

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes research background, problem identification, limitation of the problem, research questions, objectives of the study, and research significances.

1.1 Research Background

Writing is an essential skill of EFL students (Ardianti et al., 2021). Hameed & Ali (2022) emphasizes that writing, along with reading, listening, and speaking, is one of the four important skills. According to Susanti & Agung (2023), writing is a structured process that involves planning, drafting, editing, and producing a final text, also it is enabling students to construct meaningful sentences and communicate clearly. Similarly, Hadi et al. (2021) define writing as a communication process that uses graphic symbols to convey messages to readers, requiring an understanding of vocabulary, grammar, and sentence organization. In other hand, Bora (2023) highlights that writing can help learners record and organize their thoughts while building communication abilities. Thus, writing allows learners to express ideas, feelings, and experiences through written words.

Despite its importance, many learners find writing challenging. Based on Vacalares et al. (2023), the common problems that learners faced, including difficulty with grammar usage especially conjunctions and

prepositions, lack of confidence in grammar knowledge, understanding and applying proper sentence structure. In addition, the other problems that students usually faced are grammar, organizing ideas, and developing critical thinking (Padmadewi & Artini, 2019). Westwood (2013) also explained that writing is a complex task that requires the use of several skills at the same time and in specific order, including the ability to focus, language skills, long-term memory and working memory, motor coordination, critical thinking, and self-awareness in learning. Learners must not only generate ideas but also structure sentence correctly, use appropriate vocabulary, maintain coherence, and apply correct grammar, all at the same time. Therefore, feedback in the writing process is important. This statement supported by Szlachta et al. (2023) that stated feedback is an important part of teachers' support to help students learn how to write correctly. Keh (1990) explained that feedback refers to information provided to a writer that can guides them in making revisions to their work. Feedback can help students to understand their mistake and learn how to make their writing better. Szlachta et al. (2023) also explained that feedback is the part of support that helps students feel more confident, so they keep trying and not be afraid to write. Feedback helps increase students' motivation, which can later improve their learning results (Budhyani et al., 2022). It can also build their confidence in their own abilities. Through feedback, writers can identify areas where their writing was unclear or confusing to the reader, such as missing details, poor structure, underdeveloped ideas, or incorrect of words or tenses (Keh, 1990). That is

align with the goal of giving feedback which aims to help learners fix their mistakes while also enhancing their understanding, fluency, and accuracy in using the language (Wang, 2025). Unfortunately, although feedback is an important part of the learning process of writing, it is often not given effectively. This statement supported by Vacalares et al. (2023) that reported teachers often returned written assignment with only a score, without any comments or correction to guide revision. This study also explained that sometimes feedback is given not necessarily deep. This absence of specific feedback limits students' ability to understand their writing errors and hinders their learning process. Some students also said that their work was not really checked carefully, which made them feel disappointed and think that writing tasks were not important.

Ineffectiveness in providing feedback highlights the need for innovative tools that can offer efficient and real-time feedback. Technology has become an important part of English language teaching. According to Kusuma (2023), integrating technology into teaching helps teachers develop the knowledge and skills needed to teach English effectively. As a result, AI tools such as ChatGPT have gained increasing attention in language learning. AI has become a global phenomenon where it is the latest technological innovations that people everywhere talking about and almost all industries and education sectors have started using it (Maha et al., 2024). Also in the 21st century, using modern technology in teaching and learning is seen as essential (Diah et al., 2020). These make technological tools especially those powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI) have the potential

to overcome these challenges in education field. This statement supported by Kaharuddin (2021) that stated AI can detect students' mistakes in writing and give them feedback. In other hand, Ayeni et al. (2024) also stated that some AI tools can give quick feedback, offer extra help when someone is stuck, or even act like personal tutor. So, using AI in education has the potential to solve those problems.

Other than that, based on Astrini et al. (2020) in teaching writing teacher are also encouraged to use technology, so that students feel more interested and motivated in learning English. AI is one of the technologies that teachers can use for learning English. Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education means using smart computer systems to help make learning more personal and effective for each student (Ayeni et al., 2024).

One of the most prominent AI tools being explored for educational purposes today is ChatGPT. ChatGPT is an Artificial Intelligence chatbot developed by OpenAI that uses technology called Generative Pre-trained Transformer (GPT) (Adiguzel et al., 2023). This study also explained that ChatGPT is designed to understand and generate human-like responses to text input. So, it allowed to perform a wide range of tasks such as answering questions, summarizing texts, writing essays, translating languages, and even creating computer code. In other hand Lo (2023) also stated that ChatGPT has many functions to support student learning such as answering questions, summarizing information, facilitating collaboration, concept checking and exam preparation, drafting assistance, and providing feedback. In the part of providing feedback, it is also validated by Memarian

& Doleck (2023) that explained the integration of ChatGPT can provide students with immediate feedback on their mistakes and learning progress. Kusuma et al. (2024) also reported that ChatGPT helped users paraphrase their writing and identify grammatical mistakes. This suggests that ChatGPT can function as a valuable feedback tool in supporting the development of EFL students' writing skills.

In the context of this study, ChatGPT-generated feedback refers to feedback automatically generated by ChatGPT based on students' uploaded writing texts. The feedback focuses on several aspects of writing, namely content and development, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. Through this process, students receive immediate suggestions and corrections to improve the overall quality of their writing.

Some researchers have conducted study about the potential of ChatGPT-generated feedback, for example study by Teng (2024) examined the experiences and perceptions of 45 English Foreign Language (EFL) students in Macau in using ChatGPT for one semester. The results of the mixed-method approach revealed that the use of ChatGPT significantly increased students' writing motivation, self-efficiency, engagement, and collaborative writing tendencies. The instant feedback provided by ChatGPT encouraged students to be more engaged in the revision process and strengthened their confidence in their writing ability. These findings suggest that ChatGPT can be an effective supporting tool in process-based writing instruction, especially in contexts where teachers face time

constraints and high workloads in providing personalized and detailed feedback.

Furthermore, study by Polakova & Ivenz (2024) used a quasi-experimental design to evaluate the impact of ChatGPT on the writing skills of 110 EFL university students. Quantitative results showed significant improvements in linguistic aspects such as grammar, clarity, passive voice usage, and text cohesion after students received feedback from ChatGPT. Focus group interviews also revealed that most participants found the feedback from ChatGPT as useful, detailed, and encouraging critical reflection on their own writing. Although some students had difficulty in understanding or applying the advice provided, the majority perceived an improvement in their writing skills and an appreciation of technology as a support for independent learning. These findings confirm that ChatGPT has significant potential to support writing learning in the digital age, especially for generation of learners who are familiar with technology.

Although ChatGPT offers several advantages in providing rapid and personalized feedback, some studies have also highlighted its risks and limitations in educational settings. Teng (2024) found that EFL learners perceived ChatGPT's feedback as useful and powerful. However, they also reported several weaknesses, such as overly formal responses, irrelevant comments, difficulty in understanding feedback, and the lack of human interaction that teachers can provide. The study emphasized that ChatGPT cannot fully replace teachers' roles in writing instruction and should instead function as a supportive tool alongside teacher guidance. Similarly, Steiss

et al. (2024) argued that AI-generated feedback may sometimes be inaccurate or misleading, making AI literacy essential for both teachers and students. The researchers stressed that users need to understand the limitations of AI tools in order to use them appropriately in writing instruction. Furthermore, Graham & Milan (2025) explained that excessive reliance on ChatGPT may reduce students' independent thinking, deep processing, and critical evaluation skills if it is used without proper guidance. Nevertheless, when integrated carefully with appropriate pedagogical strategies, AI tools can still support idea generation and enhance students' learning processes. These findings indicate that although ChatGPT has strong potential to support writing instruction, its implementation should be examined critically, especially among younger learners in the Indonesian EFL context.

Despite the previous studies that examined the benefits and limitations of ChatGPT in writing instruction, several important gaps still remain in the existing literature. Most of the previous studies and implementations have focused on global or higher education contexts. There is still limited empirical research investigating the effectiveness of ChatGPT-generated feedback on junior high school students' writing skills, particularly in the Indonesian EFL context. Most previous studies examined senior high school or university students and were conducted in countries outside Indonesia. Therefore, the effectiveness of ChatGPT-generated feedback for younger learners in Indonesian classrooms remains underexplored. This indicates a clear research gap related to students' age

level and educational context. To address this issue, the present study will be conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Singaraja, focusing on eighth-grade students.

Based on preliminary observations through interviews with English teachers at the school, teachers face heavy administrative workloads and teach classes consisting of approximately thirty students. These conditions limit their ability to provide detailed and individualized feedback on students' writing. The teachers also reported that many eighth-grade students still experience difficulties in several aspects of writing, particularly spelling, sentence structure, and vocabulary development. These findings suggest that students require more intensive feedback to improve their writing skills. Therefore, the use of ChatGPT-generated feedback is considered worth investigating as an alternative tool to support writing instruction. Moreover, students at SMPN 1 Singaraja are already familiar with ChatGPT and are permitted to bring mobile phones to school with teacher approval, creating a supportive environment for implementing this technology in the classroom. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effect of ChatGPT-generated feedback on the writing skills of junior high school students in Indonesia and to provide deeper insights into its potential role in enhancing students' writing performance at this educational level.

1.2 Problem Identification

Artificial intelligence (AI) is now being used more in education and is seen as something that can really help students learn better. Some of the studies state that AI tools such as ChatGPT can help students learn better,

especially in giving feedback in writing. This tool can give fast and personalized feedback that may help students improve their writing skills more effectively than traditional ways. But most of the studies have been done in university or senior high school setting. So, there is very limited attention given to middle school setting, especially in the Indonesian context. Meanwhile, preliminary observation through interview showed that teachers at SMPN 1 Singaraja have a heavy administrative workload and teach classes with around thirty students, which limits their ability to provide detailed individual feedback. Additionally, 8th grade students usually faced difficulties in spelling, structure sentences, and expanding their vocabulary. This phenomenon makes the implementation of ChatGPT-generated feedback is worth to investigate because as what previous theory said that ChatGPT-generated feedback has a potential to provide personalized feedback.

So, this study seeks to address these gaps by examining the effect of ChatGPT-generated feedback on the writing skills of 8th grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Singaraja. By employing a quantitative research method, this research aims to contribute new empirical evidence to support or challenge existing claims about the potential of ChatGPT-generated feedback on students' writing ability. Specifically, it aims to provide a clearer explanation of whether ChatGPT can affect writing performance among Junior High School students.

1.3 Limitation of the Problem

In order to give a proper interpretation of this study, the researcher provides the limitations of this study. The limitation of this study is that it focused on analyzing the effect of the ChatGPT-generated Feedback on 8th grade students' writing skills at SMP Negeri 1 Singaraja. Where the effect of the application of this ChatGPT-generated feedback was analyzed to determine whether there was a significant difference between classes taught writing in a conventional way and classes taught writing by applying ChatGPT-generated feedback. Furthermore, the scope of writing skills analyzed in this study included content and development, vocabulary, organization, grammar, and mechanics.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the research background above, the researcher created the following research question:

1. Is there significant difference on 8th grade students' writing skills between who are taught by ChatGPT-generated feedback and students who are taught conventionally at SMP Negeri 1 Singaraja?
2. Which aspects of writing demonstrated the highest performance in the use of ChatGPT-generated feedback?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

According to the research question above, the researcher created the following objective of this research:

1. The purpose of this study is to investigate the significant difference in writing skills between students who are taught using ChatGPT-generated feedback and students who are taught conventionally at SMP Negeri 1 Singaraja.
2. This study also aims to identify which aspects of writing skills that demonstrated the highest performance in the use of ChatGPT-generated feedback.

1.6 Research Significances

The significances of this study are:

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this study is expected to provide knowledge related to the use of ChatGPT as a feedback tool in writing. These findings may provide insights about how feedback that generated by ChatGPT can guide students in the process of writing. This study also may provide theoretical understanding of how feedback generated by AI can enrich existing feedback theories.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

Practically, this study aims to provide valuable contributions to English teachers, junior school students, and other researchers.

1.6.2.1 For English Teachers

This study expected to be a study that useful for English teachers as a reference for them to apply ChatGPT-

generated feedback for teaching writing skill in Junior High School level.

1.6.2.2 For Junior High School Students

This study expected can give a positive effect on students' writing skill through ChatGPT-generated feedback.

1.6.2.3 For other Researcher

This study expected to be a reference for other researchers who are also interested in conducting research in the same field.

