

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the Research Background, Research Questions, Research Objectives, Research Significance, Scope and Limitation of Research, and Definition of Key Terms.

A. Background of the Study

Writing is an important skill in the English language used in academic and professional settings. Writing not only serves as a method to convey ideas in the EFL classroom, but also as a tool to connect individuals with their environment. Writing is often considered more complex than other language skills such as speaking, listening, and reading because it requires a thorough understanding of grammar, vocabulary, and text structure, as well as creativity to communicate ideas effectively and captivantly.¹

Furthermore, writing is also required for many tasks in an academic setting, including writing reports, essays, research papers, and other projects. In addition to helping one develop academically, proficient writing skills also demonstrate critical thinking. This is because writing requires organizing ideas logically, stating arguments clearly, and ensuring that the writing is understandable to the reader.²

¹ Bestoon Saleh Ali, "A Study of Factors That Affect Learners' English Writing Skill," *Qalaai Zanist Scientific Journal* 8, no. 4 (2023): 1285, <https://doi.org/10.25212/lfu.qzj.8.4.49>.

² Bram, B., & Angelina, P., "Indonesian tertiary education students' academic writing setbacks and solutions," *International Journal of Language Education* 6, no. 3 (2022): 267–280. <https://doi.org/10.26858/ijole.v6i3.22043>

In addition to learning about academic writing, students are also introduced to creative writing, which is a more imaginative and expressive type of writing. Compared to rigid and objective academic writing, creative writing gives more freedom to express thoughts and imagination. Learning creative writing is a fun aspect of learning a language. It starts with one's excitement and grows over time into something more interesting, knowledgeable, and integral to the educational environment.³ Through learning creative writing, EFL students can write creatively and produce enjoyable writing products. Creative writing is a course where the writer is an artist who is connected to himself or herself. Therefore, their writing is also connected to their lives.⁴

A variety of fiction and non-fiction writing styles, including novels, short stories, poetry, and magazine articles, fall under the category of creative writing. According to Olehlova, creative writing workshops in educational settings concentrate on developing writing skills through imaginative investigation of concepts, feelings and experiences. For learners of English as a foreign language (EFL), creating fiction is a major component of creative writing classes.⁵

Fiction is a type of literature that is based on imagination rather than fact.⁶ As a genre of fiction shorter than novels, short stories are taught to students in creative writing classes. Short stories usually center on one main conflict that

³ Harshini, P., "Creative writing and its influence in the generation of language skills: A creative approach." *Journal of Critical Reviews* 7, no. 4, (2020): 186–188. <https://doi.org/10.31838/jcr.07.04.32>

⁴ Nugraha, D. S. A., "Problems encountered by students in online creative writing class and solutions." *Edulingua* 8, no. 2 (2021).

⁵ Olehlova, I., & P., I., "Creative writing. In Agenda." *Estonian UNESCO Youth Association* 49, no. 2 (2016). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429261114-7>

⁶ Milhorn, H. T., *Writing genre fiction. A guide to the craft*: De Rebus, (2006)

emerges and is resolved within a limited framework. Students are encouraged to write short stories to improve their writing skills, expand their imagination, and convey their views in English.⁷

Character, setting, plot, conflict, and dialog are some of the main components to consider when creating fiction. Characters with different personalities and goals drive the story to be more vivid. The setting establishes the mood and reinforces the main idea of the story. Stories revolve around conflicts, both internal and external. While dialog enhances character interaction and explains their feelings and personalities, plot builds the framework of the story from beginning to end.

Although a fictional short story is simply a product of the imagination, writing fiction is not an easy task and many students still face various challenges in the process.⁸ One of the main difficulties is developing an interesting story. Many students struggle to come up with original ideas and often resort to clichéd or uninteresting plots. In addition, they also experience problems in determining a coherent plot and developing an interesting conflict. Another challenge that often arises is in dialog writing. Students often find it difficult to write conversations that sound natural and fit the characters they have created. Dialogue that is irrelevant or feels stilted can hinder the development of the story and make it less convincing. In addition, many students have difficulty in building strong

⁷ Masie, S. R., & Suwignyo, H., "The literacies effectiveness of short story writing learning model." *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* 9,no. 2 (2018): 391. <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.0902.23>

⁸ Utami Dewi and Fitri Rayani Siregar, "Exploring Students' Interests and Challenges in Writing Fiction in Creative Writing Class," *IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education)* 9, no. 2 (2022): 358–71, <https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v9i2.28372>.

characters. They often create flat characters with no clear background or emotional development that supports the story. These problems are often caused by a lack of experience in creative writing, limited vocabulary, and a lack of understanding of effective storytelling techniques.⁹

With advancements in technology, various digital tools have been developed to support students in improving their writing skills. One of the most prominent tools is ChatGPT, an artificial intelligence (AI) model developed by OpenAI.¹⁰ First released in November 2022, ChatGPT has quickly gained popularity among students and academics worldwide. This AI-powered tool assists users in generating text, structuring ideas, correcting grammar, and providing suggestions for improving their writing. In writing fictional short stories, ChatGPT can help students brainstorm ideas, construct more coherent plots, refine grammatical errors, and enhance vocabulary diversity in their writing.

Several previous studies have explored the role of ChatGPT in improving students' writing skills. A study by Zebua and Katemba found that students benefited from ChatGPT in terms of increased motivation, improved grammar, and enhanced writing efficiency.¹¹ Similarly, Hasanah and Muamaroh discovered that ChatGPT helped students generate ideas and structure their writing more

⁹ N. Y. Pratiwi, "THE ANALYSIS OF PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY BEGINNER WRITER IN WRITING A SHORT STORY: A Case Study in Creative Writing Class," *Indonesian Journal Of Educational Research and Review* 2, no. 3 (2019): 402, <https://doi.org/10.23887/ijerr.v2i3.22691>.

¹⁰ Wael Alharbi, "AI in the Foreign Language Classroom: A Pedagogical Overview of Automated Writing Assistance Tools," *Education Research International* 2023 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.1155/2023/4253331>.

¹¹ Zebua, J., & Katemba, C. V., "Students' perceptions of using the OpenAI ChatGPT application in improving writing skills." *Journal of Language and Literature Studies* 4, no. 1 (2024): 110–123. <https://doi.org/10.36312/jolls.v4i1.1805>

effectively.¹² However, their study also highlighted concerns about over-reliance on AI and the potential decline in students' creativity. Another study by Anggeraja, Samtidar, and Aeni indicated that ChatGPT could enhance vocabulary and idea organization, though its effectiveness depended on how frequently students used it.¹³

Additionally, Salwa and Tyas found that ChatGPT positively impacted students' motivation and writing performance. However, their study focused more on general academic writing rather than creative writing.¹⁴ Hasanah and Nurcholis examined students' perceptions of ChatGPT in academic article writing, with some students appreciating its support, while others expressed concerns about originality.¹⁵ Esmaeil et al. investigated ChatGPT's role in argumentative writing and found that while it helped students save time, issues such as accuracy, plagiarism, and reduced critical thinking skills were prevalent.¹⁶

Despite these studies, most research has focused on academic writing, such as essays and research papers, rather than creative writing, particularly fiction writing. There is still a gap in research specifically addressing students'

¹² Hasanah, D. U., & Muamaroh, M., "The university students' perceptions of the use of ChatGPT in improving writing skills" (Skripsi, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta). *Institutional Repository Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta*. (2024). <https://eprints.ums.ac.id/12524/>

¹³ Anggeraja, M. F. A., Samtidar, & Aeni, N., "The use of ChatGPT in enhancing students' writing ability." *Journal of Excellence in English Language Education* 3, no. 3 (2024): 2829-4394.

¹⁴ Salwa, A., & Tyas, N., "Exploring students' perception of EFL on the use of ChatGPT to complete the English writing task." *Berumpun: International Journal of Social, Politics, and Humanities* 7, no. 1 (2024): 80–92. <https://doi.org/10.33019/berumpun.v7i1.186>

¹⁵ Uswatun Hasanah and Ivan Achmad Nurcholis, "English Education Students' Perception of the Use of ChatGPT in Writing Articles," *Pubmedia Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris* 1, no. 2 (2024): 10, <https://doi.org/10.47134/jpbi.v1i2.298>.

¹⁶ Esmaeil, et al., "Understanding student perception regarding the use of ChatGPT in their argumentative writing: A qualitative inquiry." *Malaysian Journal of Communication* 39, no. 4 (2023): 150–165. <https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2023-3904-08>

perceptions of ChatGPT as a tool for enhancing creative writing skills. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by exploring how fourth-semester students of the English Education Department at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung utilize ChatGPT in improving their writing skills focusing on creative writing.

This study is significant because it provides new insights into how AI can support creative writing education, specifically in fiction short story. Moreover, it seeks to identify the benefits and challenges students face when using ChatGPT, offering valuable recommendations for both students and instructors on optimizing AI in writing instruction. Using a quantitative approach, this research evaluates how ChatGPT assists students in idea generation, story structuring, and overall writing quality based on short story assessment rubrics.

By conducting this research, the study aims to contribute valuable knowledge to the field of language education, particularly in understanding how AI tools can be effectively integrated into creative writing instruction. The findings will serve as a useful reference for educators in incorporating AI-assisted writing tools into English language learning, helping students develop stronger and more creative writing skills.

B. Formulation of Research Questions

Based on this background, the research questions are as follows:

1. How do English education students perceive the effectiveness of ChatGPT in improving fiction short story writing components?
2. How do English education students perceive the benefits of using ChatGPT for enhancing their fiction short story writing skills?
3. How do English education students perceive the challenges of using ChatGPT for writing fiction short stories?

C. Objectives of the Research

The objectives of this research are:

1. To analyze the perceptions of English education students toward the effectiveness of ChatGPT in improving fiction short story writing components.
2. To analyze the perceptions of English education students toward the benefits of using ChatGPT for enhancing their fiction short story writing skills.
3. To analyze the perceptions of English education students toward the challenges of using ChatGPT for writing fiction short stories.

D. Significance of the Research

Considering the importance of this research in various aspects, its significance can be viewed from two perspectives:

1. Theoretical Significance

This study contributes to the field of education by providing insights into students' perceptions of using ChatGPT as an AI-based writing assistant. The findings serve as a reference for understanding the role of AI in enhancing writing skills, particularly in higher education. By analyzing the effectiveness of ChatGPT, this research enriches the discourse on AI-assisted learning and provides a foundation for further studies on AI implementation in education, especially in the context of creative writing.

2. Practical Significance

a. For Students

This research helps students understand the effectiveness of ChatGPT as a writing aid. With features such as automated feedback, paraphrasing, and grammar checking, students can improve their writing skills more effectively.

b. For Lecturers

This study provides valuable insights for lecturers in considering the use of AI-based tools like ChatGPT in writing instruction. By understanding how students utilize and perceive the benefits of ChatGPT, lecturers can evaluate the potential advantages and challenges of AI integration in writing education.

c. For Future Researchers

This research serves as a reference for future studies exploring the use of AI in language education. The findings also encourage further

investigations into AI-assisted language skill development, including speaking, listening, and reading, as well as its effectiveness in various educational contexts.

E. Scope and Limitation of the Research

This research focuses on exploring students' perceptions of using ChatGPT to enhance writing skills. The study is conducted at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung, with a population consisting of fourth-semester students in the English Education Department.

The selection of fourth-semester students is based on academic and curricular considerations. At this stage, students have acquired fundamental writing skills in English and are currently learning creative writing, specifically fiction short story, which align with the study's objectives. Moreover, their writing proficiency levels are relatively homogeneous, making them an ideal population for assessing the effectiveness of ChatGPT as an AI-based writing assistant.

The scope of this study is limited to students who have used ChatGPT as a writing tool, either in academic or non-academic contexts. This research specifically focuses on students' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of ChatGPT in improving fiction short story writing components, the perceived benefits of using ChatGPT in the writing process, and the challenges they face while using the tool.

F. Definitions of Key Terms

1. Perception

Perception refers to the process by which individuals select, organize, and interpret information from their environment to create a meaningful understanding. According to Robins in Suyadi, perception can be categorized into positive and negative, depending on how individuals interpret the objects they encounter.¹⁷ The way students perceive a learning tool or method can significantly impact their engagement and motivation. Positive perceptions tend to enhance participation and learning outcomes, while negative perceptions can hinder progress.

2. ChatGPT

Chat Generative Pre-training Transformer (GPT) is a conversational AI system developed by OpenAI that uses machine learning and Natural Language Processing (NLP) to engage in interactive communication with users. According to Idris, ChatGPT was designed to simulate human-like conversations and assist with tasks such as answering questions, retrieving information, and generating new texts.¹⁸ The system is powered by deep learning algorithms, which allow it to quickly provide problem-solving information based on user input. Song et al. explain that the NLP capabilities

¹⁷ Suyadi Suyadi and Siti Aisyah, "Students' Perception on Learning English For Law Faculty Students at University of Batanghari Jambi," *Jurnal Ilmiah Universitas Batanghari Jambi* 21, no. 3 (2021): 1151, <https://doi.org/10.33087/jiubj.v21i3.1719>.

¹⁸ Ramadhani Idris, "Implementation of ChatGPT on English Class Essay Writing Skills in University Students," *ELS Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities* 6, no 4 (2023): 700, <https://doi.org/10.34050/elsjish.v6i4.31424>

of ChatGPT enable it to effectively interpret, manipulate, and respond to human language in a way that closely mimics human conversation.¹⁹

3. Writing Skills

Writing is an essential skill for students, particularly in language learning. According to Fitria, writing involves not only expressing ideas but also structuring them in a coherent way for readers. The process of drafting is a key component of writing, where students put their initial ideas into written form, laying the foundation for further revision and refinement.²⁰ The use of tools like ChatGPT can help students improve their writing by offering instant feedback and suggestions for improvement.

4. Creative Writing

Creative Writing is a type of writing that focuses on imaginative and artistic expression, allowing writers to explore personal experiences, emotions, and cultural backgrounds through unique storytelling. It moves beyond factual or conventional forms, emphasizing originality, inventiveness, and the writer's own voice to create emotionally engaging narratives. As Herper states, creative writing is influenced by personal history and culture, shaped by individual knowledge and imagination beyond the boundaries of formal academic disciplines.

¹⁹ Cuiping Song and Yanping Song, "Enhancing Academic Writing Skills and Motivation: Assessing the Efficacy of ChatGPT in AI-Assisted Language Learning for EFL Students," *Frontiers in Psychology* 14, no. 12 (2023): 2, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1260843>.

²⁰ Tira Nur Fitria, "Creative Writing Skills in English: Developing Student's Potential and Creativity," *EBONY: Journal of English Language Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature* 4, no. 1 (2024): 1–17, <https://doi.org/10.37304/ebony.v4i1.10908>.

5. Fiction Short Story

Fiction Short Story is a brief prose narrative that focuses on a single event, conflict, or pivotal moment, designed to deliver a complete and meaningful experience in a short reading time. It features imagined characters, a concise plot, and limited scope, typically ranging from 500 to 10,000 words, while still achieving emotional depth and thematic significance.²¹ Beyond its literary value, fiction short stories serve as effective tools in education by fostering creativity, critical thinking, vocabulary development, and emotional engagement in students.

²¹ Lazar, G. "Literature and language teaching: A guide for teachers and trainers." *Cambridge University Press*.(1993) <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511733048>