

Omani EFL students Attitudes toward AI-provided writing Feedback and Its Impact on their Writing Skills

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Abstract—With the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in educational contexts becoming increasingly prevalent, understanding students' perceptions and the effectiveness of AI-driven feedback is crucial for optimizing learning outcomes. This study involved 54 general foundation level (at Sultan Qaboos University, SQU) Omani English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students (24 female and 30 male) of varying English proficiency levels. They were asked to use ChatGPT as an assisting writing tool to provide feedback on their writing assignments over a semester, focusing on grammar, syntax, coherence, cohesion, vocabulary, and overall structure. The current research employs a quantitative survey to gather data on students' perceptions and writing improvements. Quantitative results revealed a positive shift in students' attitudes toward AI feedback. There was a significant increase in the perceived usefulness and effectiveness of AI feedback, with majority highlighting improvements in specific writing aspects, particularly grammar and vocabulary diversity, and overall coherence and cohesion. The immediate, detailed nature of AI feedback was highly appreciated, allowing students to quickly identify and correct errors. Students expressed satisfaction with the immediate, objective feedback from AI, contrasting it with sometimes subjective human feedback. The ability to revise work based on AI suggestions without feeling judged created a positive, stress-free learning environment. Students highlighted the continuous learning facilitated by prompt feedback as a significant benefit. However, some challenges were identified. A minority (15%) found AI feedback mechanical and lacking contextual sensitivity, preferring human feedback for complex tasks. They mostly mentioned that while AI was effective for technical writing aspects, it was less helpful for enhancing creativity and style. Findings also revealed that AI-driven feedback is well-received by EFL students. The immediacy and specificity of AI feedback lead to significant improvements in grammar, vocabulary, and overall writing quality. For a holistic writing development approach, combining AI with human feedback is recommended, leveraging both AI and human strengths. This study contributes to the growing literature on AI in education and offers practical implications for integrating AI tools in language learning programs.

Keywords-- Active Learning, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Learner Autonomy and Writing Feedback.

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