



Between Assistance and Abuse: Exploring the Ethical Use of ChatGPT in Algerian EFL Context

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Abstract:

The widespread adoption of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT has introduced new possibilities—and challenges—for academic writing in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. This study investigates how Algerian EFL students engage with ChatGPT as a writing aid, focusing on their motivations, perceived benefits, and ethical concerns. Drawing on data from a student questionnaire, the findings reveal a nuanced landscape: while many students report using ChatGPT to enhance vocabulary, organize ideas, and overcome language barriers, a significant portion remain uncertain about its ethical boundaries. Notably, 16.9% neither agreed nor disagreed that submitting unacknowledged AI-generated content constitutes plagiarism. Academic pressure and low proficiency emerged as primary factors influencing ethically questionable use. These results highlight a growing need for pedagogical guidance and institutional clarity. The study calls for the integration of AI literacy and academic integrity training into EFL curricula to

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ensure that technological assistance complements rather than compromises educational values.

Keywords: ChatGtp, ethic guidelines, academic integrity, academic writing.

Introduction:

The technological era has ushered in Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a transformative force, reshaping global paradigms across various sectors (Shwedeh et al., 2024; Habes et al., 2022). Among the notable innovations, ChatGPT—the Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer—stands out for its remarkable capabilities. This advanced AI tool, driven by Natural Language Processing (NLP) technology, has gained widespread recognition for assisting students in producing a wide array of written outputs, from term papers to dissertations. Unlike traditional tools such as search engines, which retrieve information based on keywords, ChatGPT interprets user intent and provides tailored, context-aware responses.

The adoption of NLP models like ChatGPT in academic contexts signals a pivotal shift in how students access and interact with information. By drawing from an extensive resource base of books, articles, and web pages, ChatGPT offers dynamic, adaptive responses that enhance learning experiences (Almaiah et al., 2022a; McGee, 2023; Seth et al., 2023). Studies on AI-driven chatbots further emphasize their role in fostering communication skills, grammatical competence (Kim, 2019), and authentic language use (Han, 2020). However, while these systems demonstrate clear educational advantages, their widespread use also raises concerns related to originality, data privacy, and academic integrity.

The integration of generative AI (GenAI) tools such as ChatGPT in higher education presents both significant opportunities and notable challenges. Research indicates generally positive attitudes toward its

use in teaching and learning (Kaplan-Rakowski et al., 2023; Lim et al., 2023). However, concerns regarding academic integrity remain prevalent, with questions arising about plagiarism and academic misconduct (Cotton et al., 2023; Dergaa et al., 2023; Dwivedi et al., 2023). These concerns necessitate the development of robust policies to prevent misuse while maximizing the educational benefits of GenAI. The ability of generative AI to deliver personalized, adaptive learning experiences complements traditional methods but also compels educators to reconsider strategies for maintaining fairness and honesty in academia. Ethical considerations must remain central as educators, technologists, and policymakers navigate the complexities of AI integration. Ensuring that ChatGPT enhances learning without compromising fairness, authenticity, or academic integrity is paramount. Addressing student motivations for AI misuse, such as academic pressure, can also inform more effective strategies to balance AI's potential with ethical concerns.

Despite the extensive discourse on the advantages and limitations of ChatGPT in educational contexts, significant gaps remain in research addressing its ethical implications. Much of the current literature either celebrates AI's potential in pedagogy or critiques its drawbacks, often adopting a binary approach that overlooks the nuanced ethical challenges involved. Furthermore, few studies adopt an interdisciplinary perspective that synthesizes pedagogical, technological, and ethical considerations (Gilliard, 2017; Bostrom&Yudkowsky, 2018; Heffernan & Heffernan, 2023). This study seeks to fill that gap by offering a comprehensive analysis that not only identifies key ethical concerns but also proposes practical frameworks for educators and policymakers. By integrating theoretical insights with actionable recommendations, this study aims to foster a more balanced, ethically grounded approach to the implementation of ChatGPT in academic settings.



In addressing these gaps, this study proposes a holistic framework that merges pedagogical, technological, and ethical perspectives to guide the responsible use of ChatGPT in education. The proposed framework aims to maximize the benefits of generative AI while mitigating its risks, contributing to a more equitable and innovative academic environment. With this aim in mind, we created the following research questions:

- **RQ1:** What are students' general perceptions of using generative AI dishonestly in L2 writing?
 - **RQ1.1:** How do students define and exemplify academic dishonesty with ChatGPT in L2 writing?
 - **RQ1.2:** What negative consequences of using AI dishonestly in L2 writing do students identify?
 - **RQ1.3:** What motivations do students believe lead to the dishonest use of AI in L2 writing?
- **RQ2:** Do students find it acceptable to use ChatGPT and similar technologies in academic writing, and what reasons do they provide for their opinions?
- **RQ3:** How do students perceive the impact of tools like ChatGPT on academic integrity in writing, and what are their predictions regarding the future use of generative AI in academic writing?

2. Literature Review

The increasing reliance on AI in education has generated extensive scholarly discourse, particularly regarding the transformative capabilities of tools like ChatGPT. This literature review provides an overview of ChatGPT's development and its implications for modern education. By examining the historical progression of ChatGPT, its applications in education, and the

challenges it presents, this section aims to contextualize its role within the broader landscape of academic innovation.

2.1. Brief History and Capabilities of ChatGPT:

OpenAI, a research organization dedicated to advancing artificial general intelligence (AGI) for the benefit of humanity, has led significant advancements in natural language processing with its Generative Pre-trained Transformers (GPT) models. ChatGPT, a derivative of these models, has gained rapid adoption across various sectors, including education. The GPT architecture's journey began with the release of GPT in 2018, featuring 117 million parameters (Radford et al., 2018). This was followed by GPT-2 in 2019, which, with 1.5 billion parameters, marked a leap in complexity and capability. Concerns over potential misuse delayed its full release, highlighting its transformative potential and associated risks. In 2020, OpenAI introduced GPT-3, a model with 175 billion parameters that showcased unprecedented abilities in generating human-like text, from essays to software code, ushering in a new era of AI applications.

ChatGPT, based on GPT models like GPT-3, offers a range of capabilities:

- **Natural Language Understanding:** It excels at understanding and generating human-like text, making it suitable for chatbots and virtual assistants.
- **Content Creation:** Beyond conversations, it generates creative outputs, including poetry and stories.
- **Task-Specific Instructions:** With specific prompts, ChatGPT can produce content tailored to diverse needs, such as legal briefs or medical summaries.
- **Code Generation:** It can write and debug software code.



- **Multilingual Support:** Its ability to operate in multiple languages reflects its diverse training data.
- **Customization:** Developers can fine-tune ChatGPT for specific applications, enhancing its adaptability across industries.

The evolution of ChatGPT underscores the rapid advancements in AI while emphasizing the need for responsible deployment, particularly in education.

2.2. The Role of AI in Modern Education: Implications for Academic Integrity

The incorporation of chatbot technology into education is transforming the traditional educational landscape, offering opportunities for enhancing learning outcomes and student satisfaction (Okonkwo & Ade-Ibijola, 2020). These AI-driven conversational agents have made significant contributions to automation and creativity within the educational system. Chatbots not only support the development of students' interactive skills but also assist teaching faculty by streamlining repetitive tasks (Okonkwo & Ade-Ibijola, 2020).

A review by Okonkwo and Ade-Ibijola (2020) categorizes the use of AI-powered chatbots in education into several domains: 66% in teaching and learning, 5% in administration, 6% in assessment, 4% in advisory roles, and 19% in research and development. More recently, Ellis and Slade (2023) explored the potential of ChatGPT as a tool for teaching data science and statistics, while Frieder et al. (2023) assessed ChatGPT's mathematical capabilities. Their findings revealed that ChatGPT could be used effectively as a mathematical knowledge base and provide insightful proofs. However, the study also concluded that while ChatGPT performs adequately at the undergraduate level,

its capabilities fall short at the graduate level, with competence significantly lower than that of a graduate student. Frieder et al. (2023) humorously noted that using ChatGPT to pass a graduate-level math exam would not be as effective as relying on a classmate.

2.3. Chatbots in Higher Education

Chatbots are widely recognized as conversational agents capable of delivering accurate and accessible course content to students and faculty (Habes et al., 2022; Al-Marouf et al., 2022). These tools enhance the higher education experience by providing learning materials anytime and anywhere, engaging users through interactive question-and-answer formats (Vaswani et al., 2017). AI-powered chatbots offer immediate, personalized assistance to students and faculty, significantly improving engagement and satisfaction (Okonkwo & Ade-Ibijola, 2020).

One key advantage of chatbots is their ability to provide tailored recommendations based on a student's past performance, learning style, and goals. Such personalized support fosters deeper engagement and satisfaction while improving learning efficiency (Radford et al., 2019). AI-driven Intelligent Tutoring Systems (ITSs) simulate human tutoring by providing real-time problem-solving support, making education more dynamic and interactive (Almaiah et al., 2022a).

Chatbots also serve as valuable tools for enhancing writing skills through features such as Automated Essay Scoring (AES), Automated Writing Evaluation (AWE), and Automated Written Corrective Feedback (AWCF). For example, widely used platforms like Grammarly and plagiarism detection tools have proven instrumental in supporting writing practices, especially in higher education (Habes et al., 2022). Although ChatGPT employs similar



underlying technologies, it is uniquely capable of generating coherent, human-like text. However, unlike traditional tools, it does not evaluate or score essays.

2.4. Advanced Features and Educational Applications

The introduction of specialized plugins in ChatGPT has expanded its capabilities beyond text generation, making it a versatile tool for education, research, and creative endeavors. For example, the Python plugin enables users to execute code for data analysis and visualization, while the DALL-E plugin generates creative visuals based on textual descriptions. Additionally, the browsing capability allows real-time access to web-based information, ensuring responses are up-to-date and comprehensive. These advanced features have revolutionized how ChatGPT can support both educators and students by offering innovative teaching and learning strategies.

Chatbots can also streamline course management by integrating subject-specific content, summarizing materials, and keeping students informed about upcoming activities. Instructors can utilize chatbots to automate assessments, record student responses, and analyze learning outcomes. This approach not only saves time but also enables educators to identify areas where students need additional support, embodying the philosophy of “working smart rather than hard” (Zeide, 2017).

2.5. Challenges and Future Prospects

Despite their potential, the adoption of chatbots like ChatGPT in education has faced challenges, including concerns about overreliance on AI, data privacy issues, and the absence of human interaction in learning (Selwyn, 2016). However, studies from institutions such as Harvard University project that AI tools, when

used as complements to human educators, will continue to grow in educational settings (Heffernan & Heffernan, 2014). ChatGPT has already demonstrated its versatility in areas such as personalized learning, multilingual support, and interactive storytelling, highlighting its value in fostering student engagement and creativity (Vaswani et al., 2017).

As the integration of AI into classrooms evolves, educators and institutions must strike a balance between leveraging technology and preserving the essential human elements of teaching and learning. The future of education lies in embracing these tools as allies in delivering enriched, personalized, and effective learning experiences.

2.6. ChatGPT and the Challenge of Academic Integrity

The increasing reliance on artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT in educational settings raises questions regarding their impact on authentic learning and the potential propagation of plagiarism. While ChatGPT provides valuable insights, its usage can blur the boundaries of originality and raise ethical concerns related to academic honesty (Habes et al., 2022). Authentic learning, rooted in constructivist pedagogy, emphasizes real-world relevance, active engagement, and the construction of knowledge (Almaiah et al., 2022a). It is a process where learners actively engage in their educational journey, grappling with genuine problems and collaborating with peers (Woolf, 2010). AI tools, while revolutionary, present challenges in ensuring students remain active agents in their learning.

ChatGPT, a state-of-the-art language model, can generate content on various topics. Some students, particularly in higher education, may be tempted to use such tools for assignments, thereby bypassing the effort traditionally required in academic writing (Tate et



al., 2023). This practice compromises the integrity of their work, contravenes academic honesty policies, and undermines the educational process (Habes et al., 2022). The definition of originality is evolving in the digital age, where AI tools can produce content that, although not directly copied from existing sources, may not qualify as the user's original work (Vaswani et al., 2017). This raises questions: Can content generated by AI be considered plagiarized?

Academic institutions are grappling with these complexities and adapting plagiarism detection tools and policies (Almaiah et al., 2022b). While some institutions prohibit the use of AI tools entirely, others permit them with proper citation (Heffernan & Heffernan, 2014). The key is fostering an environment that values academic integrity and ensures students understand the implications of their choices (Selwyn, 2016). Educators can also integrate assignments and evaluation methods prioritizing critical thinking, analysis, and originality, making it difficult to rely solely on AI-generated content (Reich et al., 2017).

With the growing application of AI in education (Almaiah et al., 2022b), concerns about students' overdependence on these tools have emerged. Overreliance can hinder critical thinking, problem-solving, and other essential skills, raising questions about the long-term implications of this trend (Zeide, 2017). AI-powered educational tools, such as intelligent tutoring systems, adaptive learning platforms, and virtual assistants, offer personalized learning experiences, instant feedback, and vast information (Al-Marroof et al., 2022).

However, habitual reliance on AI tools might bypass the cognitive struggle required in the learning process, depriving students of valuable learning moments crucial for deep understanding and skill development (Bostrom&Yudkowsky, 2018). Education is not solely about content absorption; it also involves interpersonal skills,

collaboration, and discussion. Overuse of AI tools could reduce peer interactions, impacting socio-emotional development and teamwork abilities in real-world scenarios (Gilliard, 2017).

Many educators emphasize the importance of blended learning, combining traditional methods with technology for a holistic experience (Almaiah et al., 2022c). Designing curricula that encourage students to use AI as a supplementary tool rather than a primary source is essential for fostering balanced learning (Almaiah et al., 2022d).

As education evolves in the AI era, balancing AI capabilities and maintaining active, engaged learning is critical. Foundational skills and cognitive development must remain priorities alongside technological advancements (Radford et al., 2019).

3. Research Methodology

This study utilizes a survey to examine a sample of Algerian EFL students' perceptions of AI chatbots, such as ChatGPT, in the development and enhancement of their English writing skills, with a particular focus on academic integrity. The survey investigates how students define academic dishonesty, their perspectives on the motivations for using ChatGPT unethically, the perceived effects of such practices on academic integrity, and their views on the detection, consequences, and prevention of AI-related misconduct. Furthermore, the study explores students' opinions on the potential of these tools to support their writing and whether they believe such technologies should be integrated into academic practices.

3.1. Research Participants and Setting

This study was conducted at the Teachers' Higher College (École Normale Supérieure, ENS) of Laghouat, Algeria. The ENS is a



specialized institution dedicated to the training and preparation of future educators for secondary and higher education. It provides a rigorous blend of theoretical knowledge and practical teaching skills, ensuring that graduates are well-equipped to meet the demands of the educational sector. The sample population for this study consisted of a random selection of students from the Teachers' Higher College (École Normale Supérieure, ENS) of Laghouat. During informal conversations with these students, the researcher discovered a significant trend: many students intentionally rely on ChatGPT to address academic challenges and complete their assignments. This observation highlights the growing influence of AI tools like ChatGPT in educational settings, particularly among future educators. The reliance on such tools raises important questions about their impact on students' independent problem-solving abilities and the development of critical thinking skills, both of which are essential for their future teaching roles.

3.2. The Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims to explore Algerian EFL students' perceptions of AI tools like ChatGPT in academic writing, focusing on academic dishonesty, ethical use, and the broader implications of these technologies.

The survey is divided into three sections:

- **Understanding and Perceptions of Academic Dishonesty with AI**

This section explores how students define academic dishonesty involving AI, their understanding of acceptable versus unacceptable uses of ChatGPT, and their insights into why students might misuse such tools.

- **Opinions on AI's Role in Academic Writing**
This section delves into students' perspectives on the benefits and appropriate uses of ChatGPT in academic writing, their attitudes toward incorporating AI into learning, and their views on ethical boundaries in AI use.
- **Detection, Consequences, and Future Predictions**
The final section examines students' confidence in teachers' ability to detect AI-generated content, their thoughts on institutional measures to address AI misuse, and their predictions about the future impact of AI tools on academic writing.

The questionnaire comprises 17 items, designed using multiple-choice and Likert-scale formats to ensure clarity and to effectively capture both specific and attitudinal responses. It was distributed via Google Forms to provide convenient access for participants. The questionnaire is based on the closed-category questions because it is simpler and quicker for respondents to answer. Besides, Data were collected from a random sample. A total of 71 questionnaires were collected and analysed using SPSS.26 software.

3.3. Results:

a. Respondents' Understanding and preceptions of academic dishonesty with AI

This section (Q1-Q8) explores how students define academic dishonesty involving AI, their understanding of acceptable versus unacceptable uses of ChatGPT, and their insights into why students might misuse such tools.

Table (1-1): Understanding and preceptions of academic dishonesty with AI

Q1 : "AI tools like ChatGPT can help students who struggle with English improve their	Frequency	Percentage
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writing skills."		
Strongly agree	18	25.4%
Agree	33	64.5%
Neutral	11	15.5%
Disagree	9	12.7%
Q2 :What do you think is the main challenge of using ChatGPT responsibly in academic writing?	Frequency	Percentage
Over-reliance on AI, reducing personal effort	50	70,4%
Lack of clear guidelines from institutions	9	12,7%
Uncertainty about what counts as ethical use	6	8,5%
Difficulty balancing AI use with original work	6	8,5%
Q3 : How often do you use ChatGPT or similar AI tools for academic writing?	Frequency	Percentage
Never	4	5,6%
Rarely (once or twice a month)	11	15,5%
Sometimes, only when I face difficulties	29	40,8%
Often, as a regular part of my academic writing process	21	29,6%
Always, for all my academic writing tasks	6	8,5%
Q4 : When do you typically resort to ChatGPT for academic writing? (Choose all	Frequency	Percentage

that apply)		
When I need help generating ideas	19	26,8%
When I want to improve grammar and vocabulary	23	32,4%
When I don't understand the assignment requirements	18	25,4%
When I don't have enough time to complete the work	11	15,5%
Total	71	100%

Source : Elaborated by the authors via SPSS.26

– The results indicate varying opinions regarding concerns about AI tools like ChatGPT can help students who struggle with English to improve their writing skills, a small portion of respondents (12.7%) disagree with the statement, while a significant number (64.5%) agree and a quarter of respondents (25.4%) strongly agree that ChatGPT is helpful for students who struggle with writing skills.

– A diverse set of responses were mentioned by the researchers in Q2, the results indicate varied challenges of chatgpt's responsibility in academic writing, however, a substantial portion (70,4%) found that the main challenge is over-reliance on AI, reducing personal effort. A notable percentage (12,7%) shows that lack of clear guidelines from institutions can be the main challenge, while a minority of respondents (8,5%) observe that the main challenge of using ChatGPT responsibly in academic writing can be uncertainty about what counts as ethical use and difficulty balancing ai use with original work,



– Regarding Q3, a small portion of respondents (5.6%) has never used ChatGPT or similar AI tools for academic writing, while (15.5%) of respondents expressed that has rarely used it (once or twice a month), however a substantial portion (40,8%) express that sometimes they utilize ChatGPT for academic writing only when they faced difficulties. On the other hand (29,6%) indicate that they use it often, as a regular part of their academic writing process, while a minority of respondents (8,5%) express that they always use ChatGPT for all their academic writing tasks.

– Regarding Q4, (26,8%) of respondents resort to ChatGPT for academic writing, only when they need help generating ideas, while (32,4%) of respondents resort to ChatGPT to improve grammar and vocabulary, a quarter of respondents (25.4%) depend on ChatGPT when they don't understand the assignment requirements and (15,5%) when they don't have enough time to complete the work.

Table (1-2) : Understanding and preceptions of academic dishonesty with AI

Q5 : How would you describe academic dishonesty involving AI tools like ChatGPT?	Frequency	Percentage
Submitting AI-generated work as entirely one's own	25	35,2%
Using AI to paraphrase plagiarized content	12	16,9%
Both of the above	22	31,0%
None of the above	12	16,9%
Q6 : Which of the following do you consider acceptable uses of ChatGPT in academic writing?	Frequency	Percentage

Brainstorming ideas	24	33,8%
Improving grammar and vocabulary	18	25,4%
Simplifying complex topics	27	38,0%
Generating full assignments without edits	2	2,8%
Q7 : To what extent do you agree with the statement: "Using AI tools like ChatGPT to complete assignments without acknowledgment is equivalent to plagiarism."	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	22	31.0%
Agree	28	39.4%
Neutral	12	16.9%
Disagree	6	8.5%
Strongly Disagree	3	4.2%
Q8 : Why do you think some students use AI tools like ChatGPT dishonestly?	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of time to complete assignments	8	11,3%
Pressure to achieve high grades	26	36,6%
Limited English proficiency	20	28,2%
Lack of understanding about ethical AI use	15	21,1%
Other: [Specify]	2	2,8%
Total	71	100%



Source : Elaborated by the authors via SPSS.26

The findings reveal diverse perspectives on academic dishonesty related to AI tools like ChatGPT. Around 35.2% of respondents identify submitting AI-generated work as entirely one's own as a form of dishonesty, while 16.9% believe using AI to paraphrase plagiarized content also falls under this category. Additionally, 31.0% recognize both practices as dishonest, whereas another 16.9% do not consider either to be problematic.

Regarding the acceptable use of ChatGPT in academic writing, opinions vary. A significant portion (33.8%) finds brainstorming ideas with AI acceptable, while 25.4% approve of using it to refine grammar and vocabulary. However, the majority (38.0%) see its primary role in simplifying complex topics, whereas only 2.5% consider generating full assignments without modifications an acceptable practice.

The question of whether using ChatGPT without acknowledgment constitutes plagiarism also yields mixed responses. While 4.2% strongly disagree and 8.5% do not consider it plagiarism, a considerable number hold the opposite view, with 39.4% agreeing and 31.0% strongly agreeing that it should be classified as such.

Regarding why students might misuse AI tools dishonestly, responses point to various factors. While 11.3% attribute this behavior to a lack of time, the majority (36.6%) cite pressure to achieve high grades. Additionally, 28.2% believe limited English proficiency plays a key role, while 21.1% point to a lack of awareness about ethical AI use. A small fraction (2.8%) mention other unspecified reasons.

B. Respondents' Opinions on AI's Role in Academic Writing

This section (Q9-Q13) delves into students' perspectives on the benefits and appropriate uses of ChatGPT in academic writing, their attitudes toward incorporating AI into learning, and their views on ethical boundaries in AI use.

Table (2) : Opinions on AI's Role in Academic Writing

Q9 : "AI tools like ChatGPT can help students improve their writing skills if used responsibly."	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	27	38.0%
Agree	33	46.5%
Neutral	9	12.7%
Disagree	2	2.8%
Q10 : Which of the following do you consider acceptable uses of ChatGPT in academic writing?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes, with strict ethical guidelines	37	52,1%
Yes, without restrictions	3	4,2%
No, AI tools should only be optional	23	32,4
No, they should not be used in academic settings	8	11,3
Q11 : "Using AI for minor corrections (e.g., grammar or vocabulary) should not be considered academic dishonesty."	Frequency	Percentage



Strongly agree	10	14.1
Agree	27	38.0
Neutral	24	33.8
Disagree	10	14.1
Q12 : What do you believe are the most significant benefits of using ChatGPT in academic writing?	Frequency	Percentage
Improved language accuracy	28	39,4
Better organization of ideas	20	28,2
Faster completion of assignments	9	12,7
Encourages critical thinking	11	15,5
Other: [Specify]	3	4,2
Q13 : "AI tools like ChatGPT will fundamentally change how academic writing is approached in the next five years."	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	11	13.8
Agree	33	41.3
Neutral	21	26.3
Disagree	6	7.5
Total	71	100%

Source : Elaborated by the authors via SPSS.26

The results reveal diverse perspectives on the role of AI tools like ChatGPT in academic writing. A vast majority of respondents believe that ChatGPT can enhance students' writing skills if used responsibly, with 46.5% agreeing and 38.0% strongly agreeing, while only a small fraction (2.8%) disagrees. Similarly, opinions on the acceptability of ChatGPT in academic writing vary. More than half (52.1%) support its use under strict ethical guidelines, while 4.2% approve without restrictions. However, 32.4% believe AI should remain optional, and 11.3% oppose its integration in academic settings altogether.

Regarding minor corrections, many respondents see AI-assisted grammar and vocabulary adjustments as permissible, with 38.0% agreeing and 14.1% strongly agreeing, whereas 14.1% disagree. When considering the most significant benefit of using ChatGPT in academic writing, 39.4% highlight improved language accuracy, while 28.2% value better organization of ideas. Additionally, 15.5% believe it fosters critical thinking, and 12.7% see faster assignment completion as the main advantage, with a small group (4.2%) emphasizing its use for translation.

Looking ahead, ChatGPT is expected to reshape academic writing in the coming years. While a minority (7.5%) disagrees with this notion, a substantial portion supports it, with 41.3% agreeing and 13.8% strongly agreeing that AI will fundamentally change academic writing within the next five years.



c. Respondents’ Detection, Consequences, and Future Predictions

The final section (Q14-Q17) examines students’ confidence in teachers’ ability to detect AI-generated content, their thoughts on institutional measures to address AI misuse, and their predictions about the future impact of AI tools on academic writing.

Table (3) : Detection, Consequences, and Future Predictions

Q14 : Institutions should focus on teaching students how to use AI tools ethically rather than punishing misuse	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	25	7.0%
Agree	33	11.3%
Neutral	8	46.5%
Disagree	5	35.2%
Q15 : How do you think AI tools like ChatGPT will influence academic integrity in the future?	Frequency	Percentage
Significantly improve integrity	11	15,5%
Somewhat improve integrity	20	28,2%
No significant impact	15	21,1%
Somewhat decrease integrity	21	29,6%
Significantly decrease integrity	4	5,6%
Q16 : How likely do you think universities will	Frequency	Percentage

implement stricter policies or technological solutions to address AI-related academic dishonesty in the next five years?		
Extremely likely	10	14,1%
Very likely	32	45,1%
Neutral	22	31,0%
Somewhat unlikely	7	9,9%
Q17: In your opinion, how effective are current tools and methods (e.g., plagiarism checkers, AI detection software) in identifying academic dishonesty involving AI-generated content?	Frequency	Percentage
Very effective – they can reliably detect AI-generated content.	20	28,2%
Somewhat effective – they work in most cases but have limitations.	24	33,8%
Neutral – their effectiveness is inconsistent and depends on the context.	15	21,1%
Not very effective – they often fail to detect AI-generated content.	4	5,6%
Ineffective – they cannot accurately identify AI-generated content at all.	8	11,3%
Total	71	100%

Source : Elaborated by the authors via SPSS.26



The findings highlight differing opinions on the role of AI in academic settings and its impact on integrity. A significant portion (35.2%) disagrees with the idea that institutions should prioritize teaching students ethical AI use over punishing misuse, while only 11.3% agree and 7.0% strongly agree with this approach. Similarly, views on how AI will influence academic integrity in the future vary. While 15.5% believe AI will significantly enhance integrity and 28.2% think it will lead to some improvement, 21.1% see no substantial impact. On the other hand, 29.6% anticipate a slight decline in integrity, with a small number expecting a significant decrease.

Regarding institutional responses, many respondents foresee stricter policies or technological solutions to address AI-related dishonesty in the next five years. Nearly half (45.1%) consider this very likely, while 14.1% are extremely confident in such measures. Conversely, 9.9% believe this outcome is somewhat unlikely. The effectiveness of current tools in detecting AI-generated academic dishonesty is also debated. While 28.2% rate them as highly effective and 33.8% find them somewhat effective, 21.1% remain neutral. Meanwhile, 5.6% see them as not very effective, and 11.3% deem them completely ineffective.

3.4. Findings

The findings of this study provide critical insights into Algerian EFL students' perceptions of ChatGPT's role in academic writing, highlighting both opportunities for educational support and challenges concerning ethical use.

(RQ1): ChatGPT as a Writing Aid for EFL Students

The results indicate a generally positive perception of ChatGPT's potential to support academic writing. A substantial majority (64.5%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that ChatGPT can help students struggling with English improve their writing skills (Q1), reinforcing literature that emphasizes the ability of AI-driven tools to enhance language proficiency and cognitive engagement (Kim, 2019; Han, 2020). Furthermore, 46.5% agreed that responsible use of ChatGPT could lead to improved writing outcomes (Q9). These findings echo prior studies that underscore how AI tools, when used judiciously, foster improvements in language accuracy and idea organization (Okonkwo & Ade-Ibijola, 2020; Habes et al., 2022).

However, the study also underscores concerns about over-reliance on AI, with 70.4% identifying this as the main challenge (Q2). This finding aligns with Bostrom and Yudkowsky's (2018) argument that while AI tools can support language development, they may inadvertently discourage students from actively engaging in the cognitive processes essential to academic writing. This concern underscores the need for pedagogical frameworks that encourage students to use AI as a complementary tool rather than a substitute for effort.

(RQ2): ETHICAL USE AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The findings reveal nuanced perspectives on what constitutes ethical and unethical uses of ChatGPT. A significant proportion (31%) identified "submitting AI-generated work as entirely one's own" as academic dishonesty (Q5), while 33.8% considered brainstorming ideas with ChatGPT an acceptable practice (Q6). However, only 2.8% supported the idea of generating entire assignments without edits. These findings reflect a gray area in students' understanding of



academic dishonesty, reinforcing prior research that calls for clearer institutional guidelines to define responsible AI use (Selwyn, 2016).

Additionally, 39.4% of respondents equated unacknowledged use of ChatGPT with plagiarism (Q7), mirroring institutional stances on academic integrity. However, the relatively high percentage of neutral responses (16.9%) indicates lingering uncertainty about how academic honesty applies to AI tools, highlighting the evolving definitions of originality in the digital era (Heffernan & Heffernan, 2014). These findings underscore the importance of ethical education to bridge this gap in understanding and empower students to make informed decisions when using AI tools.

STUDENT MOTIVATIONS FOR DISHONEST AI USE (RQ2)

The study identified key motivations for the dishonest use of ChatGPT, with pressure to achieve high grades (36.6%) and limited English proficiency (28.2%) being the most cited factors (Q8). These findings align with Reich et al. (2017), who identified academic pressure and language barriers as drivers of unethical behavior in academic contexts. This suggests that students may view ChatGPT as a compensatory tool to address systemic challenges rather than as a means to circumvent learning.

To address these motivations, institutions should adopt a multifaceted approach that includes academic support programs, time management workshops, and targeted language instruction. By addressing the root causes of academic pressures, educators can foster an environment where students feel confident in their abilities and less reliant on external tools to meet academic expectations.

(RQ3): Balancing Pedagogical Benefits with Ethical Concerns

A notable finding is that 52.1% of students supported the use of AI in academic writing under strict ethical guidelines (Q10). This suggests that many students acknowledge the educational benefits of ChatGPT, particularly in areas such as improving grammar (25.4%), simplifying complex topics (38%), and fostering critical thinking (15.5%) (Q12). These findings echo Ellis and Slade's (2023) conclusions that AI tools can support cognitive engagement and writing fluency when integrated responsibly.

However, the results also indicate a preference for educational interventions over punitive measures, with 64.7% agreeing that institutions should focus on teaching ethical AI use rather than imposing sanctions (Q14). This aligns with Zeide's (2017) advocacy for proactive strategies that emphasize responsible use and academic integrity through guidance and training rather than deterrence alone.

(RQ3): Future Implications for Academic Writing

The survey revealed that 41.3% of participants believe AI tools will fundamentally change academic writing practices in the next five years (Q13). However, 29.6% expressed concerns about a potential decrease in academic integrity (Q15), reinforcing debates in the literature about AI's impact on critical thinking and originality (Zeide, 2017). These concerns highlight the need for robust academic policies and adaptive assessment methods to ensure that AI integration supports learning rather than undermining it.

Moreover, 45.1% of respondents predicted that institutions will implement stricter policies and technological measures to address AI-related academic dishonesty (Q16). This reflects an acknowledgment of the need for systemic interventions, such as advanced detection



tools and policy updates, to address emerging challenges. However, the findings also suggest that a solely regulatory approach may not suffice—educational institutions must foster a culture of integrity by embedding ethical reasoning and digital literacy into their curricula.

In summary, the discussion reveals that while students perceive ChatGPT as a valuable resource for overcoming academic challenges, their views on its ethical use remain divided. The neutral stance of 16.9% of respondents regarding whether unacknowledged AI use constitutes plagiarism highlights a lack of consensus on what constitutes responsible AI use. This ambiguity underscores the need for clearer guidelines and dedicated ethical training to help students navigate the complexities of generative AI use. By fostering a balanced approach that emphasizes both innovation and academic integrity, educational institutions can equip students with the necessary skills to leverage AI tools effectively while upholding the core principles of scholarly work.

4. Conclusion, Limitations and Future Implications

The rapid integration of AI tools like ChatGPT into academic writing presents a double-edged sword: a gateway to innovation and a test of academic values. This study reveals that while many Algerian EFL students view ChatGPT as a powerful ally for overcoming language barriers and enhancing writing, they remain divided on the ethical boundaries of its use. The findings point to an urgent need for institutions to demystify what constitutes responsible AI use, moving beyond punitive measures to foster an academic culture where technology empowers rather than compromises integrity.

While this study provides valuable insights into the perceptions and ethical considerations surrounding ChatGPT use among Algerian

EFL students, it is not without limitations. First, the sample was limited to students from a single institution, which may not fully represent the diversity of perspectives across different educational contexts in Algeria or other regions. Second, the study relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to social desirability bias, as students might underreport unethical behaviors or overstate their adherence to ethical guidelines. Third, the study focused primarily on ChatGPT, and the findings may not generalize to other AI tools with different functionalities or ethical implications. Future research could expand the scope to include multiple institutions, diverse AI tools, and longitudinal studies to track changes in student perceptions and behaviors over time.

Despite these limitations, the findings still offer actionable insights for institutions aiming to integrate AI ethically into their curricula. To harness the benefits of generative AI while preserving academic integrity, institutions must shift from punitive approaches to proactive, education-focused strategies. Key recommendations include:

1. **Integrating Ethical AI Use into Curricula:** Courses should incorporate modules on responsible AI use, helping students develop the skills needed to balance AI assistance with original work.
2. **Providing Clear Guidelines:** Institutions should create comprehensive policies that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable AI use, ensuring students have a clear understanding of ethical boundaries.
3. **Promoting AI Literacy:** Workshops and training for both students and faculty can foster AI literacy, enabling informed use of tools like ChatGPT while addressing concerns such as data privacy and bias.
4. **Enhancing Assessment Strategies:** Redesigning assignments to focus on critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity can



reduce opportunities for AI misuse by making the process of learning more personalized and engaging.

The rapid evolution of generative AI is poised to redefine the academic landscape, reshaping how students approach research, writing, and problem-solving. While the potential for enhanced learning experiences is vast, so too are the challenges in maintaining fairness and authenticity. As AI tools become more sophisticated, institutions will need to implement adaptive policies and ethical frameworks that evolve alongside technological advancements. Moreover, fostering a culture of integrity, where students view AI as a supplementary resource rather than a substitute for personal effort, will be crucial.

Ultimately, the future of education depends on the ability of educators, students, and institutions to strike a balance between innovation and integrity. By embracing a collaborative, ethical approach to AI use, academia can empower students to thrive in a digital era while upholding the core values of intellectual honesty, creativity, and critical inquiry.

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