

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Writing is one of the most essential skills students must master, as it allows them to express ideas, thoughts, and information clearly and effectively (Setiyaningsih, 2015). Compared to other language skills, such as speaking, listening, and reading, writing is often considered the most challenging, requiring not only linguistic competence but also critical thinking and organization (Hyland, 2003).

In academic, especially in argumentative writing, strong writing skills are very important for structuring ideas, presenting logical arguments, and persuading readers. One of the most effective ways to develop these skills is through feedback. As Hyland and Hyland (2006) explain, feedback plays an important role in improving students' writing development by pointing out areas of improvement and reinforcing successful strategies. Feedback helps learners understand their strengths and weaknesses, promoting deeper engagement with the writing (Ferris, 2003).

Traditionally, teachers and peers have provided this feedback. However, with the improvement in technology, artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT now offer students immediate, automated feedback. These tools are increasingly integrated into writing instruction, offering suggestions on grammar, vocabulary, coherence, and structure (Song & Song, 2023). AI feedback systems can process text quickly and provide consistent input, reducing the workload for teachers and enabling students to revise their work more efficiently (Bai & Wang, 2023; Zhai, 2022).

While AI-generated feedback offers clear benefits about speed and accessibility, questions remain about its effectiveness compared to human feedback. Human feedback, for example, teacher feedback, is often more personalized, context-sensitive, and emotionally supportive (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012). On the other hand, AI tools like ChatGPT can sometimes provide overly general or formulaic responses that lack deep engagement with students' writing

styles (Miszoglad, Pierce & Yoon, 2023; Dzulfikri & Yazid , 2024). Therefore, it is important to examine how students perceive and respond to ChatGPT's feedback compared to traditional feedback methods.

Most of the studies these days have looked at how accurate AI feedback is, or how it can be used as an extra tool to help teachers. What they have not really focused on is how students actually feel about and respond to feedback from AI compared to feedback from teachers. For example, Teng (2024) explored EFL learners' experience and perception in using ChatGPT for feedback writing using a mixed-method approach. Similarly, Kasneci et al. (2023) explored the opportunities and challenges of using ChatGPT in education, including writing. There is still little research on whether students trust AI feedback, whether it motivates them, or how engaged they feel when using it. Also, there is still little research that compares ChatGPT feedback and lecture feedback. This is important because the way students see and react to feedback can strongly affect how well they improve their writing.

Because of this, this research would be very important, as it looked more closely at how students experience ChatGPT's feedback compared to lecture feedback. Instead of only focusing on grammar or writing results, this study also pays attention to students' feelings. This could give new ideas about how AI feedback can be used better in language learning.

This research was conducted in an argumentative writing class at a private university in Surabaya, Indonesia, which is Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University. In this course, students are expected to make well-organized essays that have clear thesis statements, logical reasoning, and supporting evidence. However, Tasya (2022) reported that students of one university in Jakarta have difficulties in writing an argumentative essay that is categorized into five aspects, which are content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Due to limited time, instructors may not be able to give each student thorough feedback. In response to this issue, AI tools like ChatGPT can be used alternatively by giving students independent support and helping them improve their writing more effectively.

Therefore, the research aimed to investigate the extent to which ChatGPT feedback improves students' writing skills in an argumentative writing course. Specifically, this study aims to examine the impact of ChatGPT's feedback on students' ability to revise and improve their argumentative essays. It also investigated students' perceptions of ChatGPT as a feedback tool, including its advantages and limitations when compared to traditional teacher or peer feedback. By combining quantitative and qualitative methods, this study aimed to contribute to the growing research on the use of AI tools to support writing instruction in academic contexts

1.2. Research Questions

To examine the role of AI-generated feedback in argumentative writing, this study seeks to investigate two key aspects:

1. To what extent does ChatGPT's feedback improve students' writing skills in an argumentative writing course?
2. What are students' perceptions of ChatGPT's feedback in their argumentative writing process?

1.3. Research Objectives

To assess the effectiveness of ChatGPT-generated feedback in argumentative writing, this study aims to achieve two research objectives:

1. To measure the impact of ChatGPT feedback on students' writing improvements using quantitative analysis.
2. To identify the strengths and weaknesses of ChatGPT feedback compared to human feedback in an argumentative writing course based on students' perception

1.4. Theoretical Framework

According to Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is frequently addressed in terms of assisted or scaffolded learning since it describes the learner's capacity to successfully finish activities with the guidance of more experienced individuals. ZPD itself means students learn something very difficult to master by themselves, but it can be done with the help

or with the guidance of knowledgeable others. ZPD's scaffolding techniques are giving feedback, questioning, and instructing. In this research, guidance from more experienced individuals means ChatGPT, as the experienced one, which can give students feedback, assisting and guiding them to improve their skills in writing an argumentative essay. Vygotsky's theory emphasized scaffolding, or providing support to learners to help them understand the material.

The Feedback Intervention Theory (FIT) describes how different kinds of feedback affect learning outcomes and performance. The usefulness of feedback is dependent on its focus, whether it be task-, process-, or self-regulatory. According to Kluger and DeNisi (1996), instead of focusing on general praise or criticism, effective feedback helps students focus on particular areas for progress. This study examines ChatGPT's feedback to see if it corresponds with the guidelines for effective feedback and how students view its influence on their ability to write argumentatively.

1.5. The Significance of the Study

This study gives useful information for both students and lecturers by assessing how ChatGPT feedback affects students' writing performance and perceptions in an argumentative writing course compared with lecture feedback. ChatGPT's ability to give instant feedback improves accessibility for students who need instant help in improving their structure, grammar, and coherence.

By intentionally integrating AI technologies into writing classes, this study can help teachers in providing students with comprehensive learning support. AI tools like ChatGPT can help students identify grammatical errors, improve sentence structure, and refine their arguments, allowing them to revise their work more efficiently.

By knowing the impact and identifying the strengths and weaknesses of ChatGPT feedback, this study can help students to improve their writing skills, especially in argumentative writing.

1.6. Scope and Limitations of the Study

Scope:

This study examines the impact of ChatGPT-generated feedback on students' writing performance, revisions, and perceptions in an argumentative writing course. The participants will be students enrolled in an argumentative writing course.

Limitations:

1. This study only examines argumentative writing, so the results may not apply to other types of writing.
2. It relies on students' personal opinions about ChatGPT feedback
3. The study measures how ChatGPT affects students' writing based on their revisions, but it does not track their writing progress over a long period.
4. It only focuses on ChatGPT and does not compare it with other AI feedback tools, which may limit the findings.

1.7. Organization of the Proposal

This thesis contains five chapters. In the first chapter, the writer talks about the background of the study, research questions, research objectives, theoretical framework, definition of key terms, scope, and limitations of the study. The second chapter provides a review of the literature on writing feedback, AI-generated feedback, and previous studies related to ChatGPT's role in writing instruction. The third chapter explains the research design, participants, data collection methods, and data analysis plan. The fourth chapter presents the findings and discussion based on the collected data. The last chapter concludes the study by summarizing the key findings and providing recommendations for future research.