# Utilizing Artificial Intelligence in Writing Feedback: Benefits and Challenges for First-Year Students at Hanoi University of Industry

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	ABSTRACT		

This paper analyses the application of AI technology to the process of delivering writing feedback to first-year students of Hanoi University of Industry (HaUI). AI brings an effective solution to improve writing skills since one wants to receive individual and effective instruction. In this article, the authors discuss how there are opportunities for the use of AI to improve feedback quality, time, and flexibility in line with the various AI tools and platforms that cater to young writers. It also explores the implications and difficulty of incorporating AI-driven feedback systems for the classroom, like having issues with technology use and the roles and participation of teachers. This research uses qualitative data collection techniques, interviewing 10 teachers and focusing group discussions with 50 students majoring in business. Drawing on the analytical framework outlined above, this article examines the possible benefits and limitations of AI written feedback applicable to HaUI and offers directions for teachers and administrators in comparable contexts who want to utilize AI technology for writing feedback to support learners.

# Introduction

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, writing

feedback, potentials,

challenges, benefits

Technological development has continued to progress at very high rates, with developments in AI, for instance, changing the way students receive feedback on their work in various elements of education. Hanoi University of Industry (HaUI) is one of the particular contexts in which the requirement to offer professional teaching of writing is rather acute, especially in the framework of English Occupational Purposes (EOP) courses for first-year students. These students, originating from various fields, are challenged by the need to write English as a second language and, at the same time, learn specific interpersonal communication skills essential in their respective areas of practice. Because writing is an area that needs constant feedback, they must get timely, personalized, and practical feedback so as to help them enhance their

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achievements in their academic needs and their future careers.

At present, writing feedback at HaUI is mostly provided by the teachers in the classroom during the discussions and in the written assignments submitted through the university learning management system (LMS), eop.edu.vn. However, due to increased class size and limited resources, students do not receive feedback as they desire, and the feedback process takes time and may not be as relevant as when students need to enhance their writing ability. That is why embracing AI-assisted tools can be the answer to this issue. AI technologies in the form of feedback writing assistants have the ability to improve the quality and speed of the feedback process by delivering real-time, individualized feedback to student's specific areas of weakness in writing.

However, with regard to using AI in feedback, there are the following concerns: disparity in technological competence among students and teachers, and teacher involvement and control. These problems need to be solved effectively so that the application of the AI tools will not pose a challenge in the HaUI educational setting. This article also tries to raise the possibilities and concerns of using such feedback tools for the first-year students at HaUI with AI's support and discuss the possibility of applying these tools.

Though various forms of AI tools and technologies such as Grammarly or Turnitin have already entered the educational processes all over the world and a number of studies state their use for enhancing the educational process and outcomes, little is still known about their effectiveness and applicability in the contexts of EOP programs in Vietnamese universities including HaUI. The current research also focuses on enhancing the students' general writing accuracy and rarely lacks proper consideration for the EOP first-year students' specific areas of concern, including technical-business writing. Furthermore, there is a lack of information concerning various issues that teachers encounter when working with AI feedback and traditional assigning of lessons, as well as individual students' needs in big, multicultural classes. This research aims to fill these gaps through AI applications in the context of HaUI and its EOP program. It also offers information and suggestions to teachers and administrators who wish to use AI to improve their students' writing performance.

# Current English Teaching and Learning Framework at HaUI

As a pioneer in teaching English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) for technical and economic students in Vietnam, HaUI has carried out the EOP project since 2015 and has gained some achievements. At this university, the flipped classroom model is applied to all EOP classes of eight major groups including Automotive Technology, Business, Chemical Technology, Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Garment Technology and Fashion Design, Mechanical Engineering, Information Technology, and Tourism and Hotel Reception.

Eight non-majored English groups at HaUI study EOP in 6 semesters, from the first year to the third year. Students have to complete the EOP curricula in 30 credits. For each module, students study 5 credits equivalent to 75 periods, of which 40 are taught in face-to-face (F2F) classes with teachers and 35 are self-study on eop.edu.vn. An online lesson includes the following

contents: Vocabulary, Grammar, Listening, Reading, Writing, Pronunciation, and Speaking. Each section is designed with topic-related exercises for students to learn and practice before joining F2F classes. During the F2F classes, students are asked to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned online to perform class activities in groups, pairs, and individually. Before class, students study online on the website eop.edu.vn. They learn key language knowledge in Vocabulary and Grammar and practice language skills in Listening, Reading, Writing, and Pronunciation. Students learn pronunciation and how to write words in the Vocabulary section. For the Grammar part, students learn tenses, forms, usages, grammatical structures, and useful expressions related to the topic of each unit. At the end of the Vocabulary, Grammar section, students can test their online language knowledge through section tests. For Listening and Reading skills, students practice various tasks such as listening and reading for main ideas or detailed information. Students can practice writing skills at different levels, from writing simple to complex sentences, paragraphs, emails, letters, etc. In addition, students have to complete their writing tasks and speaking videos and then upload them on the online learning site so that teachers can give comments and marks. Besides, students have 2 F2F classes (100 minutes per class), which is equivalent to 4 periods each week, with teachers and other students to practice their English-speaking skills. When studying each unit, students are required to understand the overall objectives and the objectives of each lesson. The curriculum consists of 8 units with two lessons for each. A F2F lesson is designed from 4 to 5 activities with one warmup activity and 3-4 learning activities. After class, students continue to log in to the learning site eop.edu.vn to complete the remaining online tasks like section tests, unit tests, and writing and speaking assignments. Teachers use the level of online completion and the scores of these online tests to determine the conditions for students to take the end-of-term exams.

#### **Potential Benefits of Using AI for Writing Feedback**

#### Improving Feedback Quality

AI applications have gradually been identified as useful in offering timely, individualized, and positive feedback to students' writing. These systems employ natural language processing (NLP) techniques to deal with most standard grammatical, syntax, and style problems. Tran (2024) stated in her study that with the help of AI tools, students progressed much in coherence, cohesion, and lexical resources, as building up knowledge of vocabulary and connectors and that the application of an AI-powered writing assistant improved students' overall writing quality and helped them to organize their thoughts. According to the study by Cahyono and Kurniawan (2020), the use of AI to enhance feedback systems, such as fast, accurate, and contextual feedback, enhanced the quality of writing among students. Additionally, Liu et al. (2020) also outlined that alongside identifying the errors and provide better awareness of language processes. Other researchers, Klein et al. (2019) also discussed that using AI is more helpful in improving the quality of feedback by stressing positive rather than negative

## feedback.

## Enhancing Timeliness and Scalability

Another impressive advantage that AI has brought to the educational process is the possibility of giving instant feedback to a large number of students, which would not be easy for a teacher. This scalability is particularly helpful in mitigating the amount of work teachers have to do regarding grading, they can concentrate on more engagement with students. In the same study, Xiong et al. (2020) emphasized that large classrooms reap the advantages of AI as the immediate feedback helps students learn faster while it does not pressure the teacher to respond immediately. Moreover, Cahyono and Kurniawan (2020) explained how AI feedback can be used in relation to the level of education with regard to delivering feedback efficiency depending on the number of students in the class.

## Facilitating Skill Development

Technology also aligns student learning through the usage of intelligent learning platforms that monitor and track the student's performance and, therefore, adjust learning needs. Nazaretsky et al. (2022) established that such adaptive systems can follow the learning progress of individuals, and thus present learning paths that fit the student's abilities. This approach becomes useful in helping students develop specialized skills since it helps to identify specific areas that students need to work on. In the study by Miranty and Widiati (2021), the participants who learned from AI learning tools said they achieved better writing scores than those who received traditional feedback.

## Supporting the Flipped Classroom Model

The use of the flipped classroom, in which the core content is delivered outside of class, and class time is spent on interactive activities, is built on the support of AI tools that can deliver feedback outside of school hours. The use of AI has improved students' writing practice by enabling them to edit their work before discussion in the classes. Huang and Yang (2023) indicated that the flipped classroom enhanced by the use of AI has the benefits of promoting higher student autonomy and readiness. As Li and Peng (2022) pointed out, the flipped class environment requires students to use AI in writing practice outside the classroom while actual classroom time is dedicated to higher-order thinking skills.

## Challenges and Considerations in AI Implementation

## Technological Accessibility

The greatest difficulty that one finds when using AI for writing feedback is that the technology is not available to everyone. This is because many universities, colleges, and students do not have proper infrastructure like good Internet connection or are equipped with the latest hardware to efficiently use AI in education. Huang et al. (2019) found that the disproportionate adoption of this technology can expand the gap in learning opportunities and limit the flow of timely and quality feedback to some learners. In addition, the development of information technologies and the level of digital competence of students and teachers act as important conditions when using AI tools. As highlighted by Lo and Hew (2023), if students or teachers fail to discover such technologies, they will fail to apply the AI tools to their maximum capability. To eradicate such inequalities, there is a need to ensure that the students and teachers

are given enough support and training for the fairness of technology that should complement the writing abilities of students and teachers through AI.

### Teacher Involvement and Control

Despite the fact that AI gains the capacity to automate and improve specific properties of feedback, it is still important to control the ratio of AI-generated and human feedback. There is a feedback loop where teachers are able to interpret, contextualize, and individualize what they are doing and what AI cannot. According to Bali (2017), the excessive use of AI in a classroom results in feedback that eliminates personal factors, making students lose the essence that a teacher provides with certain authority and human feeling. Thus, the role of AI should be focused on supporting the teacher's activity as a source of feedback.

The other challenge is a lack of readiness for teachers to properly prepare for the utilization of AI in their profession. Some possible reasons why some teachers may be reluctant to use AI: low self-efficiency in applying such technologies or concern that the feedback process will be wade. Luckin et al. (2016) emphasized that AI only succeeds when the teacher training programs cover its advantages and disadvantages. Teacher practices of flexibility in AI-supported learning environments encompass technology-mediated competencies and approaches to integrate AI feedback into conventional practices. The study also hypothesized that the best way to incorporate AI is when teaching decisions are in the teacher's hands, and AI is only assisting the teacher in delivering instructions.

### AI Tools for Writing Feedback

### Popular AI Tools for Writing Feedback

Currently, other AI-based applications such as Grammarly, Turnitin, and WriteLab are actively used in the educational process in order to give feedback on writing. Grammarly is one of the leading tools, and it utilizes NLP in order to detect grammatical, punctual, and stylistic errors and offers suggestions to change them. Among the benefits presented by Sanosi (2022), the application proved that it is useful for students to determine areas they need to avoid while learning how to write more quickly and fluidly. Usually associated with aspects of plagiarism detection, Turnitin now offers an AI writing feedback service capable of boosting academic integrity and organization of papers. Owan et al. (2023) pointed out that utilizing AI components of Turnitin, such as Feedback Studio indeed assists students in comprehending and improving their academic written output. Another considerably less popular but still used AI to provide feedback on readability, interest, and variations of sentences is WriteLab, which proved especially beneficial for deeper analysis of certain texts, as seen by Dong (2023).

All of these tools give feedback on something as simple as the correct and wrong usage of some grammar rules or as complex as style and content choice and, therefore, are suitable for almost any learning environment.

## The Use of AI Tools in HaUI's Context

At HaUI, the first-year students who have enrolled in the EOP program will benefit greatly from the application of these AI tools. The specific needs of EOP students, such as pointing out

weaknesses in business communication and technical writing, could be addressed by Grammarly and Turnitin. For example, Grammarly's built-in prompt for the necessity of improving formal writing can give instant feedback about the mistakes students make regarding sentence structure and word choice, which are crucial elements in business writing. Maudilidina and Wibowo (2022) agreed with the idea that AI tools like Grammarly enhanced the students' technical writing skills and offered them feedback that corresponded to their level.

Furthermore, plagiarism detection tools are one of the key benefits for an academic institution such as HaUI because students have to learn appropriate approaches to research and citations. Owan et al. (2023) pointed out that students can obtain original work by integrating Turnitin with an AI feedback assistant to help them understand academic writing guidelines.

In this specific context, these AI tools can be used in practice to provide the ongoing writing development of EOP students at HaUI through writing assignments and projects. For instance, Grammarly can be implemented into daily writing activities and essay assignments where students write their home assignments and, in return, receive feedback concerning such writing criteria as task fulfillment, vocabulary, grammar, and richness of ideas within minutes. This could save a lot of time that teachers spend marking simple mistakes, and give teachers more time to teach values such as critical thinking and structure of a good argument. As stated by Laflen (2023), the active utilization of AI feedback as a learning material contributes to the student's ability to write independently of the teacher to revise their papers before the submission of their final copies.

In addition, Turnitin's Feedback Studio could be also used during the development of bigger projects like research papers to facilitate formative comments on the further arrangement of the content and corrected citations. Alharbi and Al-Hoorie (2020) found that students who employed Turnitin to submit several versions of the work were inclined to make deeper changes, proving enhanced comprehension of academic writing rules. This is in line with the current HaUI's first-year EOP student's needs, where a majority of them finds it hard to write good and properly formatted technical reports.

# Methodology

# Design of the study

A qualitative research method is employed to explore the teacher and student perceptions of AI technologies for writing feedback. The research aims to find out students' attitudes towards the advantages, difficulties, and outcomes of AI-based feedback in writing assignments; this will be achieved by administering semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions.

## **Participants**

The study includes 10 EOP teachers and 50 students majoring in business at HaUI who are taking EOP courses. It was done according to their experience using AI-based feedback tools, ensuring that they have diverse exposure to AI in education, knowledge, and academic fields.

### Data collection

The interviews were conducted with the teachers and students separately in order to understand their viewpoints, attitudes, and experiences with using AI to provide feedback on students' writing assignments. The interviews were unstructured, so participants could state only those opinions that correspond to the major aspects, including the quality of feedback, the interaction with AI, and its function in skill development. Teachers and students participated in two separate focus groups so that they could involve peers in their discussion and reflection on the situation. These conversations generated a rich source of qualitative data and group learning about people's use of AI tools for writing feedback.

## **Findings and discussions**

The results of this study revealed a range of perspectives about the use of AI technologies for generating feedback on writing at HaUI and the benefits and challenges of its implementation in teachers' and students' experiences. From focus groups and semi-structured interviews, more detailed insights are received regarding these tools and their impacts on writing.

## Perceived benefits of AI-Driven feedback

Both the teachers and students mentioned that the speed and efficiency of the feedback that the AI gives is an issue. Some participants were pleased to know that AI tools like Grammarly or Turnitin enable immediate rectification of simple mistakes such as grammatical, spelling, or punctuation. This, in turn, helped students to focus more on what they intended to achieve. In an interview, one student stated:

"I can enhance my writing much faster due to using Grammarly since I receive suggestions immediately on the mistakes I make when typing. I do not have to wait for the teacher to correct every small mistake."

In addition, teachers also found that using AI tools lightened their workload and helped them pay closer attention to the broader features of students' writing. A teacher commented:

"The AI corrects all the easy things like grammar and spelling which helps free me up to look at things like how the actual argument being made and critical thinking process evidenced in the students' writing."

This is in accordance with the overall objective of applying AI to complement rather than replace human feedback, as it enables teachers to give more personalized feedback on the higher-order writing skills.

## Challenges and limitations of AI feedback

The study also identified significant factors that hinder the use of AI in producing comments. Another issue for concern amongst the teachers was that the AI tools were good at correcting simple grammatical errors but lacked the depth and insight to give useful comments on many high-level assignments, such as logic, tone, and creativity. Some teachers reported that after writing and receiving feedback, the students might believe that writing simply corrects grammar while ignoring the enhancement of critical thinking and persuasive skills. One teacher reflected during a focus group discussion: "AI systems are unable to fully comprehend the nuances of an argument or creative writing. They work well for technical fixes, but not for the more complex abilities we are attempting to impart."

Students also found that the use of AI was limited when faced with more complicated writing problems. One participant said:

"The AI is helpful when I make little errors, but occasionally I feel like it does not fully grasp what I am saying. It provides grammatical comments, but not my thoughts."

This underlines the need for constant, active teacher involvement in the writing process to ensure that student needs are met fully by providing more than grammar corrections.

The impact on student engagement and skill development

Another important result is how the usage of AI feedback affects the writing interest and improvement of the students. Several students said they felt more confident in their writing because they could handle technical problems without assistance. For example, a participant explained:

"I feel more confident using the AI tool because it tells me what is wrong and how to fix it. Writing helps me become more self-sufficient."

Other students also indicated that they felt more confident and took more responsibility for their writing edits than before. Teachers described such reliance on AI only in terms of potential modification on the surface level. According to a teacher:

"Students are just correcting what the AI has identified while they may have other problems with their writing, failure of argument or coherence for instance."

This means that although students become more independent when using AI tools, teachers are responsible for helping students write with more reflection and analysis.

The role of professional development for teachers

The results reveal that an emphasis on professional development should be considered for AI tool implementation. However, most teachers interviewed admitted that they were not ready to take advantage of AI in the classroom. One teacher remarked:

"The use of AI tools is useful, though I think that I require further professional development on how I may incorporate them into learning and teaching effectively."

Recognizing that fact, HaUI hosted a series of workshops for professional development that addressed the interpretation of AI-generated feedback and how to apply it to the current curriculum. These trainings ensured that teachers gained confidence in their capacity for using AI. As one participant shared:

"After the training, I felt more prepared to employ AI technologies in addition to my own comments, as one participant noted. It improved my ability to balance the two kinds of feedback."

This suggests that for AI technologies to be effectively adopted in practice, teachers must be trained to ensure that the applications do not complicate the teaching process.

#### Continuous evaluation and feedback loops

The final idea that came out of the discussions was the importance of constantly gathering feedback to ensure that AI technologies remain on course and useful. All respondents highlighted the fact that evaluations of the tools and their functionality should be done frequently. As AI technology advances, one teacher proposed that:

"We continue to evaluate these technologies. What functions well today might not be effective tomorrow."

One participant remarked:

"It is important to keep improving the AI tools based on our feedback, so they can help us better in the future. Students continued to endorse the idea of continuous evaluation."

In the long run, with continuous evaluation of the student's performance and feedback from HaUI teachers, the application of AI technologies will remain relevant in improving the quality of the written comments.

AI tools integrated into the HaUI writing feedback process have several advantages, particularly in terms of writing efficiency and students' decision-making on technical corrections. However, the results also reveal more concerning issues, especially in relation to higher-order writing skills. It is, thus, important to view AI feedback as a complementary set of feedback to human feedback. The key factors affecting the applicability of AI tools in writing encompass the ongoing assessment of these tools and the development of current practices. These interventions put HaUI in a better place to leverage AI technologies while at the same time ensuring the balanced development of students' skills.

The results of the work are consistent with Cahyono and Kurniawan (2020) and Xiong et al. (2020), who clearly defined the benefits of AI feedback on the quality and speed of feedback to writing. The study by Duong et al. (2024) found several important effects of using AI in writing education for both students and teachers. Students receive feedback and comments quickly so they can complete their assignments on time and effectively. Not only does students' learning productivity increase, but their grades also improve. As AI technology develops, it will help students and teachers speed up the academic writing process. Like their research, this study found the students benefited from the real-time feedback that they received from the teacher, which made their writing process much more effective and interesting.

However, the study also has some similar limitations to the one by Bali (2017). All the teachers interviewed from HaUI raised issues related to AI's feedback deficiency on complicated tasks, including logical arrangements and creativity.

## Conclusion

Applying AI techniques to provide writing feedback at HaUI can enhance the timeliness and effectiveness of feedback and improve the educational process of the students. Due to timely, personalized, and accurate feedback, AI technologies can fix the most common writing problems, such as the poor usage of grammar, syntax, and style. They can also be designed for a large number of students. However, such an implementation must meet certain plans, especially on aspects such as teacher involvement and control.

Teachers require the positive aspects of using AI in giving feedback, along with the advantages of personalized teaching during face-to-face lessons. However, technical considerations must still be made to ensure that all students have the same opportunities to access AI-supported resources regardless of their level of digital literacy or infrastructure.

More research should take into account the effects that AI will have on students' writing in the long-term use. Studying the evolution of the interface between AI and the teaching of writing is also important as this technology advances. More research is still required in the identified research areas to enhance and enrich its impact on teachers and students and define the best way to use AI in the educational sector.

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