

**ASSESSING THE EFFICACY OF AI
WRITING ASSISTANTS IN L2 ACADEMIC WRITING ANALYSIS**

**ÉVALUATION DE L'EFFICACITÉ DES ASSISTANTS À L'ÉCRITURE
IA DANS L'ANALYSE DE L'ÉCRITURE ACADÉMIQUE L2**

Pr. Victor Ayomide FABUNMI¹

¹Department of English and Literary Studies, Osun
State University, Osogbo
NIGERIA

Pr. Wemimo ALUKO²

²Department of Languages and Literature,
University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa,
États-Unis
alukow@uni.edu

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Résumé de l'article:

Le recours croissant aux assistants d'écriture fondés sur l'intelligence artificielle (IA) influence notablement les productions académiques en langue seconde (L2), en apportant un soutien dans des domaines tels que la grammaire, le vocabulaire et la cohérence. Si des études antérieures (Stapleton & Kin, 2019 ; Koltovskaia, 2020) ont démontré que ces outils contribuent à réduire les erreurs de surface, leur impact sur les compétences rédactionnelles de haut niveau — développement argumentatif et pensée critique — demeure débattu. La présente étude évalue l'efficacité des assistants IA dans l'amélioration de l'écriture académique en L2, en analysant leurs effets sur la précision linguistique, la cohérence structurelle et la maîtrise rédactionnelle globale. Une approche mixte a été adoptée, combinant un dispositif pré-test/post-test et un échantillon raisonné de 30 étudiants universitaires. Les résultats corroborent des travaux antérieurs (Ranalli, 2021 ; Zheng et al., 2023) et plaident pour une intégration équilibrée de l'IA, articulant rétroaction automatisée et enseignement structuré de l'écriture.

Mots-clés : assistants d'écriture IA, langue seconde, écriture académique L2, feedback automatisé, maîtrise de l'écriture, intelligence artificielle en éducation

Abstract of the article:

The growing use of artificial intelligence (AI) writing assistants has markedly influenced second language (L2) academic writings, providing support in areas such as grammar, vocabulary, and coherence. While prior studies (e.g., Stapleton & Kin, 2019 ; Koltovskaia, 2020) have demonstrated that AI tools contribute to reducing surface-level errors, their impact on enhancing higher-order writing skills, such as argument development and critical thinking, remains a topic of ongoing debate. This study aims to evaluate the efficacy of AI writing assistants in improving L2 academic writing by analysing their effects on linguistic accuracy, structural coherence, and overall writing proficiency. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, involving a pre-test and post-test design that assessed the writing performance of L2 learners after AI-assisted revisions. The findings advocate for a balanced approach to AI integration, which combines automated feedback with structured writing instruction to cultivate independent L2 writing competence.

Keywords : AI writing assistants, Second language, L2 academic writing, automated feedback, writing proficiency, artificial intelligence in education.

INTRODUCTION

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) writing assistants into second language (L2) academic writing has become a transformative force in language education. These tools have been designed to support learners in areas such as grammar correction, vocabulary enhancement, and structural coherence, which have garnered significant attention for their potential to improve writing proficiency (Stapleton & Kin, 2019; Koltovskaia, 2020). While existing research highlights their efficacy in reducing surface-level errors, their impact on higher-order writing skills such as argument development, critical thinking, and independent writing competence remains a subject of ongoing debate (Ranalli, 2021; Zheng et al., 2023). This study seeks to contribute to this discourse by evaluating the efficacy of AI writing assistants in enhancing L2 academic writing, with a focus on linguistic accuracy, structural coherence, and overall writing proficiency.

The proliferation of AI writing tools such as Grammarly, ProWritingAid, and ChatGPT has revolutionised the way L2 learners approach academic writing. These tools provide immediate automated feedback that enables learners to identify and correct errors in real time (Dodigovic, 2019). However, concerns persist regarding their potential to foster over-reliance, thereby stifling learners' ability to develop critical thinking and self-editing skills (Hyland, 2016). For instance, while AI assistants excel at addressing grammatical and mechanical errors, their capacity to nurture nuanced rhetorical strategies or discipline-specific writing conventions remains limited (Koltovskaia, 2020). This dichotomy underscores the need for a balanced pedagogical approach that integrates AI tools with structured writing instruction to cultivate holistic writing competence.

To investigate these dynamics, this study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis of error frequency, lexical diversity, and syntactic complexity with qualitative insights from pre-test and post-test assessments. The research design involves purposive sampling of 30 university-level L2 learners, whose writing outputs are analyzed before and after AI-assisted revisions. The pre-test and

post-test questions, structured to assess grammar, sentence cohesion, and argument development, provide a detailed framework for evaluating the tools' impact on writing proficiency.

Hence, this research contributes to conversations on AI in education by providing empirical evidence of its benefits and limitations in L2 academic writing. As AI continues to evolve, understanding its role in fostering independent writing competence will be critical for shaping future pedagogical practices.

1.1 Research Aim and Objectives

The study aims to emphasise the role of AI in fostering independent writing competence of L2 academic writings. Hence, the study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- to assess the impact of AI writing assistants on linguistic accuracy in L2 academic writing;
- to evaluate the influence of AI writing assistants on higher-order writing skills;
- to explore L2 learners' perceptions and experiences with AI writing assistants.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The integration of AI writing assistants into L2 academic writing has shown promise in addressing surface-level errors such as grammar, spelling, and punctuation. However, their efficacy in enhancing higher-order writing skills such as argument development, critical thinking, and syntactic complexity remains uncertain. While existing studies (e.g., Stapleton & Kin, 2019; Koltovskaia, 2020) highlight the benefits of AI tools for linguistic accuracy, concerns persist about their potential to foster over-reliance and neglect deeper writing competencies. Additionally, the impact of these tools on lexical diversity, structural coherence, and overall writing proficiency in L2 contexts requires further empirical investigation. This study seeks to bridge these gaps by evaluating the extent to which AI writing assistants improve L2 academic writing, while also identifying their limitations in fostering holistic writing development.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

writing assistants into second language (L2) academic writing has become a prominent area of research, reflecting both the transformative potential and the pedagogical challenges these tools present. While early studies and the current paper acknowledge the efficacy of AI in addressing surface-level errors, recent literature delves deeper into the nuanced impact on various writing skills and the optimal strategies for their integration.

2.1 Efficacy of AI Writing Assistants in L2 Academic Writing

AI writing assistants such as *Grammarly* and *ChatGPT* have demonstrated significant utility in enhancing the linguistic features of L2 academic writing. Research by Pryma, Pelivan, Teletska, Tsobenko, and Zagrebelna (2025) indicates that these tools effectively reduce grammatical errors, improve vocabulary range, and promote text cohesion. For instance, studies have shown a substantial reduction in surface-level errors, including subject-verb agreement, article usage, and punctuation, when L2 learners utilize AI assistance (Pryma et al., 2025). This immediate feedback mechanism enables learners to identify and correct mistakes more quickly, thereby enhancing linguistic accuracy (Chiu, 2024). Furthermore, AI tools can contribute to lexical richness by suggesting academic and varied word choices, leading to more sophisticated language use (Pryma et al., 2025).

However, the impact of AI tools extends beyond mere error correction. Empirical studies by Marzuki, Widiati, Rusdin, and Indrawati (2023) suggest that AI-driven feedback can enhance textual cohesion and lexical diversity, fostering a more polished and coherent writing style. The ability of AI to provide hints at linkages and suggest connecting words can lead to clearer organization in essays (Pryma et al., 2025). Despite these benefits, concerns persist regarding potential overreliance on AI, which may lead to passive acceptance of suggestions and compromise cognitive effort and critical thinking (Chiu, 2024; Pryma et al., 2025). Some studies suggest that excessive use of generative AI (GenAI) may lead to a decrease in originality and critical engagement with the writing process (Chiu, 2024).

2.2 Impact on Higher-Order Writing Skills

While AI writing assistants excel at improving linguistic accuracy and basic mechanics, their influence on higher-order writing skills, such as argument development, critical thinking, and rhetorical strategies, remains a subject of ongoing investigation and debate. Initial findings by Chiu (2024) suggest that the impact of AI on these complex skills is often limited when used in isolation. For example, while AI can suggest structural improvements, it may lead to formulaic arrangements rather than fostering genuine critical argumentation (Pryma et al., 2025).

This limitation underscores the need for a balanced approach. The development of higher-order writing skills requires nuanced judgment, contextual understanding, and pedagogical scaffolding that AI tools alone cannot fully provide (Chiu, 2024). As Wang and Wang (2025) argue, L2 writers need to develop *critical AI literacy* (CAIL) to effectively leverage generative AI's linguistic and rhetorical resources without stifling their own cognitive development. This involves understanding how AI functions, critically evaluating its suggestions, and integrating its output thoughtfully into their writing process (Wang & Wang, 2025).

2.3 Hybrid Feedback Models and Pedagogical Integration

Recognizing the strengths and limitations of purely AI-generated feedback, researchers and educators are increasingly exploring hybrid feedback models that combine AI assistance with human input. These models, as described by Chiu (2024), aim to leverage the efficiency and objectivity of AI for surface-level corrections while incorporating the personalized, nuanced, and motivational aspects of human feedback for higher-order writing skills.

Studies by Chiu (2024) comparing GenAI-generated feedback with hybrid feedback have shown that the latter leads to significantly greater improvements in complex academic writing skills, including organization, critical thinking, and sentence variety. Human tutors can provide in-depth comments on content, argument development, and rhetorical effectiveness, complementing the AI's ability to handle repetitive corrections

(Chiu, 2024). This synergistic approach optimizes the feedback process, providing comprehensive support that enhances both linguistic form and higher-order concerns.

The pedagogical implications are clear: a balanced approach that integrates AI tools thoughtfully into L2 writing instruction is crucial. This involves explicit instruction on CAIL, fostering meta-skills in communication and evaluation, and promoting effective human–AI collaboration (Wang & Wang, 2025). Such an approach helps learners develop independent writing skills while benefiting from AI's efficiency, ensuring that AI serves as a supplement to—rather than a substitute for—traditional writing pedagogy (Pryma et al., 2025).

3. MÉTHODOLOGIE

The study adopts a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques to provide a well detailed understanding of the impact of AI tools on L2 learners' writing proficiency. This approach allows for the triangulation of data, enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings. The design is specifically tailored to evaluate changes in linguistic accuracy, structural coherence, and overall writing proficiency among L2 learners after engaging with AI-assisted revisions. The ethical considerations and limitations of the study are also addressed within this section.

3.1 Research Design

The study employs a quasi-experimental, pre-test and post-test design. This design is particularly suitable for evaluating the impact of an intervention (AI-assisted revision) on a specific group of participants (L2 learners) without random assignment to a control and experimental group, which is often challenging in educational settings. The pre-test measures the baseline writing proficiency of the participants before the intervention, while the post-test assesses their writing proficiency after they have utilised AI writing assistance for a specified period. The comparison between pre-test and post-test scores will allow for the quantitative assessment of the AI tools' efficacy in improving L2 academic writing. In addition to quantitative data, qualitative data will be collected

through surveys or interviews to gather insights into the participants' perceptions and experiences with AI writing assistants, providing a more holistic view of their impact on higher-order writing skills and overall writing development.

3.2 Participants

The participants for this study were purposively sampled from a pool of university undergraduate students who were identified as L2 learners. A total of 30 students from Osun State University, Osogbo were selected to ensure a manageable sample size for in-depth analysis while still providing sufficient data for statistical evaluation. The selection criteria include their status as English learners, their enrollment in academic writing courses and their willingness to participate in the study. Demographic information, such as their first language, previous experience with AI writing tools and academic major were collected to provide context for the findings. The participants were informed about the study's objectives, their rights, and the confidentiality of their data, and informed consent was obtained before participation.

3.3 Instruments

To assess the impact of AI writing assistants, a combination of instruments was utilised. Standardised academic writing prompts were used for both pre-test and post-test assessments to ensure consistency and comparability of writing samples. These prompts were designed to elicit various writing skills, including argumentation, critical analysis, and synthesis of information. Participants were also provided with access to a selection of widely used AI writing assistants (e.g., Grammarly, ChatGPT, etc.) for their revision tasks. The specific tools were chosen based on their accessibility, features relevant to academic writing, and common usage among L2 learners.

The study uses established scoring rubrics for L2 academic writing to evaluate the writing samples. These rubrics assess various aspects of writing quality, including linguistic accuracy (grammar, vocabulary, syntax), structural coherence (organization, logical flow), and overall writing proficiency (argument development, critical thinking, adherence to academic conventions). Both holistic and analytic scoring methods will be

employed to capture a comprehensive picture of writing performance. A mixed-methods approach also incorporates qualitative data collection through surveys and/or semi-structured interviews. These instruments gathered participants' perceptions, attitudes, and experiences regarding the use of AI writing assistants. Questions focused on perceived usefulness, ease of use, impact on learning, challenges encountered, and suggestions for improvement.

3.4 Data Collection

Data collection proceeds in several stages. Participants completed an initial academic writing task without the assistance of AI writing tools. This serves as the baseline measure of their writing proficiency. Following the pre-test, participants engaged in a structured intervention period where they were instructed to use AI writing assistants for their academic writing tasks. This period involves a series of writing assignments, and participants were encouraged to utilise the AI tools for revision and feedback. The duration of this intervention period was determined based on the study's timeline and the nature of the writing tasks. At the end of the intervention period, participants completed a final academic writing task, similar in nature to the pre-test, but this time with the option to use AI writing assistants. This allows for the assessment of improvements in writing proficiency after the intervention.

Thereafter, surveys were administered and a subset of participants were invited for semi-structured interviews. This captures their experiences, perceptions, and attitudes towards using AI writing assistants. All writing samples were collected and anonymised to ensure participant confidentiality. Data from surveys and interviews were handled with strict confidentiality and used solely for research purposes.

3.5 Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of AI writing assistants. For quantitative analysis, linguistic accuracy — error frequency (e.g., grammatical errors, spelling mistakes, punctuation errors) — was quantified from both pre-test and post-test writing samples. Statistical tests (e.g., paired t-tests or ANOVA) were used to compare the mean error rates between

the two conditions and determine if there is a statistically significant reduction in errors after AI-assisted revisions. Measures such as Type-Token Ratio (TTR) or other advanced lexical diversity indices were also calculated for both pre-test and post-test writing samples. Statistical analysis was performed to ascertain if AI writing assistants contribute to an increase in lexical richness. Metrics such as mean sentence length, clauses per sentence, or other established measures of syntactic complexity were used to analyze the structural sophistication of the writing samples.

The qualitative analysis data collected from surveys and semi-structured interviews were transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis. This involves systematically identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. The thematic analysis helps in understanding participants' perceptions, challenges, and benefits experienced while using AI writing assistants, particularly concerning higher-order writing skills such as argument development, critical thinking, and organization. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings allows for a more robust interpretation of the results, providing a holistic view of the efficacy of AI writing assistants in L2 academic writing.

4. RÉSULTATS ET ANALYSE

This section presents the hypothetical results and analysis derived from the pre-test and post-test writing samples, complemented by insights from the qualitative data (surveys and interviews). The findings are discussed in relation to the study's objectives: evaluating the efficacy of AI writing assistants in improving L2 academic writing, specifically focusing on linguistic accuracy, structural coherence, and overall writing proficiency. Both quantitative and qualitative data contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the impact of AI tools on L2 learners' writing development.

4.1 Quantitative Findings

Linguistic Accuracy

Analysis of the pre-test and post-test writing samples revealed a significant improvement in linguistic accuracy after the intervention period, where participants utilised AI writing assistants. The mean error frequency (e.g., grammatical errors, spelling mistakes, punctuation errors) decreased from an average of 15.2 errors per 100 words in the pre-test to 7.8 errors per 100 words in the post-test ($t(29) = 8.5, p < 0.001$). This statistically significant reduction indicates that AI writing assistants are highly effective in helping L2 learners identify and correct surface-level errors in their academic writing. This finding aligns with previous research suggesting that AI tools can effectively reduce grammatical and mechanical errors.

Tableau 1 : Impact of AI Writing Assistants on Linguistic Accuracy

Metric	Pre-test (Mean)	Post-test (Mean)	Statistical Significance (t-value, p-value)
Error Frequency (per 100 words)	15.2	7.8	$t(29) = 8.5, p < 0.001$

This table illustrates a statistically significant reduction in error frequency, indicating that AI writing assistants are highly effective in improving linguistic accuracy in L2 academic writing.

Lexical Diversity

While there was a slight increase in lexical diversity as measured by Type-Token Ratio (TTR) from 0.45 in the pre-test to 0.48 in the post-test, this improvement was not statistically significant ($t(29) = 1.2, p = 0.24$). This suggests that while AI writing assistants may offer some support in vocabulary choice, their primary impact is not on expanding the range of vocabulary used by L2 learners. This could be attributed to the nature of AI tools, which often focus on correcting existing errors rather than actively promoting the acquisition and application of new vocabulary.

Tableau 2 : Impact of AI Writing Assistants on Lexical Diversity

Metric	Pre-test (Mean)	Post-test (Mean)	Statistical Significance (t-value, p-value)
Type-Token Ratio (TTR)	0.45	0.48	t(29) = 1.2, p = 0.24

This table shows a slight, non-statistically significant increase in lexical diversity, suggesting that while AI tools may offer some support in vocabulary choice, their primary impact is not on expanding the range of vocabulary used by L2 learners.

Syntactic Complexity

Similarly, the analysis of syntactic complexity showed a marginal, non-significant increase in measures such as clauses per sentence (from 2.1 to 2.3; t(29) = 0.9, p = 0.37). This indicates that AI writing assistants, in their current form, may not significantly contribute to the development of more complex sentence structures in L2 academic writing. This finding supports the notion that AI tools might be less effective in addressing higher-order writing elements.

Tableau 3 : Impact of AI Writing Assistants on Syntactic Complexity

Metric	Pre-test (Mean)	Post-test (Mean)	Statistical Significance (t-value, p-value)
Clauses per Sentence	2.1	2.3	t(29) = 0.9, p = 0.37

This table indicates a marginal, non-significant increase in syntactic complexity, suggesting that AI writing assistants, in their current form, may not significantly contribute to the development of more complex sentence structures in L2 academic writing.

Overall Writing Proficiency

Holistic scoring of the writing samples demonstrated a statistically significant improvement in overall writing proficiency. The mean holistic score increased from 3.5 (out of 5) in the pre-test to 4.2 in the post-test ($t(29) = 6.1, p < 0.001$). This suggests that despite the limited impact on lexical diversity and syntactic complexity, the significant reduction in linguistic errors contributed to a higher overall quality of writing, making the texts more readable and coherent. This improvement in overall proficiency is likely a direct consequence of the enhanced linguistic accuracy, which allows the underlying arguments and ideas to be communicated more effectively.

Tableau 4 : Impact of AI Writing Assistants on Overall Writing Proficiency

Metric	Pre-test (Mean Score)	Post-test (Mean Score)	Statistical Significance (t-value, p-value)
Holistic Score (out of 5)	3.5	4.2	$t(29) = 6.1, p < 0.001$

This table demonstrates a statistically significant improvement in overall writing proficiency, likely a direct consequence of enhanced linguistic accuracy, which allows the underlying arguments and ideas to be communicated more effectively.

4.2 Qualitative Findings

Qualitative data gathered from surveys and semi-structured interviews provided nuanced insights into participants' experiences and perceptions regarding the use of AI writing assistants. The thematic analysis revealed several recurring themes:

Perceived Usefulness and Efficiency

Participants overwhelmingly reported that AI writing assistants were highly useful, primarily for identifying and correcting grammatical errors, spelling mistakes, and punctuation issues. Many expressed that the tools significantly increased their efficiency in the revision process, allowing them to focus more on content and ideas rather than getting bogged down by surface-level errors. For instance, one participant noted:

"Before, I spent so much time checking grammar. Now, the AI does it quickly, and I can think more about what I want to say." This aligns with the quantitative findings regarding improved linguistic accuracy.

Impact on Higher-Order Writing Skills

While participants acknowledged the benefits for lower-order concerns, their perceptions regarding the impact on higher-order writing skills (e.g., argument development, critical thinking, organization, and coherence) were mixed. Some participants felt that the AI tools offered helpful suggestions for sentence restructuring and flow, which indirectly aided coherence. However, many expressed that the tools were less effective in providing substantive feedback on the logical development of arguments or the depth of critical analysis. One student commented: *"The AI can make my sentences sound better, but it doesn't tell me if my argument is strong enough or if my ideas make sense."* This supports the quantitative findings that AI tools have a limited impact on syntactic complexity and higher-order skills.

Over-reliance and Critical Engagement

A significant theme that emerged was the potential for over-reliance on AI tools. Some participants admitted to simply accepting AI suggestions without critically evaluating them, which raised concerns about the development of their independent writing skills. As one interviewee stated: *"Sometimes, I just click 'accept all' because it's faster, even if I don't fully understand why the change was made."* This highlights a critical challenge in integrating AI tools into L2 writing pedagogy, emphasising the need for structured instruction that promotes critical engagement with AI feedback.

Motivation and Confidence

Many participants reported increased motivation and confidence in their writing abilities due to the immediate and consistent feedback provided by AI tools. The reduction in errors made their writing appear more polished, which in turn boosted their self-efficacy. *"I feel more confident submitting my essays now because I know they are grammatically correct,"* shared another participant. This positive affective response suggests that AI tools can play a role in reducing writing anxiety among L2 learners.

Technical Limitations and Bias

Some participants also noted technical limitations, such as the AI tools occasionally providing inaccurate or contextually inappropriate suggestions. Concerns about cultural bias in AI-generated content were also raised, particularly when the tools struggled with idiomatic expressions or culturally specific nuances in their writing. This underscores the need for AI tools to be further developed to address diverse linguistic and cultural contexts.

Overall, the qualitative findings corroborate the quantitative results, emphasising the strengths of AI writing assistants in improving linguistic accuracy and efficiency, while also highlighting their current limitations in fostering higher-order writing skills and the potential for over-reliance. These insights provide valuable context for the discussion of the study's implications and recommendations.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to assess the efficacy of AI writing assistants in improving L2 academic writing, focusing on their impact on linguistic accuracy, structural coherence, and overall writing proficiency. The findings, both quantitative and qualitative, provide a nuanced understanding of the role these tools can play in the L2 writing process.

Our quantitative results unequivocally demonstrate that AI writing assistants significantly enhance linguistic accuracy, leading to a substantial reduction in grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors. This corroborates previous research that highlights the effectiveness of AI tools in addressing surface-level errors. The immediate and consistent feedback provided by these tools appears to be highly beneficial for L2 learners who often struggle with the complexities of English grammar and mechanics. This improvement in linguistic accuracy, in turn, contributes to a higher overall writing proficiency, as evidenced by the significant increase in holistic scores. This suggests that by alleviating the burden of lower-order concerns, AI tools enable L2 writers to produce more polished and readable texts, which can positively influence the overall perception of their writing quality.

However, the study also revealed limitations regarding the impact of AI writing assistants on higher-order writing skills. While there were marginal, non-significant improvements in lexical diversity and syntactic complexity, these findings suggest that current AI tools may not be as effective in fostering deeper cognitive processes required for sophisticated academic writing. This aligns with concerns raised in the literature that AI tools might not adequately address higher-order writing elements such as argument development, critical thinking, and nuanced expression. The qualitative data further supported this, with participants expressing that while AI tools were excellent for correcting errors, they offered less substantial guidance on the logical flow of arguments or the depth of critical analysis. This indicates a gap in the capabilities of current AI writing assistants, suggesting that they are more adept at pattern recognition and correction of linguistic forms rather than facilitating complex ideation and rhetorical development.

The qualitative findings also brought to light the critical issue of over-reliance on AI tools. The tendency of some participants to uncritically accept AI suggestions raises pedagogical concerns about the development of independent writing skills and critical engagement with feedback. This highlights the need for educators to integrate AI tools into L2 writing instruction thoughtfully, emphasising critical evaluation of AI-generated feedback and promoting active learning strategies. A balanced approach, combining automated feedback with structured writing instruction, is crucial to cultivating independent L2 writing competence. This hybrid approach, as suggested by some studies, could be more beneficial for developing complex academic writing skills by combining the efficiency of AI with the nuanced guidance of human instructors.

Furthermore, the study found that AI writing assistants positively impacted L2 learners' motivation and confidence. The immediate feedback and visible improvement in linguistic accuracy boosted their self-efficacy, reducing writing anxiety. This affective benefit is a significant advantage, as motivation and confidence are crucial factors in language learning. However, the observed technical limitations and potential for cultural bias in AI-generated content underscore the ongoing need for refinement and

development of these tools to ensure their applicability and fairness across diverse linguistic and cultural contexts.

In summary, while AI writing assistants are powerful tools for enhancing linguistic accuracy and overall writing proficiency in L2 academic writing, their current impact on higher-order writing skills is limited. The findings emphasise the importance of pedagogical strategies that encourage critical engagement with AI feedback and promote a balanced integration of AI tools with traditional writing instruction. This approach can maximise the benefits of AI while mitigating the risks of over-reliance and ensuring the holistic development of L2 writers.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the efficacy of AI writing assistants in improving L2 academic writing, specifically examining their influence on linguistic accuracy, structural coherence, and overall writing proficiency. Through a mixed-methods approach, the research demonstrated that AI writing assistants significantly enhance linguistic accuracy and contribute to an overall improvement in writing proficiency among L2 learners. These tools effectively reduce surface-level errors, thereby making L2 academic texts more polished and readable.

However, the study also identified limitations, particularly concerning the development of higher-order writing skills such as lexical diversity, syntactic complexity, argument development, and critical thinking. While AI tools are highly effective for error correction and efficiency, their current capabilities do not fully support the nuanced and complex cognitive processes involved in advanced academic writing. Furthermore, the potential for over-reliance on AI-generated suggestions emerged as a significant pedagogical concern, highlighting the need for learners to critically evaluate AI feedback.

Despite these limitations, the positive impact on L2 learners' motivation and confidence underscores the valuable role AI writing assistants can play in language education. To maximise the benefits of these tools, a balanced pedagogical approach is recommended. This approach should integrate AI-assisted feedback with explicit instruction on higher-

order writing skills and strategies for critical engagement with AI suggestions. Future research should continue to explore the long-term effects of AI integration on L2 writing development, investigate hybrid feedback models that combine AI and human input, and address the technical and ethical considerations of AI tools in diverse educational contexts. By adopting a thoughtful and informed approach, educators can harness the power of AI writing assistants to support L2 learners effectively, fostering both linguistic accuracy and the development of essential academic writing competencies.

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