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From Tool to Risk: The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Students' Academic Writing

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Abstract:
The rapid development of artificial intelligence has disrupted not only the professional world but also the academic field. In particular, various AI-based tools, such as automatic correctors and text generators, provide valuable support to students in improving their writing skills. However, excessive use of these technologies could undermine their cognitive autonomy as well as their critical and creative thinking. This article offers a reflection on the challenges associated with integrating AI into the writing process for students.
Keywords: Artificial intelligence, Critical thinking, Technological dependency, Writing skills.

Introduction

As longstanding as it is dynamic, reflection on writing competence cannot be considered an emerging issue. Owing to its central importance in the educational field, this competence has consistently occupied a prominent place in pedagogical, didactic, and, more recently, technological concerns. Today, tools integrating artificial intelligence, such as text generators and automated proofreading systems, are profoundly transforming the experience of academic writing. They provide students with real-time assistance, significantly improve grammatical and syntactic accuracy, and offer support in more complex textual dimensions, such as fluency and coherence.

It is therefore undeniable that artificial intelligence plays an effective role in the development of learners' writing competence, particularly among university students. However, it is also necessary to question the modalities of its use: how do students appropriate these tools? Does artificial intelligence constitute a lever for learning and a catalyst for the development of writing skills, or does it, on the contrary, pose a threat to learners' autonomy, creativity, and critical thinking?

To a certain extent, the increasing integration of artificial intelligence into the educational sphere highlights the significant contributions it offers in enhancing students' writing abilities. These technologies not only enable the correction of orthographic, syntactic, and stylistic errors, but also contribute to strengthening learners' writing skills. However, no technology, regardless of its level of advancement, can be considered entirely beneficial. Indeed, AI tools may also pose risks to learning by potentially undermining the ethics and authenticity of academic work.

This paper therefore aims to examine, and even rethink, the use of artificial intelligence technologies in the development of students' writing competence. While it is undeniable that AI is reshaping traditional frameworks of writing instruction, it is equally important to acknowledge the challenges it may generate, particularly with regard to intellectual autonomy, creativity, and the appropriation of knowledge.

Consequently, the issue of AI's impact on writing competence cannot be addressed from a purely theoretical perspective. For this reason, an empirical study, based on a qualitative approach, was conducted in order to support the reflections developed within the theoretical framework of this article.

Conceptual Framework

1. Writing Competence: Foundations and Challenges

Writing competence refers to the set of knowledge, skills, and strategies mobilized in the production of coherent, structured texts adapted to a given communicative situation. According to Dabène (1991), it involves not only mastery of linguistic rules (spelling, grammar, syntax), but also the ability to organize ideas, articulate a relevant discourse, and adhere to the conventions of the targeted discourse genre.

In the field of foreign language didactics, this competence is viewed as a complex and evolving process that goes beyond mere linguistic transcription. For Reuter (1996), writing means confronting a communication problem, which requires discursive, linguistic, and cognitive choices. Writing competence therefore entails both technical skills and cognitive abilities (planning, revising, editing), as well as a reflective stance toward one's own production.

In the current educational context, strongly influenced by digital technologies and artificial intelligence, this competence assumes an even more strategic dimension. It constitutes a key factor for academic success, as well as an indicator of intellectual autonomy and critical thinking. Moreover, in the professional world, the quality of written expression is often perceived as a marker of credibility, efficiency, and professionalism.

Thus, in light of the transformations brought about by digital technologies, it becomes essential not only to preserve this competence but also to redefine it by taking into account the new tools mobilized by students in their writing practices.

1.1. Writing Competence and Critical Thinking: An Essential Interconnection

Beyond the mere ability to produce a written text, writing competence plays a fundamental role in the development of students' critical thinking. Indeed, the act of writing is not limited to the transcription of ideas; rather, it constitutes a genuine cognitive exercise that engages learners in structuring their thinking. Writing requires students to organize their ideas logically, construct coherent arguments, and adopt a reflective stance toward the subject under consideration.

Writing thus fosters the emergence of critical reasoning by encouraging students to question, analyze, and formulate well-supported viewpoints. From this perspective, it becomes a privileged tool for learning argumentation and developing autonomous thinking.

This intellectual function of writing is highlighted by Lev Vygotsky, who states that "written language […] compels the individual to detach from the immediate situation and to conceptualize abstraction" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 99). In other words, writing pushes students beyond the concrete and immediate, engaging them in a process of deeper reflection. He further adds that "writing does not merely represent a form of communication, but a means of structuring and developing abstract thought" (ibid., p. 100).

In the same vein, Olson (1998, p. 9) emphasizes that "writing is not simply a transcription of spoken language, but a technology of the mind that transforms the way we think, analyze, and

remember." Similarly, Goody (1979) asserts that "writing is not merely a tool for communication; it constitutes a condition of possibility for analysis, logic, and critical reflection." (p. 56).

These perspectives converge in highlighting the epistemic role of writing, which becomes not only a vehicle for conceptualization but also a catalyst for critical thinking. In this sense, writing competence goes beyond its primary function of transmitting information and emerges as a genuine tool for intellectual construction, essential for the development of an autonomous and critical mind.

1.2. Writing and Communication: Between Instrumental Function and Aesthetic Dimension

In his theory of language functions, Roman Jakobson distinguishes the poetic function from other functions by emphasizing its particular orientation toward the message itself. Unlike the referential or expressive functions, the poetic function focuses on the form of the message, its aesthetic qualities and the way it is expressed, rather than solely on its content. This implies that the success of a communicative act does not depend exclusively on the information conveyed, but also, and sometimes primarily, on how that information is formulated. Jakobson (1960), thus, highlights the specificity of this function, which confers a creative and aesthetic dimension upon written language.

In written discourse, this attention to form is manifested through syntax, lexical associations, style, wordplay, and other stylistic devices that contribute to making the message more expressive and engaging. Writing competence therefore proves essential in crafting messages that are both effective and aesthetically refined, capable of capturing the reader's attention and enhancing the communicative impact of the text.

The poetic function, as defined by Jakobson, thus requires a refined mastery of language, an art of expression that values creativity, stylistic precision, and textual elegance. From this perspective, writing is not merely a tool for transmission, but becomes a space for aesthetic expression and discursive enhancement.

Extending this perspective, Deborah Brandt (1995) argues that "literacy is an economic resource," (p. 167) thereby emphasizing that writing-related skills, including those linked to textual aesthetics, possess undeniable social and professional value. A few years later, she further specifies that "literacy is a crucial economic resource that determines social mobility and access to professional opportunities" (Brandt, 2001, p. 21). This observation underscores the central role of writing competence not only in academic contexts but also in professional and social life. The ability to write with clarity, precision, and effectiveness thus becomes a determining factor for employability, career advancement, and access to diverse opportunities.

This view aligns with that of Chartier (1991), for whom "reading and writing are not merely technical skills, but social practices that define relations of power and distinction" (p. 11). Similarly, Gee (1996) highlights that "literacy is not only a set of skills, but a form of cultural capital that opens or restricts access to social institutions" (p. 45) Barton and Hamilton (1998) further argue that "writing practices are closely linked to the social and economic contexts in which they acquire meaning" (p. 45).

These perspectives collectively highlight the central role of writing competence across academic, professional, and social domains. The ability to write clearly, accurately, and effectively becomes a key determinant of professional integration, career progression, and access to opportunities. Far from being a purely technical skill, writing competence constitutes a powerful lever for inclusion and mobility, enabling individuals to position themselves advantageously within formal

and professional communication contexts. It therefore represents a fundamental asset in a world where access to resources and opportunities increasingly depends on the mastery of language skills.

1.3. Writing as a Driver of Creativity and Innovation

Beyond its role in fostering critical thinking, writing is not merely a mechanical exercise; it can also serve as a powerful catalyst for stimulating creativity among students. Ken Robinson, in his well-known talk *"Do Schools Kill Creativity?"* (2006), underscores the crucial importance of creativity in the educational process, arguing that creativity is as essential as literacy, and that writing provides a unique space for its exploration. This statement highlights the fundamental value of creativity, placing it on par with traditional skills such as reading and writing.

For Robinson, writing represents one of the most effective means of unleashing and developing creativity. By encouraging students to engage in writing activities, educational institutions provide a fertile ground for experimentation, innovation, and original thinking. This suggests that writing tasks are not solely aimed at improving linguistic competence, but also play a crucial role in the development of creative thinking and personal expression.

As Vygotsky (2004) emphasizes in *Imagination and Creativity in Childhood*, "imagination is not separate from rational thought, but constitutes the basis of all human creation, whether artistic or scientific" (p. 14). By mobilizing imagination, writing becomes a privileged tool for generating new ideas and linking lived experience with imagined worlds.

Furthermore, according to Flower and Hayes (1981), in their cognitive model of writing, "writing is a problem-solving process that compels the writer to generate, organize, and transform ideas" (p. 373). This demonstrates that the act of writing not only structures thought but also stimulates creativity through the continuous search for original and appropriate formulations.

Therefore, writing becomes a space in which students can move beyond everyday constraints to explore new ideas, push the boundaries of their imagination, and engage in innovative forms of expression.

1.4. Writing as a Vector of Autonomy and Intellectual Empowerment among Students

The experience of writing cannot be reduced to a mere exercise in style or lexical choice; rather, it is embedded in a broader dynamic through which students explore, structure, and assert their thinking. By providing a space of freedom, writing enables learners to move beyond the constraints and frameworks imposed by the academic environment. It becomes a means of transcending external limitations and engaging in a genuinely autonomous intellectual process. From this perspective, writing does not merely consist of reproducing established knowledge, but of constructing one's own relationship to knowledge, thereby strengthening students' critical independence.

Peter Elbow (1998) highlights this dimension by asserting that "writing without fear of immediate judgment allows students to better grasp their thoughts and become more critical of their own work" (Elbow, 1998, p. 5). This observation underscores that writing, when practiced without the pressure of immediate correction or expected conformity, enables learners to develop genuine reflective distance and refine their critical judgment.

This emancipatory function of writing resonates with Paulo Freire's (1974) assertion that "to read and write the word is to read and write the world" (*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, p. 45). In other words, writing is not merely a technical exercise, but an act of conscientization through which students learn to position themselves in relation to reality, to question it, and to engage with it autonomously.

Moreover, according to Charlot (1997), "to learn is always to learn something, but it is also to learn for oneself and to construct oneself as a subject" (*On the Relationship to Knowledge*, p. 89). In this sense, writing constitutes a major lever for the appropriation of knowledge, as it engages students in an active process of articulating and reorganizing their understanding.

Thus, writing can be regarded as a fundamental pillar not only in academic training but also in learners' personal and intellectual development. It is not limited to an exercise in reproduction; rather, it represents a reflective and creative experience that places students at the center of their own learning process.

However, in the digital age, the question arises as to the continuing role of traditional writing. While digital practices promote faster and more fragmented forms of communication, they do not replace the depth of reflection enabled by extended writing. As Baron (2009) notes in A Better Pencil, "digital writing technologies may expand the ways we write, but they also challenge the contemplative dimension of writing" (p. 72). In this regard, the current challenge is not to choose between handwritten and digital writing, but to consider how these two modes can complement one another in supporting students' creativity, critical thinking, and autonomy.

2. Artificial Intelligence as a Pedagogical Assistant in Enhancing Writing Competence

This second section aims to examine the role of artificial intelligence in the process of learning to write, highlighting the advantages it offers for the development of students' writing competence.

2.1. AI and Self-Directed Learning: Toward Guided Autonomy

Learner autonomy is now at the core of contemporary pedagogical frameworks. According to Holec (1981), autonomy is defined as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (p. 3). It entails the learner's active responsibility in setting objectives, selecting methods, monitoring the learning process, and evaluating outcomes.

However, the development of such autonomy is not innate. Many students encounter difficulties in accessing relevant sources of information, either due to a lack of engagement with traditional research methods or because of the complexity of academic inquiry.

The advent of digital technologies, and particularly artificial intelligence, has profoundly transformed this context. AI now enables simplified and interactive access to a wide range of resources, offering personalized support and immediate feedback. In doing so, it lowers informational and methodological barriers, thereby promoting self-directed learning.

In the domain of writing, AI proves particularly beneficial. Automated correction systems allow students to identify and correct their errors instantly, whether grammatical, lexical, or stylistic, thus fostering a more autonomous and progressive learning process. As noted by Luckin et al. (2016), AI "enables the creation of intelligent learning environments capable of providing individualized support at scale".

Another relevant perspective is offered by Bandura (1997) through the concept of self-efficacy, defined as the belief in one's ability to accomplish a specific task. Bandura characterizes self-efficacy as the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the actions required to achieve given goals. He distinguishes it from self-esteem or general confidence, emphasizing its contextual and task-specific nature.

Bandura also identifies four primary sources of self-efficacy: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and emotional/physiological states. A strong sense of self-efficacy

promotes perseverance in the face of difficulties, reduces fear of failure, enhances problem-focused thinking, and raises aspirations. In *Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control*, Bandura emphasizes that perceptions of self-efficacy are "a key factor in a generative system of human competence," noting that it is not merely the number of skills one possesses, but what one believes can be accomplished with them under varying circumstances (1997, p. 37).

Thus, in the digital age, AI appears as a genuine catalyst for self-directed learning. It enables learners to move beyond the limitations of traditional models by offering more accessible, interactive, and individualized learning experiences. In this sense, it contributes to a redefinition of learning paradigms, where student autonomy relies not only on individual effort but also on the integration of intelligent technologies capable of guiding and supporting the learning process.

2.2. AI and the Personalization of Learning: Toward Tailored Learning Pathways

Beyond providing immediate assistance in correcting written work, artificial intelligence constitutes a key lever for the personalization of learning. One of the major contributions of intelligent technologies lies in their ability to adapt content, methods, and learning pace to the specific needs of each learner. As Luckin (2017, p. 67) notes, "intelligent systems offer individualized learning pathways, enabling students to progress at their own pace while receiving feedback tailored to their needs."

This perspective marks a departure from traditional teaching models, in which the same content is delivered to all learners regardless of their cognitive or linguistic differences. Through AI, it becomes possible to implement what Popenici and Kerr (2017) refer to as adaptive education, an approach that places the learner at the center of the process and adjusts each activity according to their prior knowledge, difficulties, and learning pace.

AI, thus, enables a precise identification of pedagogical needs. For instance, a student who frequently makes syntactic errors can receive targeted exercises addressing this issue, while another may be directed toward activities focusing on textual coherence or paraphrasing. According to Chen et al. (2020), intelligent learning systems "analyze performance in real time and adjust proposed tasks to maintain the learner within an optimal zone of development" (p. 112). This approach aligns with Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development, whereby learning is enhanced when it occurs between what the learner can already do independently and what can be achieved with appropriate support.

Another advantage of such personalization lies in its impact on motivation. As Ryan and Deci (2000) argue, intrinsic motivation is strengthened when learners perceive that instruction directly addresses their needs and supports effective progress. By providing immediate and tailored feedback, AI fosters a sense of competence and efficacy, thereby enhancing engagement and persistence.

Finally, the personalization enabled by AI contributes to redefining the teacher's role. Rather than serving solely as a transmitter of knowledge, the teacher becomes a mediator, facilitator, and regulator of learning. As Holmes, Bialik, and Fadel (2019) point out, educators can rely on AI to free up time and focus on more qualitative dimensions of pedagogy, such as socio-emotional support, creativity, and critical thinking.

Consequently, far from being limited to a corrective function, AI makes it possible to establish genuinely personalized learning, taking into account individual needs, progress, and developmental pace. This adaptive approach is now emerging as one of the most promising transformations in contemporary education.

2.3. AI in Educational Contexts: Challenges and Limitations

It is now widely acknowledged that artificial intelligence is profoundly transforming the field of education. As a major component of the digital revolution, it offers undeniable advantages, particularly in the learning of writing. AI-based tools provide students with immediate and interactive support: they automatically correct written productions, identify linguistic, grammatical, lexical, and stylistic errors, and offer personalized feedback. Furthermore, some systems go beyond simple correction by suggesting activities adapted to each learner's level and pace, thereby contributing to more individualized and effective learning.

However, despite these benefits, it is essential to highlight the limitations of AI in education. Excessive reliance on these tools raises several pedagogical and ethical concerns. As Selwyn (2019) cautions, "while AI may support cognitive processes such as writing, it should not replace traditional learning, where personal reflection and manual writing practice play an essential role" (p. 78). This warning reflects a growing concern: the automation of the writing process may reduce cognitive effort, which is a central component in the development of writing competence.

Indeed, when used without regulation, AI may lead to excessive dependence on digital tools. Students may then neglect the practice required to consolidate their linguistic skills, particularly in terms of idea structuring, argumentation, and stylistic creativity. As Holmes, Bialik, and Fadel (2019) note, technology should be designed as a support for human activity, not as a substitute, thereby highlighting the risk of delegating cognitive tasks entirely to machines.

Beyond the issue of creativity, one of the major challenges lies in preserving students' cognitive independence. According to Amiel and Reeves (2008), the integration of digital technologies in education must be accompanied by a critical framework that prevents superficial or purely instrumental use. In other words, while AI simplifies certain aspects of learning, it may also limit the depth of reflection by encouraging a quick-solution approach at the expense of reasoning and the gradual construction of knowledge.

Another challenge concerns inequalities in access. While some students benefit from advanced platforms, others face a lack of technological resources, thereby widening disparities among learners. In addition, issues related to ethics and data privacy remain central concerns. Williamson and Piattoeva (2019) warn against the use of educational data for purposes of surveillance or commercialization.

In sum, while AI represents a major advancement in supporting and personalizing learning, it cannot replace the human educational experience grounded in critical thinking, creativity, and autonomous practice. Its integration into educational contexts should therefore be conceived as complementary rather than substitutive, within a balanced framework where the teacher retains a central role as mediator and guide.

It is undeniable that the emergence of AI has marked a significant turning point in the history of education, offering numerous advantages for the development of students' writing competence. However, inappropriate use of these tools may transform these benefits into obstacles, potentially hindering students' progress in improving their writing. To further support this reflection, it was deemed relevant to conduct a survey among students as part of an empirical investigation.

3. Methodology

3.1. Sample and Data Collection Instruments

As part of this research, an exploratory study was conducted with 40 undergraduate and Master's students in French studies enrolled at an Algerian university. The aim was to analyze their relationship to writing and to examine the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) use on the development of their writing competence.

Moreover, semi-structured interview of approximately twenty minutes was conducted face-to-face in order to explore students' perceptions, attitudes, and practices. The interview questions focused on three main areas:

1. Writing practices within and beyond the academic context.
2. The use of AI in written productions.
3. Perceptions of the advantages and risks associated with its integration.

The collected data were analyzed through thematic coding, allowing for the identification of recurring patterns as well as students' perceptions and attitudes toward writing and AI.

3.2. Students' Relationship to Writing

The findings reveal a generally distant relationship to writing. Among the 40 participants, only ten reported engaging in writing regularly and voluntarily outside the academic context. For the majority, writing remains a strictly academic activity, limited to assignments required by instructors. This perception reflects a utilitarian and constrained relationship, experienced more as an academic obligation than as a personal or creative practice.

Table 1. Students' Writing Practices

Writing Practice	Number of Students	Percentage	Comments
Regular and voluntary (outside academic context)	10	25%	Writing for pleasure or personal expression
Strictly academic (assignments only)	30	75%	Writing perceived as an obligation, not creative

The interviews also highlight a set of recurring difficulties affecting both linguistic and compositional aspects. Several students reported weaknesses in spelling, verb conjugation, and grammar. The main obstacles identified are summarized in Table 2, which highlights the areas in which students experience the greatest difficulty.

Table 2. Difficulties Encountered by Students in Writing

Type of Difficulty	Number of Students Reporting This Issue	Representative Excerpt
Spelling	12	"I find it difficult to remember the spelling of all words" (Int. 5)
Conjugation	8	"Conjugation is a difficult task because of its complexity" (Int. 40)
Grammar	10	"Grammar is my weak point; I struggle to understand grammatical rules" (Int. 23)
Organization and coherence	15	"I have difficulty linking my ideas coherently when writing" (Int. 11)

These findings indicate that students face deficiencies affecting nearly all aspects of writing competence: linguistic accuracy, syntactic construction, logical organization of ideas, and stylistic quality. This situation contributes to a growing disengagement from writing, which is increasingly perceived as a tedious activity. It may be assumed that this lack of interest is partly related to limited engagement with reading, which is nevertheless essential for the development of writing competence.

3.3. Frequency and Modalities of AI Use in Students' Written Work

Analysis of the interviews reveals that the use of AI tools is widespread among students. All participants acknowledged the significant support these tools provide, particularly in correcting linguistic errors. As one student stated:

"By using AI, we no longer have to worry about spelling or grammar mistakes; AI takes care of these issues. It can even write the entire text for us" (Int. 15).

Students identified several advantages of AI use, including speed and efficiency in error correction, real-time interaction, and support in structuring and composing texts. These benefits appear to contribute to a perceived improvement in writing skills, while reducing stress and the time devoted to writing tasks.

However, excessive use of these tools may have negative effects. Some students expressed a sense of dependency, feeling "obliged" to rely on AI, not only to benefit from its advantages, but also to avoid writing independently. Such dependency may hinder the development of their writing competence and intellectual autonomy.

To better illustrate these contrasting perceptions, Table 3 summarizes the main advantages and disadvantages identified by students.

Table 3. Students' Perceptions of AI Use

Aspects Examined	Perceived Advantages	Disadvantages / Risks
Linguistic correction	Automatic correction of spelling and grammar	Risk of dependency
Speed and efficiency	Time-saving in writing and editing	Reduced personal effort
Structuring and writing	Support in organizing ideas and composing texts	Reduced intellectual autonomy
Interaction and guidance	Immediate feedback and real-time suggestions	Limited development of writing skills

The interviews also reveal variation in frequency of use. While some students rely heavily on AI tools, others use them only when necessary. The following table presents this distribution:

Table 4. Reported Frequency of AI Use Among Students

Frequency of Use	Number of Students (N = 40)	Percentage
Daily use	16	40%
Weekly use	14	35%
Occasional use (as needed)	8	20%
Rarely or never	2	5%

3.4. AI and Writing Competence: Risks of Dependency and the Erosion of Critical and Creative Thinking among Learners

The interviews reveal that intensive use of AI tools may lead to cognitive dependency. Some students acknowledge that when assigned a writing task, they are easily tempted to rely on AI:

"If we are asked to reflect on a given topic and we know that AI can do it for us, we eventually give in, and we feel that we could never produce work as well on our own" (Int. 8).

Others report a decline in their capacity for autonomous thinking: "Our ability to think stops functioning because we know we will be assisted by AI" (Int. 32).

These findings suggest that although AI is perceived as a useful support, its excessive use may undermine the development of critical thinking and creativity. Students tend to adopt a passive attitude toward writing, relinquishing personal reflection and the production of original content. This conscious dependency limits the autonomous exercise of writing competence and reduces the intellectual engagement required to produce authentic and thoughtful texts.

3.4.1. Ethical Issues Related to the Inappropriate Use of AI in Educational Contexts: Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Beyond the risks associated with dependency and loss of creativity, excessive or inappropriate use of artificial intelligence raises major ethical concerns, particularly regarding plagiarism and academic integrity. In educational contexts, any fraudulent use of sources or unattributed content is strictly sanctioned, and academic production is expected to reflect the student's authenticity and personal contribution.

Plagiarism, defined as the unauthorized appropriation of another's work while claiming authorship, constitutes both an ethical and legal violation. In the context of AI, the question arises as to whether the use of AI-generated texts without acknowledging their source can be considered a form of plagiarism. According to the collected testimonies, some students reproduce AI-generated content without citation, raising concerns about the authenticity of their work and their adherence to academic standards.

Thus, the integration of AI into writing practices extends beyond technical or pedagogical considerations; it also entails ethical responsibility. It becomes necessary to implement awareness-raising and preventive measures to ensure the appropriate use of these tools and to preserve academic integrity. Students must be guided in distinguishing between technological assistance and the substitution of personal work, so that AI remains a support rather than a replacement for their competencies and critical reflection.

Moreover, while students appear aware of these issues, some continue to use AI tools in ethically questionable ways, which further raises concerns about the authenticity of their academic output. To address these challenges, it is essential to develop pedagogical strategies that clearly differentiate between acceptable assistance and academic misconduct. In this regard, AI should function as a support mechanism, not as a substitute for students' skills and critical thinking.

3.4.2. Perceived Advantages of AI in the Development of Writing Competence

Despite the identified risks, students acknowledge several benefits associated with the use of AI. These tools facilitate the identification and correction of linguistic errors, improve textual fluency and coherence, and provide personalized support that complements traditional pedagogical guidance.

Some students report that AI helps them better organize their ideas, save time, and focus more on reflection and argument structuring. Others emphasize that immediate feedback promotes self-assessment and progressive learning.

In sum, AI represents a potential lever for strengthening writing competence, provided that its use remains thoughtful and well-regulated. Striking a balance between technological support and

autonomous engagement remains essential to ensure the harmonious development of writing proficiency.

4. Results

The survey conducted with 40 students highlights three main findings. First, writing practices remain largely confined to the academic context. Only a minority (25%) report writing regularly outside university, while the majority (75%) associate writing with academic obligation. This utilitarian perception is accompanied by recurring difficulties, particularly in spelling, grammar, verb conjugation, and, most notably, the organization of ideas.

Second, the use of artificial intelligence tools is widespread. All participants acknowledge their usefulness, especially for linguistic correction and text structuring. However, frequency of use varies: 40% report daily use, 35% weekly use, and only 5% indicate that they rarely rely on such tools.

Third, students express contrasting perceptions. On the one hand, AI is viewed as valuable support that facilitates writing and reduces stress related to errors. On the other hand, several students highlight increasing dependency, reduced personal effort, and the risk of plagiarism resulting from the direct use of generated content.

These findings reveal a tension between the pedagogical benefits of AI and the risks associated with its unregulated use, thereby setting the stage for a discussion of its implications for writing competence.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that artificial intelligence has become an integral component of students' writing practices. While its integration provides meaningful support for learning, it also raises significant challenges that warrant careful consideration.

From a benefits perspective, AI facilitates linguistic correction, thereby reducing stress and enhancing students' confidence in their written productions. It also supports better text organization and enables faster progress through immediate feedback. These findings align with the work of Luckin (2016) and Chen et al. (2020), who emphasize the role of AI in personalizing learning and strengthening self-efficacy.

From a risk perspective, the results indicate that excessive use may lead to cognitive dependency. Students may gradually delegate the entire writing effort to AI, thereby reducing their intellectual autonomy and creative engagement. These observations corroborate the concerns raised by Selwyn (2019) and Holmes, Bialik, and Fadel (2019), who stress the importance of preserving cognitive effort and critical reflection in the writing process.

Furthermore, the study highlights important ethical issues. The appropriation of AI-generated content without proper attribution raises concerns about plagiarism and academic integrity. This finding echoes the concerns of Williamson and Piattoeva (2019) regarding the unregulated use of educational technologies.

In sum, AI represents both a learning opportunity and a potential risk for the development of writing competence. When used in a balanced manner and supported by ethical awareness, it can serve as a powerful tool for enhancing writing skills. Conversely, unregulated use may undermine intellectual autonomy and the authenticity of students' work.

Conclusion

In light of the widespread use of artificial intelligence tools in academic writing, this study of 40 students has shed light on their perceptions and practices regarding these technologies. While tools such as Grammarly, QuillBot, Writefull, and DeepL Write provide valuable support in terms of linguistic correction, paraphrasing, text structuring, and time efficiency, their excessive use raises significant pedagogical and ethical concerns. Uncontrolled dependency may weaken learners' critical thinking, creativity, and autonomy, while also encouraging forms of implicit, often unintentional, plagiarism.

These findings underscore the need to revalorize writing as a reflective and personal activity, in which AI serves as a complementary tool rather than a substitute for thought. Academic institutions must raise students' awareness of the risks associated with the misuse of these technologies and promote practices that foster autonomous writing, critical reflection, and creativity. Collaborative workshops and activities centered on personal expression may help reconcile technological tools with authentic learning.

Ultimately, artificial intelligence represents a powerful lever for the development of writing competence, provided that it is used in a thoughtful, ethical, and well-regulated manner, ensuring that writing proficiency remains the outcome of active, reflective, and creative learning.

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