning rather than complicates it. Ongoing training is important for teachers to stay updated with AI advancements and apply them effectively in their teaching strategies”.

Participant 8 from Ha'il University further argued that.

“For AI to be used effectively in teaching, teachers need comprehensive training. It is important that teachers understand how to use AI tools to support their teaching their void potential pitfalls. Proper training ensures that educators can use AI tools to improve their teaching practices and provide meaningful learning experiences for students. There is a need for professional development programs that equip teachers with the skills and knowledge necessary to integrate AI in a way that benefits both teaching and learning.

Consistent with the current study findings, Devineni (2024) argued that AI users are accountable for protecting and promoting personal data as human rights and dignity. They should fulfill their ethical and legal responsibilities according to their roles in the AI systems life cycle will not stop to maintain accountability for AI systems and their impacts, it is necessary to establish appropriate oversight, conduct impact assessments, and perform the due diligence evaluations.

4. AI can improve the current teaching approaches.

According to Vázquez-Parra et al. (2024), collaboration between humans and generative AI is becoming essential in addressing the challenges posed by ChatGPT in education. Rather than replacing human contributions, AI technologies should be seen as tools that improve and simplify educational tasks for teachers. Educators and researchers can work alongside ChatGPT, focusing on its responsible and ethical application. In this collaborative model, teachers are key in guiding students on how to use ChatGPT appropriately. They can emphasize the value of critical thinking, fact-checking, and proper attribution, ensuring that students view ChatGPT as a tool to support their learning, not as a replacement for their intellectual work. The fourth study question is based on the perceptions about AI's potential to improve the current teaching approaches. This question focuses on what participants perceive as AI's core capabilities to bring modifications in the teaching process. Data gathered from study participants indicated 2 prevalent themes including ethical use and training, and balanced integration.

Theme 1. Professionalization and efficiency

The theme one of question 4 focused on how AI can improve current teaching approaches when implemented with proper guidelines and teachers training. Accordingly, Tang (2024) emphasized student-centric approaches as valuable to enhance the current teaching methods ensuring ethical use of AI. As noted, the educational sector is increasingly focused on student centered learning, moving away from traditional teacher centered approaches for stopping the conventional model, teachers serve as the primary source of knowledge and authority, controlling the pace, activities, and evaluation of learning process. While this method helps maintain order and ensure key topics are covered, it often limits student engagement, collaboration, and creativity. In contrast, student-centered learning involves students' activity in the learning process, encouraging them to take responsibility for their own education, with teachers acting as facilitators or guides rather than the sole source of knowledge. Considering recurrent error of technology, it has further supported student learning by offering personalized and adaptive learning experiences, feedback, and student support, that not only helps teacher create activities and materials that better meet students need and engage them more effectively but also helps them ensure the ethical use of technology in education (Bukar et al., 2024). Participant One from Ajman University observed,

“To improve teaching approaches, AI must be used ethically and with proper training. It is essential that educators understand not only how to use a dose effectively but also how to do so in a way that aligns with ethical standards. This means incorporating AI in a manner that supports students learning while maintaining academic integrity. In my opinion this ethical use ensures AI compliments teaching without compromising educational values.”

According to participant 8 from Ha'il University,

“Effective integration of AI into teaching relies on clear ethical guidelines and through training for instructors. When teachers are well trained to use AI tools ethically, they can use these tools to improve their teaching strategies, providing designed feedback, and support student learning more effectively. Ethical use combined with proper training helps ensure that AI improves educational practices rather than undermining them. Aligning AI with ethical standards and providing educators with necessary training are key to maximizing AI's positive impact on teaching.

Consistent with the gathered response, Lin et al. (2023) argued that this AI model has the potential to greatly facilitate content creation for researchers and writers. It can act as a helpful tool by generating initial drafts, proposing rephrasing options, and even providing references and citations. This support can speed up the writing process for academic papers and articles, potentially transforming how research is shared. Besides, ChatGPT can help translate complex scientific ideas into more understandable language, making research results accessible to a broader audience and supporting scientific literacy.

Theme 2. Curriculum development

Theme 2 indicated that study participants believe in curriculum development capabilities of AI tools into current teaching approaches. As Yang and Zheng (2021) opined, AI can improve the accessibility and acceptance of educational tools, potentially improving the learning experience of a broader range of students by offering adaptive learning and instant feedback. This shows that AI offers impressive capabilities, the human aspect of education remains essential. Teachers provide empathy, moral guidance, and a profound understanding of student needs, indicating qualities that algorithms cannot replicate. Research consistently highlights the significance of teacher-student relationships in effective learning. This relationship creates a supportive environment that encourages student engagement, risk taking, and a passion for learning. As they take on more administrative and analytical tasks, teachers must prioritize these replaceable human interactions. Thus, participant 4 from Ajman University emphasized.

“Change GPT can be highly beneficial in curriculum development by providing ideas and content for planning lessons. It can provide different perspectives and examples on different topics, which can help teachers design more comprehensive and engaging lessons for the students, ChatGPT can assist in creating assessment tools, like quizzes and tests, ensuring they are consistent with the learning objectives and standards of our institution.”

Participant 9 from Ha'il University shared a similar perspective, stating,

“AI technology can be used significantly in curriculum development as it can analyze and incorporate feedback from students. Technology like ChatGPT, which is facilitated by AI, can suggest adjustments to the curriculum to better meet student needs. Sometimes there are many modifications that are required to do, and I believe that, I can help to determine the issues and counter them effectively. It can also help teachers stay updated with the latest educational trends and research, ensuring that the curriculum remains relevant and effective.”

These responses remained consistent with the argumentation by existing literature on AI technology in education (See Chen et al., 2020; Wang & Cheng, 2021). As Chen et al. (2020) stated that AI can improve humanization in the classroom by automating routine tasks, allowing teachers to concentrate on teaching more. By using AI for data analysis and administrative duties, it can be integrated into the classroom to support, rather than replace, the human elements of education. This approach does not reduce the teachers' role but instead improves their ability to meet individual student needs and create a supportive, engaging classroom environment. The focus remains on direct student interactions and personalized teaching.

5. Recommendations for the AI use in teaching process.

The final study question is based on exploring the participants' perceptions about AI use in the teaching process. The relevant question further led to propose some significant recommendations by the participants. These perceptions and recommendations are consistent with the argumentation by Akgun and Greenhow (2022). As noted, teachers cannot be replaced by AI technology, rather it necessitates the collaboration between educators and AI in the learning process. This allows them to use AI for tasks such as creating lesson plans, tracking students' attendance, reporting learning outcomes, and developing learning media and resources. Hence, the last question further help generating two prominent themes from the collected data including ethical use and training and balanced integration of AI technology.

Theme 1. Ethical Use and Training

According to Sallam (2023), a key concern with AI, including tools like ChatGPT, in academic writing is the risk of plagiarism. As AI systems become more advanced in producing text, it's increasingly difficult to differentiate between human-written and AI-generated content. This raises ethical issues around the accidental use of AI-generated text as original work, underscoring the need for practices that protect the integrity of academic research. Additionally, the use of ChatGPT in education comes with specific limitations that should be

considered. One of the main issues is that ChatGPT operates based on patterns from its training data, rather than a true understanding of the topics it discusses in environments that emphasize deep comprehension and critical thinking, this limitation can be a major drawback. ChatGPT's responses are constructed by predicting likely words or phrases, which doesn't necessarily reflect an in-depth grasp of complex concepts or the capability to engage in substantive discussions.

The first team generated from the last question indicated the responses revolving around recommendations for ensuring ethical use and adequate training when integrating AI into the teaching process. According to participant 5 from Ajman University,

"To effectively incorporate AI into teaching, it is crucial to establish clear guidelines for ethical use and provide thorough training for educators to ensure that AI tools are used responsibly and that instructors are equipped to integrate them in ways that improve learning while upholding academic integrity. I personally believe that ethical considerations and professional development are essential components for maximizing AI's benefits in education".

Participant 10 from Ha'il University supported this sentiment, arguing,

"For the successful AI integration in teaching, focusing on ethical use and comprehensive training is vital. Teacher should be trained not only in the technical aspects of AI tools but also on how to apply them ethically. This approach ensures that AI supports educational goals without compromising academic standards or student learning outcomes.

Participant 6 from Ha'il University further added,

"Implementing AI in teaching should be guided by strong ethical principles and supported by extensive training for teachers on staff clear protocols must be established to ensure AI tools are used ethically combined educators need to be well prepared to apply these tools in ways that enriched learning without compromising academic integrity".

Overall, these responses highlighted the importance of combining ethical guidelines with strong training programs that may help teachers use AI effectively and responsibly in their teaching practices. Get the data also highlighted that ongoing professional development ethical guidelines and crucial to that AI improves educational practices while retaining high standards of academic honesty.

Theme 2. Balanced Integration

According to Stepanechko and Kozub (2023), the integration of AI technology into teaching and learning leads to massive significant shift in teaching and learning, bringing new possibilities for personalized learning, efficient administrative process, and insightful analysis of student performance. However, alongside these promising opportunities numerous challenges and considerations need strong management to fully ensure the benefits of technology. The integration of AI presents technical, ethical, and pedagogical challenges that require thorough strategies and collaborative efforts to address effectively, ensuring that the full potential of AI in education is realized. Therefore, the second and the final theme revealed strong emphasis on balanced integration of AI technology in the teaching process. Participant 2 from Ajman University argued that.

"A balanced approach to integrate AI into teaching is essential. While I can provide practical support, such as personalized feedback and resource recommendations, it should not replace the traditional teaching matters that encourage critical thinking and engagement. The key is to use AI to improve, not replace, the core aspects of education.

Participant 4 from Ajman University added, "integrating AI in a balance pay means using it to assist with specific tasks like grading or generating content ideas while still keeping the focus on direct student teacher interactions. AI should be a tool that supports traditional teaching methods, not one that overtakes them. This balance ensures that students benefit from technological advancements without losing the personal touch that effective teaching requires".

According to participant 6 from Ha'il University, "balancing AI integration involves using these tools to support and enrich conventional teaching methods rather than substituting them. For example, AI can be used to handle redundant task and provide additional resources, but it is important to maintain human interactional guidance to ensure a holistic learning experience".

These responses emphasize the importance of maintaining a balance to ensure that AI complements rather disrupts the learning process. They also highlighted that thoughtful balance helps to make use of AI advantages while preserving essential aspects of direct instruction.

5. Discussion

This study is significant due to its specific focus on how teachers at Ajman University and Ha'il University view the use of ChatGPT in education. While previous research has examined various aspects of ChatGPT, such as its language capabilities and ethical implications, this study fills a gap by capturing teachers' opinions, concerns, and ethical reflections on its educational use. By focusing on higher education students in KSA and UAE, this research provides localized insights into ChatGPT's educational impact, contributing a distinctive perspective within this demographic. The selection of the sample and methodology is consistent with the study's goals. The focus on a English language instructors in Ajman University and Hai'l University, ensures that the data collected reflects relevant perspectives on ChatGPT in education. Using a qualitative design, the researchers conducted semi-structured interviews, analyzing the responses with thematic analysis to gain a subtle understanding of English language teachers in the respective institutions.

Despite the prospective usage, concerns about the ethical implications of ChatGPT's use in education were prevalent among participants. They expressed that a strong dependence on ChatGPT for educational responsibilities might compromise the primary goals of education, potentially hindering students' development in critical thinking and creativity. Similar ethical issues are noted by Baidoo-Anu and Ansah

(2023) who emphasize that although ChatGPT can support educational tasks, it is important to handle its use thoughtfully to maintain ethical standards. Consistent with the current research findings, Trust et al. (2022) further support ChatGPT as an effective tool for generating ideas and improving teaching strategies, but caution that it should be used selectively, particularly for students with specific learning needs. According to Yan (2023), while ChatGPT offers practical educational benefits, it requires ethical guidelines to balance its advantages with the need for academic integrity. Embracing responsible practices in using ChatGPT, as suggested by Welding (2023), can help maintain the integrity of academic work, promote independent thinking, and limit over-reliance on AI, eventually supporting educational growth and future development.

As shown by the current study, ChatGPT offers various opportunities for teaching and learning particularly in-terms of English language instruction, but it also brings certain challenges and concerns in academic settings. A prominent issue is the risk of AI systems supporting existing biases and discrimination in both education and research. Besides, there is a possibility of AI tools being tampered with or manipulated, which could result in unreliable or biased outputs (Alqarni, 2015; Shegay & Krivosheeva, 2020). In a study by Meniado (2023), it is argued that ChatGPT's abilities across different subjects and its potential applications in education were examined, focusing on early concerns identified by researchers shortly after its release. Thus, it is found that ChatGPT is guaranteed as a helpful tool for instructors, assisting in creating course materials, offering suggestions, and acting as a virtual tutor to support student queries and collaboration. However, some significant challenges were identified, such as the generation of inaccurate or fabricated information and the potential to bypass plagiarism detection systems. Overall, it is emphasized to overcome these ethical challenges to ensure maximum output from students and support to English language teachers in their professional responsibilities and task completion.

5.1 Study Implications and Recommendations

This study revealed that integrating AI tools into higher education offers significant opportunities and challenges. Teachers should balance using AI to improve educational practices and preserving the core elements of traditional teaching to provide significant support. However, it is important to recognize that learning is fundamentally a social and interactive process as specified by sociocultural theory. Under the relevant theory, teachers should use AI as a supplement that argues their direct engagement with students rather than replacing their rich, interactive experiences crucial for developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Similarly, policymakers play a critical role in shaping the effective integration of AI in education. They must develop and enforce comprehensive guidelines to ensure AI tools are employed ethically and responsibly. This includes addressing academic integrity and data privacy issues and safeguarding against possible misuse of AI technologies. Consistent with sociocultural theory, policymakers should also consider the broader impact of AI on the learning environment and the social dynamics essential for meaningful education. Supporting the creation of strong professional development programs for teachers is equally important. Such programs should focus on equipping teachers with the necessary skills to integrate AI effectively while maintaining their teaching practices' social and cultural dimensions. Policymakers can help ensure that they contribute positively to educational outcomes while upholding academic standards by establishing clear guidelines and investing in teacher training. It is also implied that the academic community should engage in ongoing discourse about the role of AI in education. Continuous research and dialogue are critical for understanding the evolving aspects of AI in teaching and learning.

Given that sociocultural theory highlights the significance of community and collaborative learning, it is important to consider these elements when integrating AI. Academic institutions should promote collaborations among teachers, technologies, and researchers to identify and implement effective AI integration strategies. They should also focus on developing tools and approaches that balance technological advancement with preserving essential educational values. The academic community can ensure that AI improves educational practices while respecting the social and cultural dimensions of learning by promoting a collaborative, culturally aware environment.

6. Conclusion

Overall, it is found that AI holds significant potential in transforming education by providing several benefits to improve teaching practices. This research highlighted the significance of AI in improving educational practices, particularly in teaching English writing skills to students. Findings show that while AI provides substantial benefits such as resource recommendation and personalized feedback, it also presents challenges like academic integrity concerns and overreliance by teachers and students. Balancing the positive and negative aspects of AI integration is crucial to maximize its benefits while mitigating its drawbacks. More comprehensive research is also needed to develop effective strategies for the ethical and balanced use of AI in education. Therefore, AI should complement traditional teaching methods, ensuring that technology enhances rather than replaces the essential human elements of education.

6.1 Limitations and Future Research

Although, this research fills a significant gap and contributes to the existing literature on technology and education. It has some limitations. The first limitation involves using qualitative design and approach, as despite providing in-depth insights, the generalizability of results still needs to be investigated. Future researchers can counter this limitation using comprehensive approaches like mixed-method techniques. The second limitation involves a narrow focus only on English language teachers. This can limit the scope by adding a diverse group of samples, i.e., teachers from other disciplines, to gain robust insights. Finally, the third limitation is based on a sole focus on teachers. Future researchers can overcome this limitation by focusing on students' use of AI technology for learning.

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Authors' contributions

Fahad Aljabr: Introduction & Background. Bilal Zakarneh: Methodology & Previous Studies. Nagaletchimee Annamalai: Findings & Discussion. Nidal Al Said: Conclusion & Recommendations. Diana Amin: Revised Findings and Discussion. All authors collaborated on abstract, revisions, and final submission.

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