

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the background of the study, problem identification, research scope, research questions, research objectives, significance of the study, and key terms. It describes why this research is conducted, focusing on how AI-assisted writing especially ChatGPT affects students' English writing skills, plagiarism awareness, and learning engagement. It also outlines the main problems and reasons for the study, defines the limits of the research, and states the questions and objectives. Finally, it explains the value of the study for theory and practice and clarifies important terms to avoid misunderstanding.

1.1 Research Background

Technology has changed many parts of human life especially education. Technology is now widely used to support teaching and learning activities because it can make the process more effective, efficient, and interesting especially in English learning (Kusuma, 2020; Santosa, 2022; Suwastini et al., 2023). This idea is in line with cognitive constructivism seen learning as an active process where students build knowledge through experience and interaction (Ngan & Hercz, 2024). In Indonesia, this view is also supported by the Merdeka Curriculum, which encourages student-centered learning, flexibility, and learner autonomy (Ratnawati et al., 2024). In addition, young people today are very close to technology in their daily live makes the use of digital tools in English learning has become relevant (Kusuma, 2021)

One of the recent developments in educational technology is artificial intelligence (AI). In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, AI can help both teachers and students in many ways. It can give quick feedback, adjust tasks that match with student, and help teachers prepare better learning activities (Dewi et al., 2025). AI-based tools also support students through error correction, practice activities, and performance analysis. It can make learning more interactive and engaging (Santosa, 2022). language learning is a complex process that needs interaction and suitable teaching methods. The use of AI in EFL learning has received much attention from researchers and educators (Bibi & Atta, 2024; Marzuki et al., 2023). This is becoming more common because the practices can be applied very easily in real learning situations (Ali et al., 2023; Kusuma, 2020; Priyatna et al., 2023; Santosa, 2022).

Among the many AI tools available today, ChatGPT has become one of the most discussed in education. ChatGPT is based on natural language processing and can generate responses to help users with different language tasks (Santosa et al., 2024). In English writing, ChatGPT can help students improve grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure, and organization of ideas by giving direct feedback during the writing process (Ho, 2024; Zebua & Katemba, 2024). Previous studies showed that the use of ChatGPT by students commonly to understand vocabulary, correct mistakes, generate ideas, translate texts, and write different kinds of assignments. Students used ChatGPT for writing activities making emails and stories (Enzelina et al., 2023; Kohnke et al., 2023). Some studies found that it can support creativity, collaboration, and participation in

class. Another case showed that teachers used ChatGPT to prepare the materials and assignments (Salwa & Tyas, 2024; Saputra et al., 2025).

The use of ChatGPT is related to writing skill that known as one of the most important parts of English learning skill. Writing is not about expressing ideas, but this about the student's skill to organize ideas, use grammar correctly, choose proper vocabulary, and produce a clear text. However, many students still face problems in writing English. Based on preliminary observation at SMK Negeri 4 Denpasar. The students have difficulty generate the ideas, organizing, follow correct text structure, and use grammar accurately. Many students made mistakes in vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization in writing activities. Their writing is sometimes repetitive and less connected. These problems showed that students need support to improve both the language and the organization of their writing. In this case, ChatGPT may help improvement by the students in revise their language, vocabulary, and produce better writing.

However, the use of ChatGPT in writing class brings some concerns. Since writing often used to measure real language skill in the same time the use of AI tools raises questions about originality, fairness, and authenticity. Some people worry that ChatGPT may weaken conventional learning if students depend on it too much (Hong, 2023). On the other hand, several studies show that ChatGPT can support independent learning, provide fast feedback, and make learning more suitable to students' needs (Baskara & Mukarto, 2023; Farrokhnia et al., 2024; Suwastini et al., 2023). Smart learning systems and machine learning are also expected to become more important in education in the future (Talan, 2021).

Therefore, ChatGPT should be seen not only as a useful tool, but also as an issue that needs to be studied carefully.

Another important issue related to ChatGPT is plagiarism awareness. Plagiarism often discussed in the use of AI in education. Other issues that appear was the reliability of information, academic performance, and dependence on technology, however, these important issues did not discuss in depth. (Ajlouni et al., 2023; Alberth, 2023; Barrot, 2023; Tai et al., 2023; Wahyudin & Andini, 2023). In practice, students used ChatGPT to help them write, but they did not understand the difference between support and academic dishonesty (Ajlouni et al., 2023; Alberth, 2023; Jarrah et al., 2023; Kohnke et al., 2023; Tai et al., 2023; Wahyudin & Andini, 2023). Previous studies stated that issues like plagiarism, data privacy, and academic integrity have not become the main focus in much AI-related research (Kayalı et al., 2023; Mahapatra, 2024; Prasetya & Syarif, 2023). make plagiarism awareness needs more attention, especially in English writing.

In the Indonesian context, the use of artificial intelligence in the classroom needs to be considered in relation to current government policy. Menteri Dalam Negeri Republik Indonesia et al. (2026) emphasizes that the use of digital technology and artificial intelligence in education must align with child protection principles and the goals of national education. Meanwhile, Menteri Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah Republik Indonesia (2025) shows that AI has started formally accommodated in schools through the provision of Coding and Artificial Intelligence as optional subjects. In addition, Menteri Komunikasi dan Informatika Republik Indonesia (2023) underlines the importance of ethical, safe, transparent, and accountable AI usage. Therefore, the use of ChatGPT in English

writing classes should be examined not only in terms of learning effectiveness, but also in terms of ethics, academic integrity, and responsible classroom use.

Besides writing skill and plagiarism awareness, student engagement is also important in vocational English education. Student engagement refers to the attention, participation, motivation, and active involvement in learning activities. Students are engaged will be participated more in discussion. they do tasks seriously and take responsibility for their learning. it can make learning more interactive, fast, and personal help increase engagement because (Baskara & Mukarto, 2023; Kohnke et al., 2023). However, many problems raised that students become too dependent on the use of technology. This may reduce creativity and critical thinking without proper usage (Barrot, 2023). Similar concerns raised about the long-term effect of AI on writing ability and creativity makes more evidence needed in research (Mahapatra, 2024; Song & Song, 2023).

Other issues of previous studies on the use of ChatGPT in EFL learning is that most of them relied on questionnaires or literature reviews. less studies that show the examine how ChatGPT used by teachers and students in real classrooms. It makes classroom issues such as inaccurate correction, overdependence on technology, and reduced creativity still not understood (Kostka & Toncelli, 2023; Zebua & Katemba, 2024). Some researchers have suggested the importance of ethics and AI literacy, but these suggestions are still general and have not been clearly applied in classroom practice (Alberth, 2023; Kostka & Toncelli, 2023; Tai et al., 2023). In addition, only a few studies have clearly shown how ChatGPT is used in daily learning activities (Alberth, 2023; Jarrah et al., 2023).

Research gaps also shown in terms of scope, context, and duration. There were still limited quantitative evidence about the effect of ChatGPT on writing in real learning settings (Alberth, 2023; Barrot, 2023; Kostka & Toncelli, 2023; Tai et al., 2023). Many studies were conducted only in a short time, so it is difficult to know the long-term impact of ChatGPT on students' writing habits, motivation, and engagement (Kayalı et al., 2023; Mahapatra, 2024). Therefore, the researchers suggest that the need for longer study on how ChatGPT affects learning and motivation for long term (Heung & Chiu, 2025; Lo et al., 2024).

In addition, many studies were toom a place in universities or in certain countries. It makes the results could not appropriate generalized to all educational settings especially in vocational high school (Holland & Ciachir, 2025; Kayalı et al., 2023; Song & Song, 2023). Although, some researchers offered theoretical guidance for responsible AI use, only a few studies provide practical teaching guidelines that can be directly used in the classroom (Cotton et al., 2024; Khurma et al., 2024). The concern about academic dishonesty also remains strong, especially when the students use ChatGPT to complete tasks without real learning happening (Lo et al., 2024).

These issues are relevant to vocational English education now days. In vocational high schools, students are expected to develop practical English skills that can support their academic learning and future work. This is in line with the *Merdeka Kurikulum* which encourages students to plan, revise, and edit their writing as part of independent learning (Padmadewi et al., 2023). In this situation, ChatGPT helped students by give quick feedback, vocabulary choice, and support the sentence development during writing. its use must be balanced so that students

still need to develop their own ideas to think critically and write based on their own understanding. Teachers also need to guide students to use technology in a responsible and ethical way (Darmayanti et al., 2018; Santosa et al., 2019).

Considering the problems found in vocational English classrooms, the growing use of AI in language learning, and the limitations of previous studies. This study investigates the effect of ChatGPT on writing skill, plagiarism awareness, and student engagement in vocational English education. This topic is important because the value of ChatGPT should not only be seen from whether it improves students' writing, but also from whether it influences their awareness of academic honesty and their active participation in learning. By examining these three aspects at SMK Negeri 4 Denpasar, this study is expected to provide a clearer understanding of how ChatGPT can be used in vocational English education in an effective, responsible, and meaningful way.

1.2 Problem Identification

Based on the finding from previous studies and also supported by preliminary observations in the research setting. This study identified five related problems that support the need to examine the use of ChatGPT in vocational EFL writing at SMK Negeri 4 Denpasar. Previous studies show that technology and AI offer benefits and challenges in language learning, especially in writing, academic integrity, and student engagement (Cotton et al., 2024; Kohnke et al., 2023; Shadiev & Yang, 2020). However, the main problem in this study based on research evidence and classroom conditions.

The first, writing is one of the most important skills for EFL students. it requires students to generate ideas, organize clearly, use correct language, and

revise. Writing is not a simple activity, but it uses a cognitive process that includes planning, expressing ideas in written form, and reviewing or revising the text (Flower & Hayes, 1981). Because of this, writing instruction is often challenging, especially when students need support to improve content and language use (Richards & Renandya, 2002).

The Second, the difficulty of writing can see not only in theory but also in the research setting. Previous studies assessed writing through content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics (Brown, 2007). The preliminary observation at SMK Negeri 4 Denpasar showed that students faced problems in understand the structure of descriptive text. The student confused how to develop ideas, vocabulary choice, and find grammar mistakes. The students made mistakes in how to spell, capital letters, and punctuation when write a text. These problems made their writing less clear. This makes students needed help not only with the final result but also while writing and revising.

The third, writing in the digital era related to the risk of plagiarism and copy-paste behavior. this saw when students have low awareness of plagiarism and limited skills in paraphrasing also citation. The academic integrity has important values such as honesty, responsibility, and fairness. These values are violated when students present other ideas as their own (ICAI, 2021). Previous study showed that students did not understand plagiarism or did not realize how serious this problem in academic setting, especially when they used online sources without proper citation (Erguvan, 2022; Razi, 2015). In this study, the preliminary observation suggested that some students completed tasks by copy and paste. This

risk become greater when students use AI-generated text without clear guidance and responsibility (Cotton et al., 2024; Jarrah et al., 2023).

Fourth, although students are familiar with digital devices, technology has not been used fully in English learning to support the writing process. Previous studies showed that technology could improve the performance in learning and motivation. It used with good plan and supported by teacher readiness (Shadieff & Yang, 2020). However, numerous issues arise, such as limited teacher training, unequal access, and weak instructional design. These issues reduced the effectiveness of technology integration in the classroom (Rintaningrum, 2023). In the preliminary observation showed that technology did not use consistently to support planning, drafting, and revising. The teachers and students need practical strategies to use technology with responsible and effective for learning.

Finally, recent studies showed that ChatGPT supported language learning in the improvement of writing skills and student engagement. ChatGPT provide quick language support, vocabulary suggestions, and feedback. This help students improve their writing and become more active in learning (Bibi & Atta, 2024; Kohnke et al., 2023; Mahapatra, 2024). However, the literature pointed out ethical concerns such as over dependence, unclear authorship, and academic dishonesty when students submit AI-generated text without revision or acknowledgment (Alberth, 2023; Cotton et al., 2024). Therefore, this study needs real classroom research for clear ethical guideline in the vocational school context so that ChatGPT can support learning without replacing students' own writing efforts.

1.3 Research Limitation

This study limited to Grade X students of the Hotel Accommodation program at SMK Negeri 4 Denpasar. It involved two classes namely X PH 1 and X PH 5. This chosen classes based on the approval of the English teacher and the school principal. This study focused only on descriptive writing text and examined three main variables such as writing skill, plagiarism awareness, and student engagement. The use of ChatGPT applied only for the treatment period make the finding were limited to the context of this study.

1.4 Research Questions

This research aims to address the following key questions:

- 1.4.1. Is there any significant simultaneous effect of using ChatGPT on writing skills and plagiarism awareness of tenth-grade students at SMK Negeri 4 Denpasar?
- 1.4.2. Is there any significant effect of using ChatGPT on the writing skills of tenth -grade students at SMK Negeri 4 Denpasar?
- 1.4.3. Is there any significant effect of using ChatGPT on the plagiarism awareness of tenth-grade students at SMK Negeri 4 Denpasar?
- 1.4.4. How do tenth-grade students at SMK Negeri 4 Denpasar engage in using ChatGPT related to their writing skills and plagiarism awareness?

1.5 Research Objectives

Based on the research questions, this study aims to:

- 1.5.1. To find out the significant simultaneous effect of using ChatGPT on writing skills and plagiarism awareness of tenth-grade students at SMK Negeri 4 Denpasar.

1.5.2. To find out the significant effect of using ChatGPT on the writing skills of eleventh-grade students at SMK Negeri 4 Denpasar.

1.5.3. To find out the significant effect of using ChatGPT on the plagiarism awareness of tenth-grade students at SMK Negeri 4 Denpasar.

1.5.4. To explore the learning engagement of tenth-grade students at SMK Negeri 4 Denpasar in using ChatGPT related to their writing skills and plagiarism awareness.

1.6 Research Significance

This study was important both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it contributed to the development of knowledge about English learning supported by artificial intelligence, especially ChatGPT. Practically, the findings provided useful benefits for students, teachers, schools, and other researchers who were interested in technology-based learning. A more detailed explanation of the theoretical and practical significance was presented in the following subsections.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

This study contributed to the development of knowledge, especially about the use of technology such as ChatGPT in English language learning. This study focused on three main areas:

1.6.1.1. Writing

This study helped increase the understand of how writing could be taught in a more interesting and effective way with the help of AI in the classroom. The used of ChatGPT in the learning process could help students develop ideas, use better grammar, and improve their vocabulary when writing descriptive texts process.

1.6.1.2. Plagiarism Awareness

This study also helped explain how students understood honesty in writing, used their own words, avoided plagiarism, and used AI in a responsible way. Sometimes, students relied too much on AI without realizing that this could lead to dishonest writing. This study focused on six important aspects: the ability to recognize plagiarism, citation skills, understanding of the types and effects of plagiarism, ethical use of information, paraphrasing skills, and students' views on plagiarism. This was important for improving digital literacy and building good writing ethics when using AI in learning.

1.6.1.3. Student Engagement

This study helped increase the understand of student engagement when AI used in the classroom. Student engagement could be seen through four main dimensions such as behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and agentic engagement. With the support of ChatGPT, students become more active in classroom activities to show greater interest in learning, think more deeply, and participated more by asked questions or expressing ideas. Therefore, this study helped explain how AI could support student engagement in English learning.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

This study was also important in practice because it provided useful benefits for parties directly involved in the English learning process, especially in vocational high schools. The used of ChatGPT in writing lessons not only helped students to improve the literacy skills, but also gave teachers and schools opportunities to create learning that was more creative and relevant.

1.6.2.1. For EFL students

The findings of this study showed that ChatGPT help students to improve writing skills, especially in developing ideas, drafting, revising, editing, and rewriting descriptive texts more independently. The results showed that students had better plagiarism awareness such as the importance of originality, proper citation, and responsible use of information. In addition, ChatGPT helps increase students' behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and agentic engagement, so the learning process becomes more active and meaningful.

1.6.2.2. For EFL Teachers

The findings of this study gave a useful idea for English teachers in teaching writing in a more effective, interactive, and ethical way. The results showed that ChatGPT can be used as a learning support tool to help teachers guide students in developing ideas, improving language use, and revising their writing. This study also showed the importance of teacher guidance that make students use the AI responsibly and not depend on it too much.

1.6.2.3. For School

The findings of this study are useful for schools in supporting the use of technology in the teaching and learning process. The results showed that ChatGPT help the improvement of digital literacy, academic integrity, and student engagement in vocational high schools. Therefore, this study helped schools to see the potential of AI as part of learning innovation in 21st-century education.

1.6.2.4. Future Researchers

The findings of this study are useful for reference to future researchers who want to study about the use of ChatGPT in English language learning. The results about writing skill, plagiarism awareness, and student engagement could use for further studies in different educational levels, learning contexts, or language skills.

1.7 Definition of Key Term

The main terms used in this study were defined to avoid confusion. Each term was explained in two forms, namely conceptual definition and operational definition. The conceptual definition provided a theoretical explanation of the meaning of each term based on expert views, while the operational definition described how each term was applied or measured in the study. These two definitions were presented to help readers understand the terms used in this study.

1.7.1 Conceptual Definition

Conceptual definition in this study used to explain the main terms discussed in the research. The main terms are ChatGPT, writing skill, plagiarism awareness, and student engagement with explanation based on expert views and relevant studies to provide a clear conceptual meaning for this study.

1.7.1.1. ChatGPT

ChatGPT is an artificial intelligence model that developed by OpenAI that produce text like human understand. It uses Natural Language Processing and the Generative Pre-trained Transformer framework to produce relevant and contextual responses (Fauzi et al., 2023; Qadir, 2023). In English language learning,

ChatGPT can be used as a learning tool to help students practice English, develop ideas, improve grammar, enrich vocabulary, and receive quick feedback in writing (Hossain & Al Younus, 2025; Pratama & Hastuti, 2024; Zhou et al., 2024). This supports student to organize the writing activities and this helps understand the lesson in easy way (Kohnke et al., 2023; Rahma & Fithriani, 2024). However, ChatGPT should be used carefully because the students may become too dependent on this tool. It may lead to plagiarism or inaccurate information when the usage without proper guidance (Darma et al., 2023; Pratama & Hastuti, 2024; Zhou et al., 2024). Therefore, in this study, ChatGPT was defined as AI-based learning tool that supports students' writing, plagiarism awareness, and engagement in English learning.

1.7.1.2. Writing skill

Writing skill is the ability to express ideas in written form clearly and meaningfully. Writing is not only about producing a final text, but also about planning ideas, turning them into written language, and revising the text to improve it (Flower & Hayes, 1981). In this study, writing skill refers to the ability to write descriptive texts. the students must develop ideas, organize content, use appropriate vocabulary, good grammar, and apply correct mechanics such as spell, capitalization, and punctuation.

1.7.1.3. Plagiarism Awareness

Plagiarism awareness is students' understanding of honesty and responsibility in writing. this includes the ability to recognize plagiarism, the meaning, the effects. use sources properly, write in their own words, and show responsible attitudes toward writing. Violating the values of honesty, responsibility and

fairness in writing is considered unethical or plagiarism (ICAI, 2021). In this study, plagiarism awareness based on six aspects such as source validation, citation skill, the understand of plagiarism, ethical use of information, the skill of paraphrase, and attitudes toward plagiarism (Sabaghinejad et al., 2024). Therefore, plagiarism awareness in this study means students' understanding and awareness of how to avoid dishonest writing and maintain originality in academic work.

1.7.1.4. Student Engagement

Student engagement is the level of how active student participation in the learning process. It can see on how far students participate, pay attention, feel interested, think seriously, and take initiative during learning activities. Fredricks et al. (2004) explained that student engagement includes three dimensions such as behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement. In addition, Reeve & Tseng (2011) added agentic engagement, which refers to students' active contribution in directing own learning. In this study, student engagement includes four dimensions such as behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, cognitive engagement, and agentic engagement. Therefore, student engagement refers to students' active participation, interest, thinking process, and initiative in learning English with the support of ChatGPT.

1.7.2 Operational Definition

In this study, the main variables were defined in practical terms. Operational definitions explain how ChatGPT, writing skill, plagiarism awareness, and student engagement were applied and measured in the research. The definitions helped the researcher choose the indicators, instruments, and methods used to answer the research questions in clear and scientific way.

1.7.2.1. ChatGPT

In this study, ChatGPT used as an AI tool to support students in writing. This tool helped students to develop ideas, improve grammar also vocabulary, and revise descriptive texts. The first, students wrote own draft, then used ChatGPT to get feedback and make revisions. Therefore, ChatGPT was operationally defined as a tool that supported students during the draft and revise process.

1.7.2.2. Writing skill

Writing skill was measured through students' pre-test and post-test scores in descriptive writing. The scoring rubric covered five aspects such as content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. This instrument was adapted from Pratama & Hastuti (2024).

1.7.2.3. Plagiarism Awareness

Plagiarism awareness was measured by a questionnaire based on the Plagiarism Awareness Model from Sabaghinejad et al. (2024). It covered six aspects such as source validation, citation skill, understanding of plagiarism, ethical use of information, paraphrasing skill, and attitude toward plagiarism. In

this study, plagiarism awareness referred to students' understanding of ethical and original writing.

1.7.2.4. Student Engagement

Student engagement evaluated through a focus group discussion to see how active students' participation in the learning process with ChatGPT. It included four dimensions such as behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and agentic engagement. Behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement.

1.8 Publication Target

The findings of this study were intended for publication in the Undiksha repository. In addition, a shorter version of this study was prepared for publication in a national journal indexed in Sinta 3 or higher. The findings were also intended to be published in an international journal focusing on technology in learning, especially in English language teaching.

