TEACHING ACADEMIC WRITING WITH CHATGPT: OPPORTUNITIES AND LIMITATIONS

Sodiqjon Ibragimov

Namangan State Institute of Foreign Languages

Abstract: This article examines the influence of large language models (LLMs) like ChatGPT on the teaching and learning of academic writing in higher education. The rapid development of artificial intelligence technologies is creating new opportunities for students and teachers, as well as serious pedagogical and ethical problems. The article examines the positive aspects of ChatGPT in developing academic writing skills, including opportunities such as generating ideas, improving text structure, overcoming language barriers, and providing personalized education. At the same time, the negative consequences of the uncontrolled use of this tool, such as the weakening of critical thinking ability, the rise of "AI-plagiarism," the unreliability of information ("hallucinations"), and stylistic uniformity, are evaluated based on scientific sources. The article concludes by presenting practical recommendations for integrating ChatGPT responsibly into the educational process, utilizing it as a "co-pilot," and maintaining academic integrity.

Keywords: ChatGPT, academic writing, artificial intelligence, large language models (LLMs), critical thinking, academic integrity, plagiarism, educational technologies, pedagogy

Academic writing is one of the fundamental skills of higher education, requiring students to create clear, logical, and evidence-based texts. With the emergence of Large Language Models (LLMs) like ChatGPT, developed by OpenAI in recent years, the landscape of teaching and learning academic writing is fundamentally changing. While these technologies are an unprecedented aid tool for students on one hand, they pose new pedagogical and ethical challenges for teachers and educational institutions on the other.

The purpose of this article is to comprehensively analyze the opportunities and limitations of using ChatGPT in the process of teaching academic writing. We will examine how this tool can enhance students' writing skills, while also considering the risks associated with its application, including the weakening of critical thinking, plagiarism, and the violation of academic integrity. The article is aimed at providing practical recommendations for the responsible integration of ChatGPT into the educational process.

Artificial intelligence, particularly generative models like ChatGPT, create unique opportunities to enhance and enrich the academic writing process rather than automating it. When applied correctly, these technologies can become a powerful pedagogical tool in developing students' writing skills. It is appropriate to examine this process in several key directions. One of the most difficult stages of academic writing is starting the research. Many students face "blank page syndrome," struggling to figure out how to cover the topic, what research questions to pose, or how to structure the article. Precisely at this point, ChatGPT can serve as an effective assistant. A student can input general ideas about their topic and ask ChatGPT to generate potential research directions, alternative viewpoints, or a list of questions for discussion. For example, a student working on the topic "The impact of sustainable tourism

on the local economy" can formulate more specific research questions through ChatGPT, such as "What opportunities does ecotourism create for small businesses?" or "How can the negative effects of tourist influx on local cultural heritage be minimized?".

Studies show that tools like ChatGPT significantly accelerate the initial "brainstorming" process and motivate students to delve deeper into the topic (Gao et al., Nature, 2023). This tool does not replace human creativity in generating ideas, but rather serves as a catalyst for it. By offering the student various perspectives, it expands their frame of thought and removes the psychological barrier in determining the starting point of the research.

The quality of academic text is determined not only by its content but also by its language and structure. Especially for students learning English as a Second Language (ESL), the correct use of grammatical rules, punctuation, and academic vocabulary can pose a serious challenge. ChatGPT functions as a powerful corrector and stylist in this regard. It not only finds simple spelling and grammatical errors but also offers suggestions for adapting sentences to academic style requirements, replacing words with synonyms, or expressing complex thoughts more fluently.

For example, a student might input a simple sentence like "This thing makes the economy better" and ask ChatGPT to turn it into academic language. The result yields variants such as "This factor significantly contributes to economic improvement" or "This phenomenon stimulates economic growth". This process is not merely text correction but an active learning tool for the student. By seeing their mistakes and how they were corrected, the student learns how to avoid similar errors in the future. As researcher M. Sallam noted, such tools help researchers save time and increase the quality of text when preparing their work for prestigious journals (International Journal of Surgery, 2023).

Sometimes students have excellent ideas but cannot express them in written form clearly and logically. In this case, ChatGPT can play the role of a "sparring partner". The student can explain their rough, confusing thoughts to ChatGPT and ask it to rework those ideas into systematized, logically connected paragraphs. This process helps the student see the weak and strong points of their argument and fill in the logical gaps between ideas.

Furthermore, ChatGPT is very convenient for paraphrasing and summarization. When writing a literature review in research work, the student needs to express the main idea of a complex scientific article in their own words. By inputting the original text into ChatGPT, one can ask for a short summary or a version expressed in different words. This is an important skill for avoiding plagiarism while simultaneously grasping the core essence of the source. Of course, the student's task here is not to blindly copy the resulting output, but to critically analyze it, adapt it to their own scientific work, and certainly provide a proper reference to the original source.

In the traditional education system, a teacher's individual approach to every student is physically limited. ChatGPT, however, offers flexible assistance tailored to the unique needs and pace of each student. It is a personal tutor available 24/7. While strengthening grammar might be important for one student, another might need to practice constructing arguments. ChatGPT can provide specific exercises, examples, and explanations in both cases. This personalized approach helps students develop self-regulation and independent learning skills. The student identifies their strengths and weaknesses and learns to use ChatGPT purposefully to solve a specific problem. This, in turn, increases the student's activity and responsibility in the learning

process. Tools like ChatGPT can play an important role in transitioning from the "teacher - sole source of knowledge" model to the "teacher - facilitator (guide) of the learning process" model.

Along with ChatGPT's attractive opportunities, its use in the academic environment raises a number of serious problems and potential risks. Ignoring these limitations can have long-term negative consequences not only on the quality of education but also on the intellectual development of students. One of the biggest concerns is the weakening of critical thinking and independent analysis skills in students due to the passive use of ChatGPT. If a student, instead of seeking answers to a complex question, comparing various sources, and drawing conclusions, simply inputs the question into ChatGPT and receives a ready answer, they bypass fundamental cognitive processes. As noted by Dwivedi and colleagues, this "outsourcing of cognitive load" hinders the development of students' important skills such as problem-solving, evaluating arguments, and synthesizing original ideas (International Journal of Information Management, 2023).

The goal of academic writing is not merely to recount information, but to analyze it, interpret it, and create new knowledge. ChatGPT, however, often provides the most general, statistically probable answer based on its existing database. These answers might seem correct on the surface, but they lack deep analysis, subtle nuances, and original perspectives. The student's task is to question these answers, verify their foundations, and construct their own independent argument. Otherwise, there is a risk that the educational process will turn into a mere "information transfer" exercise.

ChatGPT has added a new and complex dimension to the concept of plagiarism. While traditional plagiarism (copying another author's text) is easily detected using special software, AI-generated text is technically considered original because it has not been copied verbatim from anywhere. This has led to a new phenomenon called "AI-plagiarism". Many universities and academic journals are still in the process of developing clear policies and guidelines on what extent artificial intelligence can be used and how it should be properly cited.

The problem is that students often struggle to distinguish where assistance ends and where cheating begins. For instance, while using AI for grammar correction is acceptable, having an entire section written by it is considered a gross violation of academic integrity. Therefore, teachers must explain the ethical standards of AI usage to students and clearly define the boundaries between original thought and AI assistance. Otherwise, a culture of "how not to get caught" might develop among students, which contradicts the original purpose of education.

ChatGPT generates text based on patterns in its database and cannot distinguish "truth" from "falsehood". This leads to a phenomenon known as "hallucinations": the AI can confidently provide incorrect information, fake facts, and even citations to non-existent academic sources. For example, it might generate a quotation attributed to a scholar who never said it, or "invent" non-existent research results (Ji et al., ACM Computing Surveys, 2023).

For an inexperienced student, fact-checking this information is very difficult. If a student accepts ChatGPT as a reliable source of knowledge and uses the information obtained from it without verification in their work, their scientific paper will become completely unfounded and unreliable. This seriously damages not only the student's grade but also their culture of conducting scientific research. Therefore, it is necessary to impress upon students that any AI-

generated information must be re-verified through primary and reliable sources (academic journals, books, official reports).

ChatGPT generates text based on certain stylistic patterns. If many students widely use the same tool to write their papers, there is a risk that their written work will become stylistically uniform. These texts written with a "robot voice" lack personal expression, originality, and creative brilliance. Science, however, develops not only through facts but also through new, unexpected approaches, original metaphors, and a personal "voice". Academic writing is not merely a technical skill but a creative process reflecting the author's worldview, thinking style, and personality. Excessive reliance on ChatGPT can hinder a student's development of their unique writing style. In the long term, this undermines the diversity and richness of academic discourse. It is important to encourage students to use ChatGPT as a tool for refining ideas, but to "animate" the final text with their own personal voice and style.

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