



Artificial Intelligence (AI) ChatGPT in Academic and Science Writing Education: Student Dependency, Creativity, and the Mediating Role of Feedback in English as a Second Language and English as a Foreign Language Contexts

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ABSTRACT

The rapid integration of generative artificial intelligence tools such as ChatGPT is reshaping learning practices in academic and science writing education, particularly in English as a Second Language and English as a Foreign Language contexts. While ChatGPT can support language development and writing efficiency, uncritical reliance on artificial intelligence may undermine students' cognitive engagement, creativity, and agency in the writing process. This conceptual paper examines how ChatGPT influences student dependency, composing practices, and creative development in academic and science education. Drawing on process-oriented writing theory, sociocultural perspectives on mediated learning, and creativity research, the paper argues that effective writing development depends on sustained cognitive effort, iterative revision, and meaningful teacher feedback. Using insights from the United States and Nepal, the paper emphasizes that the pedagogical impact of ChatGPT is shaped by instructional design and feedback cultures. It concludes by proposing strategies for integrating ChatGPT to strengthen AI literacy in education.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid emergence of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT has transformed educational practices across disciplines, particularly in writing-intensive fields such as composition and English as a Second Language (ESL) or English as Foreign Language (EFL) instruction. Since its public release, ChatGPT has been widely adopted by students for tasks including brainstorming, drafting, paraphrasing, and editing academic texts. For instructors, the technology offers both opportunities and challenges: while it can support language development and reduce surface-level errors, it also raises concerns about academic integrity, student dependency, and the erosion of core composing skills. These concerns are especially salient in writing classrooms, where learning is deeply tied to cognitive effort, creativity, and iterative engagement with ideas. Further, composition scholars have long emphasized writing as a process-oriented activity involving planning, drafting, revising, and reflecting (Flower & Hayes, 1980). Through this process, students develop not only linguistic accuracy but also rhetorical awareness, critical thinking, and authorial voice. However, when students rely heavily on AI-generated text, key stages of the composing process may be shortened or bypassed altogether. Rather than engaging in the productive struggle that fosters originality and learning, students may accept AI-produced drafts as finished products, thereby reducing opportunities for creativity, experimentation, and intellectual risk-taking. As a result, instructors increasingly report concerns that students appear less invested in idea generation and revision, raising questions about whether AI-supported writing practices may contribute to learner passivity or “cognitive offloading.”

These concerns are particularly pronounced in ESL/EFL contexts, where students often face additional linguistic and affective challenges. Multilingual writers may turn to ChatGPT not only for efficiency but also for confidence, using AI to compensate for perceived language deficiencies. While such support can be beneficial when used strategically, uncritical reliance risks reinforcing dependency and limiting the development of independent writing skills. Moreover, global disparities in pedagogical traditions further complicate the picture. In contexts such as Nepal, where product-oriented assessment and exam-driven writing practices have historically dominated, the introduction of AI tools may intensify tendencies toward surface-level writing rather than encourage process-based learning. Comparative perspectives, therefore, offer valuable insight into how local feedback cultures and grading practices shape students’ engagement with AI-assisted writing. On the other hand, teacher feedback emerges as a crucial mediating factor in this evolving landscape. Research consistently demonstrates that meaningful written feedback and transparent grading practices play a central role in supporting revision, creativity, and learner autonomy (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Thapa’s comparative study of U.S. and Nepali ESL composition practices highlights how feedback-rich environments encourage deeper engagement with writing processes, whereas feedback-poor contexts often prioritize correctness over development. Similarly, teachers’ perceptions, agency, and ethical framing of ChatGPT use significantly influence whether AI functions as a learning scaffold or a shortcut that replaces student thinking (Thapa & Shrestha, 2026). These studies suggest that the pedagogical impact of ChatGPT is not inherent to the technology itself but is shaped by instructional design, assessment practices, and feedback cultures.

Against this backdrop, the present paper critically examines the implications of ChatGPT use for student creativity, motivation, and composing practices in writing classrooms. Rather than adopting a binary stance that frames AI as either beneficial or harmful, the paper argues

that unregulated reliance on ChatGPT risks undermining the cognitive and creative foundations of writing, while pedagogically guided use can support learning when aligned with process-based instruction and robust feedback practices. Specifically, the paper addresses the following questions: How does ChatGPT influence students' composing processes and creative engagement? In what ways might AI encourage dependency rather than learning? How can teacher feedback and assessment practices mitigate these risks, particularly across different ESL/EFL contexts? By synthesizing composition theory, sociocultural perspectives on tool-mediated learning, and comparative insights from U.S. and Nepali classrooms, this paper seeks to contribute to ongoing debates on AI literacy and ethical writing pedagogy in an increasingly AI-mediated educational landscape

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent years have seen the expansion of generative artificial intelligence tools in educational contexts, with ChatGPT emerging as one of the most widely used platforms for academic writing support. Research on AI-assisted writing highlights several potential benefits, including support for idea generation, grammatical accuracy, lexical choice, and revision efficiency (Zhai, 2022). For multilingual writers in ESL/EFL contexts, ChatGPT can function as a linguistic scaffold, offering models of academic discourse and reducing anxiety associated with second-language writing. From this perspective, AI tools are often framed as democratizing technologies that lower linguistic barriers and expand access to academic participation. However, alongside these perceived benefits, a growing body of scholarship raises concerns about the pedagogical consequences of uncritical AI adoption. Large language models generate text based on probabilistic patterns rather than understanding, which can result in fluent but shallow prose. Such outputs may obscure gaps in reasoning, encourage surface-level engagement, and promote stylistic uniformity. Studies examining student use of AI tools further suggest that learners frequently rely on ChatGPT for full drafting rather than limited support, blurring the line between assistance and substitution (Van Niekerk, 2025). These trends have prompted composition scholars to question whether AI-assisted writing aligns with long-standing pedagogical commitments to process, revision, and intellectual struggle.

One of the most prominent concerns in the literature is the risk of student dependency on AI tools, often conceptualized as cognitive offloading. Cognitive offloading occurs when learners delegate mental tasks—such as planning, problem-solving, or decision-making—to external tools, potentially reducing learning gains (Kellogg, 2008). In writing contexts, this can manifest when students rely on AI to generate ideas, organize arguments, or paraphrase sources rather than engaging in these cognitive processes themselves. Further, empirical studies indicate that students who depend heavily on AI tools may demonstrate reduced engagement with the writing process and diminished confidence in their own abilities (Wang *et al.*, 2025). Rather than viewing writing as a recursive activity involving drafting and revision, some students treat AI-generated text as a finished product, bypassing opportunities for reflection and improvement. This tendency has led instructors to describe student writing practices as increasingly passive or “lazy,” not in a moral sense, but in terms of reduced cognitive investment. Such patterns are particularly concerning in composition pedagogy, where learning is understood to emerge through sustained effort and iterative practice (Flower & Hayes, 1980).

Thaumatococcus danielli plants were collected from a rainforest area in a rural community in Imo State, Nigeria. The plant was uprooted from the wild, non-reserved forest area, where

no governmental or institutional restrictions exist regarding the collection of plant materials for academic research purposes. The collected plant samples were identified and authenticated at the Department of Plant Science and Biotechnology, Federal University of Technology Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria, as *Thaumatococcus danielli*. This identification process ensured scientific accuracy and provides a replicable reference for laboratory-based instruction and educational research involving indigenous plant species.

The issue of dependency is further complicated by affective factors. Students who experience anxiety, time pressure, or low writing self-efficacy may turn to AI as a coping mechanism rather than as a learning aid. While this reliance may offer short-term relief, long-term overuse risks undermining the development of independent writing skills. Educational technologies often promise efficiency but can inadvertently reshape learner identities, positioning students as consumers of automated solutions rather than active knowledge producers. Similarly, Creativity occupies a central place in composition studies, where writing is valued not merely for correctness but for originality, voice, and rhetorical effectiveness. Creativity in writing is widely understood as emerging through exploration, risk-taking, and revision rather than immediate fluency (Graham & Harris, 2018). From this perspective, difficulty and uncertainty are not obstacles to learning but essential conditions for creative growth.

The literature on AI-assisted writing raises concerns that generative tools may inhibit these creative processes. Because ChatGPT produces text based on dominant linguistic patterns, its outputs tend to reflect conventional structures and “safe” arguments, potentially discouraging originality. When students adopt AI-generated drafts with minimal modification, their writing may become homogenized, lacking a distinctive voice or personal engagement. Several studies note that AI-supported texts often appear polished yet generic, meeting surface-level expectations while avoiding intellectual risk (Liu & Wang, 2023). This tension is particularly evident in academic contexts that prioritize originality and critical thinking. While AI can assist with brainstorming, excessive reliance may limit students’ opportunity to develop their own ideas. Errors, struggle, and experimentation are central to writing development, especially for novice and multilingual writers. When AI removes these stages, students may achieve short-term success at the expense of long-term growth. Consequently, scholars increasingly call for pedagogical frameworks that distinguish between AI use as a creative catalyst and AI use as a replacement for thinking.

Concerns about dependency and creativity intersect closely with debates on academic integrity and assessment. Traditional plagiarism frameworks are often ill-equipped to address AI-generated text, as such content may not match existing sources (Bittle & El-Gayar, 2025). This has led to widespread uncertainty among instructors regarding detection, enforcement, and fairness. However, many scholars argue that focusing solely on policing AI use obscures deeper pedagogical issues related to assessment design. Research suggests that assignments emphasizing product over process are particularly vulnerable to AI misuse. When grading prioritizes correctness and fluency, students may feel incentivized to submit AI-generated work that meets formal criteria with minimal effort. In contrast, process-oriented assessments—such as draft portfolios, reflective commentaries, and revision memos—encourage sustained engagement and make learning visible. These approaches shift the focus from performance to labor, reducing the perceived value of AI shortcuts.

Assessment redesign is thus widely viewed as a key response to AI integration. Writing pedagogy must adapt to technological change by foregrounding transparency, reflection, and instructor–student dialogue. Rather than banning AI outright, instructors are encouraged to clarify acceptable uses and align assessment practices with learning goals that cannot be

easily automated. Within this evolving landscape, teacher feedback emerges as a critical mediator of AI's impact on writing development. Extensive research demonstrates that effective feedback supports revision, metacognition, and learner autonomy (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Feedback that focuses on ideas, organization, and rhetorical choices (rather than solely on grammar) encourages students to engage deeply with their texts and develop authorial agency.

Comparative study of U.S. and Nepali ESL composition practices underscores the importance of feedback culture in shaping writing development (Thapa, 2025). In U.S. contexts, where formative feedback and revision are often emphasized, students are more likely to view writing as a process. In contrast, Nepali ESL classrooms have historically prioritized summative grading and product-oriented evaluation, limiting opportunities for iterative improvement. These differences have significant implications for AI use. In feedback-rich environments, AI can be positioned as a preliminary support tool, while teacher feedback guides deeper revision. In feedback-poor contexts, however, AI may become a substitute for instructional support, reinforcing surface-level writing practices. Similarly, the central role of teacher agency in shaping how ChatGPT is integrated into ESL/EFL classrooms (Thapa & Shrestha, 2025). Their study reveals that when teachers frame AI use ethically and pedagogically, students are more likely to use it as a learning aid rather than a shortcut. Conversely, when institutional guidance is absent, students often develop ad hoc practices that prioritize efficiency over learning. These findings reinforce the argument that technology alone does not determine educational outcomes; rather, outcomes are shaped by pedagogical intent, feedback practices, and institutional culture.

The literature emphasizes that AI's impact on writing must be understood within broader sociocultural and global contexts. ESL/EFL students often face linguistic insecurity, high-stakes assessment, and limited access to individualized feedback, making them particularly vulnerable to overreliance on AI tools. While ChatGPT may appear to offer linguistic empowerment, it can also reinforce dependency if not accompanied by explicit instruction in writing processes and ethical use. Comparative perspectives reveal that global disparities in educational resources and pedagogical traditions shape how AI is adopted. In contexts where teacher workloads are high and feedback opportunities are limited, AI may fill instructional gaps but also normalize minimal engagement. Theory of mediated learning reminds us that tools influence development only through guided interaction. Without such guidance, AI risks functioning as a shortcut rather than a scaffold.

While analyzing all the literature suggests that ChatGPT occupies an ambivalent position in writing pedagogy. While it offers meaningful support for language development and efficiency, unregulated use may foster dependency, diminish creativity, and weaken core composing skills. Existing research has largely focused on immediate outcomes and instructor perceptions, leaving a gap in comparative, pedagogy-centered analyses that foreground feedback practices and creativity across ESL/EFL contexts. Addressing this gap, the present study synthesizes composition theory, AI scholarship, and comparative insights from U.S. and Nepali classrooms to examine how ChatGPT reshapes writing development and how teacher feedback can mitigate its risks.

3. METHOD

This study adopts a conceptual and analytical research design rather than an empirical one. The paper does not involve the collection of primary data from human participants; instead, it critically synthesizes existing scholarship to examine the pedagogical implications of

ChatGPT use in composition and ESL/EFL writing classrooms. Conceptual research is particularly appropriate for emerging educational technologies, where rapid adoption often outpaces empirical evidence and where theoretical clarity is needed to guide ethical and pedagogical decision-making. By integrating insights from composition studies, sociocultural learning theory, creativity research, and AI-in-education scholarship, this paper aims to develop a coherent framework for understanding how ChatGPT may influence student dependency, creativity, and writing development. Similarly, the analysis is guided by three interrelated conceptual lenses. First, process-oriented writing theory frames writing as a recursive activity involving planning, drafting, revising, and reflecting (Flower & Hayes, 1980). This lens foregrounds the importance of cognitive effort and revision in the development of writing proficiency and creativity. Second, sociocultural theories of mediated learning are used to conceptualize ChatGPT as a mediational tool whose educational value depends on how it is scaffolded through instruction, feedback, and assessment. From this perspective, AI can function either as a learning support that extends students' capabilities or as a substitute that displaces essential cognitive work. Third, creativity-focused scholarship in composition studies informs the analysis of originality, voice, and intellectual risk-taking, emphasizing that creative writing emerges through struggle, experimentation, and iterative engagement rather than immediate fluency. These lenses collectively shape the paper's critical stance toward AI-assisted writing, allowing for a nuanced examination that avoids both technological determinism and outright rejection of AI tools.

The study draws on peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, and policy-oriented research published primarily between 2018 and 2025, with foundational composition texts included to establish theoretical grounding. Sources were selected based on their relevance to one or more of the following areas: (a) generative AI and academic writing, (b) student motivation, dependency, or cognitive engagement, (c) creativity and originality in composition, (d) feedback and assessment practices, and (e) ESL/EFL writing pedagogy. Particular attention is given to comparative and context-sensitive studies, including scholarship examining differences between U.S. and non-U.S. educational settings. Two focal literature anchor the contextual analysis: Thapa's comparative study of written feedback and grading practices in U.S. and Nepali ESL composition classrooms and examination of teachers' perceptions and experiences with ChatGPT in EFL/ESL contexts (Thapa and Shrestha, 2026). These works provide pedagogical and regional grounding for the conceptual discussion and enable the integration of global perspectives into debates on AI and writing instruction.

The analysis proceeds through thematic synthesis, in which recurring concepts and tensions across the literature—such as dependency, creativity loss, cognitive offloading, feedback mediation, and ethical AI use—are identified and examined in relation to the study's research questions. Rather than aggregating findings statistically, the paper traces conceptual patterns and pedagogical implications across studies, highlighting points of convergence and divergence. Comparative insights from U.S. and Nepali contexts are used to illustrate how local feedback cultures and assessment traditions shape student engagement with AI tools.

Because this study relies exclusively on published scholarship and the author's conceptual analysis, it does not constitute human subjects research and therefore does not require Institutional Review Board approval. The paper adheres to ethical academic practices by accurately representing sources, acknowledging limitations, and avoiding prescriptive claims not supported by the literature.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A central concern emerging from the literature is that uncritical reliance on ChatGPT risks undermining the writing process itself. Composition scholarship consistently frames writing as a recursive activity involving planning, drafting, revising, and reflecting (Flower & Hayes, 1980). These stages are not merely procedural but cognitive, requiring writers to make rhetorical decisions, negotiate meaning, and refine ideas through effort and revision. When students use ChatGPT to generate full drafts or extensively paraphrase content, substantial portions of this cognitive work are outsourced to the tool. As a result, writing becomes less an act of composing and more an act of selecting, editing, or submitting AI-produced text. This shift has important pedagogical implications. The analysis suggests that students who rely on ChatGPT for drafting may bypass productive struggle, a key condition for learning and skill development. While AI-generated text often appears fluent and organized, such fluency can mask shallow engagement with content and argumentation. In this sense, ChatGPT may create an illusion of competence that does not correspond to underlying writing ability. Over time, this pattern may contribute to reduced confidence in independent writing and a diminished sense of authorship, reinforcing dependency rather than fostering growth.

To synthesize the key issues discussed in this section, **Table 1** summarizes the major pedagogical risks of uncritical ChatGPT use, their underlying mechanisms, and instructional responses that can mitigate dependency while preserving creativity and learning.

Table 1. Pedagogical Risks of Uncritical ChatGPT Use and Instructional Responses in Writing Education

Key Issue	Description of the Problem	Impact on Student Writing	Pedagogical Response
Process erosion	ChatGPT replaces planning, drafting, and revising stages of writing	Reduced cognitive engagement and shallow argumentation	Emphasize process-based assignments and multiple drafts
Illusion of competence	AI-generated fluency masks weak reasoning and limited understanding	Overestimation of writing ability and reduced authorial confidence	Require reflective commentary and justification of writing choices
Creativity loss	AI outputs favor conventional structures and safe arguments	Homogenized writing and diminished voice	Use ChatGPT for brainstorming, not full drafting
Student dependency	Cognitive offloading reduces ownership of the composing process	Weakened metacognitive awareness and learning autonomy	Explicit instruction on ethical and limited AI use
Multilingual vulnerability (ESL/EFL)	AI compensates for linguistic insecurity rather than supporting development	Reinforcement of deficit views of multilingual writers	Scaffold language development and encourage experimentation
Feedback displacement	AI substitutes for instructional guidance in feedback-poor contexts	Product-oriented writing and surface-level revision	Strengthen formative feedback focused on ideas and rhetoric
Contextual imbalance	Pedagogical traditions shape how AI is used (U.S. vs. Nepali contexts)	Uneven learning outcomes across educational systems	Adapt AI integration to local assessment and feedback cultures

Closely tied to concerns about process erosion is the question of creativity. Creativity in composition is not synonymous with novelty alone but involves intellectual risk-taking, experimentation, and the development of a distinctive voice (Graham & Harris, 2018). The literature reviewed earlier indicates that ChatGPT's outputs are shaped by dominant linguistic patterns and conventional academic norms. Consequently, AI-generated texts tend to be safe, predictable, and rhetorically conservative. The analysis suggests that when students adopt such outputs with minimal transformation, their writing may lose originality and voice. Rather than struggling to articulate ideas in their own words, students may accept AI-generated phrasing as "good enough," prioritizing correctness and coherence over creativity. This tendency is especially problematic in composition pedagogy, which values writing as a site of meaning-making and personal engagement. If students are not required to reflect on or justify their rhetorical choices, AI use may gradually normalize formulaic writing practices and discourage experimentation.

However, the analysis also reveals that creativity loss is not an inevitable outcome of AI use. When ChatGPT is positioned as a brainstorming or exploratory tool rather than a drafting engine, it can support creative thinking by exposing students to alternative perspectives or organizational possibilities. The critical distinction lies in whether AI replaces student ideation or prompts further inquiry. This finding reinforces the importance of pedagogical framing in shaping AI's impact on creativity.

The concept of dependency emerges as a key theme in the discussion. Dependency, in this context, does not imply laziness in a moral sense but rather a reduction in cognitive engagement and ownership of the writing process. Cognitive offloading to AI tools may initially appear efficient, particularly for students managing heavy workloads or linguistic challenges. Yet, the analysis suggests that habitual reliance on ChatGPT can weaken metacognitive awareness and reduce opportunities for learning through effortful practice. This issue is particularly salient in ESL/EFL contexts. Multilingual students may turn to ChatGPT as a means of overcoming linguistic insecurity or fear of error. While such support can be empowering when used strategically, it may also discourage students from experimenting with language and developing confidence in their own expressive capabilities. Over time, dependency on AI-generated language risks reinforcing a deficit view of multilingual writers, positioning AI as a necessary intermediary rather than as a temporary scaffold.

Across the literature and analysis, teacher feedback consistently emerges as a crucial mediator of ChatGPT's pedagogical impact. Feedback practices shape how students interpret writing tasks, assess their own progress, and engage with revision. Comparative study of U.S. and Nepali ESL composition classrooms underscores how feedback-rich environments encourage students to view writing as a process (Thapa, 2025), while feedback-poor contexts often reinforce product-oriented approaches. In such contexts, AI tools may be used to meet surface-level expectations rather than to support learning. The analysis suggests that robust feedback practices can counteract AI-driven dependency by re-centering the writing process. When instructors require drafts, reflections, and revision justifications, students are compelled to engage more deeply with their texts, even when AI tools are permitted. Feedback that addresses ideas, organization, and rhetorical effectiveness (rather than focusing solely on grammatical accuracy) signals that writing quality cannot be reduced to polished prose alone.

Furthermore, it further highlights the importance of teacher agency in mediating AI use (Thapa & Shrestha, 2026). Their study demonstrates that when teachers actively frame ChatGPT as a pedagogical tool with clear boundaries and ethical expectations, students are more likely to use it responsibly. Conversely, in the absence of explicit guidance, students

tend to adopt efficiency-driven practices that prioritize completion over learning. This analysis reinforces the argument that AI does not determine educational outcomes independently; rather, outcomes are shaped by how instructors integrate technology into curriculum, assessment, and feedback.

A comparative lens reveals how local pedagogical traditions influence student engagement with AI tools. In U.S. composition classrooms, where process-oriented writing and formative feedback are more common, instructors are better positioned to integrate ChatGPT as a supplementary resource. Students in these contexts may be more accustomed to revision and reflective practices that make AI shortcuts less attractive or effective. In contrast, Nepali ESL/EFL classrooms have historically emphasized product-based assessment and exam-oriented writing. Within such systems, the introduction of ChatGPT may amplify existing tendencies toward surface-level writing, as students seek to meet formal criteria with minimal engagement. Without structural support for revision and feedback, AI tools risk becoming substitutes for instructional scaffolding rather than complements to it. These comparative insights suggest that AI integration must be sensitive to local educational cultures and resource constraints.

The discussion ultimately points toward the need to reframe ChatGPT not as an autonomous solution but as a pedagogical tool whose value depends on instructional design. When embedded within process-based pedagogy, reflective assessment, and feedback-centered instruction, ChatGPT can support learning without undermining creativity or agency. Conversely, when introduced into environments that prioritize speed, correctness, and product, AI use is more likely to encourage dependency and disengagement. This reframing aligns with sociocultural theories of mediated learning, which emphasize that tools shape development only through guided interaction. From this perspective, the question is not whether ChatGPT should be used in writing classrooms, but how it should be used, by whom, and for what purposes.

The analysis reveals that ChatGPT's impact on student writing is shaped by three interrelated factors: (a) the extent to which it replaces or supports core composing processes, (b) the role of teacher feedback and assessment in sustaining cognitive engagement, and (c) the pedagogical and cultural context in which AI is introduced. While uncritical reliance on ChatGPT risks diminishing creativity, agency, and writing development, pedagogically guided use (anchored in feedback and process) offers the potential to integrate AI ethically and productively into composition and ESL/EFL instruction.

One key implication for writing instructors is the need to design assignments that foreground the composing process rather than the final product. Assignments that require multiple drafts, reflective cover letters, revision memos, or process narratives make students' thinking visible and reduce the effectiveness of AI-generated shortcuts. When students are asked to explain how their ideas developed, justify rhetorical choices, or reflect on feedback received, they must engage cognitively with their writing in ways that AI cannot easily replace. Such practices align with process-oriented composition pedagogy and encourage students to view writing as iterative and exploratory rather than transactional. In addition, instructors may incorporate in-class writing activities, peer workshops, or oral explanations of written work to reinforce authorship and accountability. These strategies are particularly valuable in AI-rich environments, as they emphasize learning through interaction and reflection rather than speed or polish.

Another important pedagogical implication concerns the explicit teaching of AI literacy. Rather than assuming students intuitively understand appropriate AI use, instructors should

clearly articulate what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable uses of ChatGPT. For example, AI may be permitted for brainstorming, generating questions, or checking surface-level language issues, while full drafting or undisclosed paraphrasing may be prohibited. Transparency in AI policies not only supports academic integrity but also positions ethical decision-making as part of writing instruction. Such guidelines are especially important for multilingual writers, who may perceive AI as a necessary support rather than a choice. By framing AI use as a tool that supports learning rather than replaces thinking, instructors can help students develop responsible and reflective practices that strengthen rather than weaken writing skills.

The analysis underscores the continued importance of teacher feedback in mediating students' engagement with AI-assisted writing. Feedback that focuses on ideas, organization, argumentation, and voice signals to students that writing quality extends beyond grammatical correctness. When instructors prioritize formative feedback and opportunities for revision, students are encouraged to invest in meaning-making and creative exploration, even when AI tools are available. Instructors may also use feedback to address AI use directly, asking students to reflect on how they used ChatGPT and how it influenced their writing decisions. Such reflective feedback practices promote metacognitive awareness and help students recognize the limits of AI-generated text.

For ESL/EFL classrooms, particularly in contexts where product-oriented assessment has traditionally dominated, integrating ChatGPT requires careful pedagogical scaffolding. Instructors may need to explicitly teach writing processes, genre expectations, and revision strategies to prevent AI tools from becoming substitutes for instruction. Comparative insights from U.S. and Nepali contexts suggest that strengthening feedback cultures and reducing overemphasis on summative grading can mitigate AI dependency and encourage deeper engagement with writing.

Finally, the findings point to the need for professional development that empowers teachers to make informed pedagogical decisions about AI. Institutions should support instructors through training, collaborative discussions, and policy frameworks that prioritize learning over surveillance. When teachers are equipped to integrate AI thoughtfully, ChatGPT can function as a pedagogical resource rather than a threat to creativity and writing development.

5. CONCLUSION

The increasing presence of generative artificial intelligence tools such as ChatGPT in composition and ESL/EFL classrooms has prompted urgent pedagogical questions about student learning, creativity, and agency. This paper has argued that while ChatGPT offers meaningful support for language development and instructional efficiency, uncritical reliance on AI risks weakening the cognitive and creative foundations of writing. Drawing on composition theory, sociocultural perspectives on mediated learning, and comparative insights from U.S. and Nepali ESL/EFL contexts, the analysis demonstrates that writing development depends on sustained cognitive effort, iterative revision, and purposeful engagement with ideas—processes that may be bypassed when AI replaces rather than supports student thinking.

Across the reviewed scholarship, student dependency emerges not as a moral failing but as a pedagogical concern rooted in reduced cognitive engagement and ownership of the writing process. When students rely on ChatGPT for drafting and idea generation without reflective mediation, writing risks becoming a transactional activity focused on product rather than meaning-making. This concern is particularly pronounced in ESL/EFL contexts, where

linguistic insecurity and exam-oriented assessment traditions may intensify dependence on AI-generated text. At the same time, the paper underscores that creativity loss and dependency are not inevitable outcomes of AI integration. Rather, they are shaped by instructional design, assessment practices, and feedback cultures. Teacher feedback is identified as a critical mediating force in this evolving instructional landscape. Comparative insights from U.S. and Nepali classrooms highlight how feedback-rich, process-oriented pedagogies can position ChatGPT as a scaffold for learning, while feedback-poor environments may inadvertently encourage surface-level engagement. Similarly, teacher agency and ethical framing of AI use play a decisive role in determining whether ChatGPT functions as a pedagogical resource or a shortcut that displaces student effort. Ultimately, this paper positions its argument that pedagogy must lead technology. Effective integration of ChatGPT in writing classrooms requires transparent AI-use guidelines, process-oriented assignments, and sustained formative feedback that foreground creativity, reflection, and student agency. As AI technologies continue to evolve, composition pedagogy must remain grounded in human creativity, critical thinking, and the transformative potential of writing as an act of learning rather than mere text production.

6. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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