

## The Impact of AI Writing Tools on Academic Integrity: Unveiling English-Majored Students' Perceptions and Practical Solutions

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### Abstract

The emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) tools has brought a multitude of benefits to many academic practices, particularly in the field of English Language Teaching. Nonetheless, they also present concerns regarding academic integrity. This research aims to explore how English-majored students at Ho Chi Minh University of Foreign Languages – Information Technology (HUFLIT) perceive the influence of AI writing tools on their academic honesty. This study also proposes some practical solutions that students might employ to maintain the authenticity of their work. Conducted in the summer semester (May to August), the participants were 114 English-majored seniors at HUFLIT. Data was collected through surveys and semi-structured interviews, which were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify students' perceptions, challenges, and solutions. The findings indicated a broad spectrum of students' perceptions towards the given concern, emphasizing that comprehensive guidelines and educational programs are important to implement AI writing tools responsibly. Additionally, some practical solutions, entailing institutional support, plagiarism checker, and ethical writing practices were identified at the end of the paper.

**Keywords:** AI writing tools, academic integrity, perceptions, solutions

### Introduction

In the globalized world, the English language has always played a pivotal role as an effective communication tool in almost every field. It is a dominant language utilized in a plethora of sectors, including education, science and technology, commerce, tourism and hospitality management, entertainment, media and press (Rao 2019). Accordingly, in many countries, more emphasis has been placed on English language teaching (ELT) than any other foreign language. This is particularly evident in non-native English-speaking countries, where having a good command in English can provide people with numerous opportunities in employment, access to information, and global connections.

Among the four language skills, writing is often considered as the most important and challenging skill that second language students need to master (Byrne, 1992; Hyland, 2003). They subconsciously commit grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling mistakes (Mohammad & Hazarika, 2016). Research by Moses and Mohamad (2019) further reported that many students finding writing to be a difficult productive skill often struggle with issues related

to a lack of ideas and limited range of vocabulary. The weak organization that makes their writing lack coherence and cohesion hinders their mastering this skill (Fareed et al., 2016).

For the purpose of assisting students to overcome these aforementioned problems, Artificial Intelligent (AI), in general, and AI-powered writing tools have become increasingly prevalent among academia. Research indicates that these tools can improve students' performance in the writing process and writing skills scores as well (Utami et al., 2023). A study by Gültekin Talayhan and Babayiğit (2023) found out that the use of AI writing tools, such as Quillbot, Jenni, ChatGPT, WordTune, Copy.ai, Paperpal, Perplexity, DeepL, Elicit, and Essay Writer, significantly improves students' writing content by generating helpful ideas and providing appropriate lexical resources. This study also pointed out the positive impacts of these AI tools on structuring well-organized writing, showing a promising result in terms of coherence and cohesion.

However, the increasing prevalence of AI writing tools in academic settings may raise concerns about potential violations of plagiarism and other forms of academic integrity, which are mainly intrinsic motivators for ethical academic behavior (Bretag, 2018). Due to an alarming fear whether students can create and complete their authentic writing without becoming overly dependent on generative AI, it is necessary to have further examination of how English-majored students perceive the utilization of these technologies without committing academic dishonesty. If this issue is not addressed properly at the tertiary level, it might foster corruption within professional organizations (Denisova-Schmidt, 2017).

In Vietnam, numerous studies have explored the benefits and challenges of integrating AI tools into the context of English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms in general, but relatively few have done so for their impact on academic integrity. This scientific article aims to explore the perceptions of English-majored students at HUFLIT regarding the impact of AI writing tools on academic honesty. It also seeks to identify the potential risks and benefits of these tools on academic integrity and propose practical solutions for alleviating negative effects while maximizing positive outcomes.

The paper has been organized in the following way. The literature review demonstrates an overview of existing research on AI writing tools, their historical development and current trends, and the impact of these tools on academic integrity. It is followed by the methodology section, which describes the mixed-methods approach, including two main data collection methods, namely survey and interview. The next section presents the findings of the research, followed by a discussion on the students' perceptions and implications for upholding academic integrity in the era of digital age. Finally, the conclusion gives a summary of the findings, and areas of further research are identified.

## Literature review

### *Overview of AI Writing Tools*

#### *Definition and Types of AI Writing Tools*

Artificial Intelligence is increasingly prevalent in education settings, becoming a central theme in discussions about technology integration. The term "Artificial Intelligence" was first introduced in 1956 by MacCarthy (Christiani, 2016, as cited in Jen & Salam, 2024). With its rapid evolution, various types of AI-assisted platforms have been created with the intention of

helping users progress in their learning. However, while many studies prove their benefits, critical perspectives emphasize the ethical and pedagogical challenges associated with their use.

AI writing tools have increasingly been the subject of recent research studies, however, there is no agreement in the definition of the term AI writing tools. These tools are broadly described as technological platforms employing artificial intelligence and natural language processing (NLP) to support language learners in developing writing skills. This general definition, however, oversimplifies the diverse functionalities and varying levels of complexity among different tools, leading to inconsistent understandings across academic contexts. As a result, a more categorization and standardization of the term are necessary to address these ambiguities.

- **Grammar and spelling check and correction:** AI writing tools like Grammarly, ChatGPT, and Microsoft Office's auto-correction feature are extensively used to identify and correct grammar and spelling errors. While many research studies have been carried out on this type of AI writing tools and revealed positive findings (K.S. McCarthy et al., 2022; Yang, 2018), they have been criticized for their inability to identify deeper linguistic and stylistic issues, such as tone, context, and audience appropriateness. Furthermore, some scholars argue that over-reliance on these tools may hinder learners' ability to develop critical editing and proofreading skills (Cabal, 2022; Ismail, 2024)
- **Content generation:** This function of AI writing tools has been in discussion for recent years. With the introduction of ChatGPT and the like, users are exploiting this type by giving prompts and these AI tools can create a written text from a sentence, a small paragraph to a long essay, and in various types of formal or informal writing products. Many research studies mentioned the function of AI writing tools to generate writing text by using algorithms and natural language processing (Dwivedi et al., 2023; Marzuki et al., 2023).
- **Paraphrasing tools:** This ability is defined as helping learners to transform a new written text from the current one by using words and phrases that in another way. Learners use AI writing tools like QuillBot, **Paraphraser.io**, Grammarly, Scribbr Paraphrasing Tool to rephrase the sentences or paragraphs when they need to maintain the original idea or meaning. Recent researchers have been questioning the accountability of these productions since learners are overusing these, they may ignore the citation or reference of the original writing (Burkhard, 2023; Yusuf *et al.*, 2024).
- **Machine translation tools:** One of the most widely used AI writing tools from the very beginning time is machine translation platforms and applications. Language learners have always enjoyed taking advantage of these machine translation tools as the easiest way to assist them in comprehending the target language. Some popular machine translation tools can be named as Google Translate, DeepL Translator, ChatGPT, iTranslate, Microsoft Translate. This type of AI writing tools received early examination from researchers and educators, and has remained an appealing topic since the quality of the translation process is being improved in a natural way (Alharbi, 2023; Mahdi, & Sahari, 2024; Sutrisno, 2020).

### *Historical Development and Current Trends*

The development of AI writing tools started in the 1950s, focusing on rule-based systems for basic tasks like checking grammar, structure, and writing styles. Early AI writing tools were

able to identify errors but struggled with ambiguity and context due to the limitation in programming (StackRoute, 2023). With advancements, auto-correct tools like Microsoft Word's Auto-correct Options and IBM grammar processors gained popularity. Artificial intelligence, particularly Natural Language Processing, has been becoming prominent despite its humble beginnings.

The introduction of tools like Grammarly in 2009 provided learners with advanced grammar and style check, attracting interest from researchers and educators (Huang, Li, & Taylor, 2020; Utami, 2023; Yang, 2018). Over decades, large-scale data and deep learning improved AI writing tools, leading to studies on their effectiveness and implications (Yusuf *et al.*, 2024).

Recently, OpenAI's ChatGPT has received more scrutiny from worldwide language learners and stakeholders, expanding AI integration into writing and improving content quality. As a result, language learners' growing reliance on these AI writing tools raised concerns among educators and academic institutions regarding the ethical writing practices associated with academic dishonesty (Bin-Nashwan *et al.*, 2023; Marzuki *et al.*, 2023; Perkins, 2023).

Modern trends in AI writing include enhanced Large Language Models (LLMs), such as GPT-3, GPT-4, Gemini, or Jasper, which shorten the gap between human and machine language. Researchers delve into the impact of these AI writing tools on language learning process, focusing on accuracy, personalization, and real-time feedback (Mahlow, 2023; StackRoute, 2023; Wang *et al.*, 2024). Ethical debates continue, with growing reliance on AI applications sparking discussion on their roles in education. Research studies regarding the ethical considerations when employing the tools have been reported in growing numbers (Alexander, Savvidou, & Alexander, 2023; Bin-Nashwan *et al.*, 2023; Cong-Lem, Tran, & Nguyen, 2024, Mohammadkarimi, 2023; Perkins, 2023). While banning AI writing tools is not favored, integrating them with clear guidance is widely supported.

### *Academic Integrity and Its Importance*

#### *Definition and Principles of Academic Integrity*

The rapid evolution of AI-powered educational tools and the emergence of current technology trends have prompted the academic community to reevaluate the concept of *academic integrity*. To be certain, academic integrity must be redefined and updated periodically, especially in the era of educational technology. A growing body of literature has been exploring the use of educational technology in language learning, alongside a recent controversial topic, which questions whether using AI-powered tools in educational institutions constitutes a breach of academic integrity. Moreover, discussions focus on how these technological tools can be integrated into educational practices without being at risk. Despite increasing research on this issue, no definitive resolution has been reached, as concluding such an act of violation depends on how institutions and educators define academic integrity.

Academic integrity refers to a set of values and behaviors which ensure academic work to be ethical and reliable. According to the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), academic integrity can be defined as “*the expectation that teachers, students, researchers and all members of the academic community act with: **honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.***” (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency [TEQSA], 2020). Align with the statement, International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI) also confirms six significant values, which can be considered as primary principles for academic integrity, including honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage (ICAI, 2014). The definition and the standards of the terminology serve as the basis for educational institutions, educators, researchers, learners and stakeholders to remain the process of research

and learning with an ethical spirit of knowledge. Any behaviors that violate the principles can be considered as breaching academic integrity, or academic dishonesty, or academic misconduct (TEQSA, 2020).

It is undeniable that the maintenance of academic integrity is crucial to educational settings. The credibility of institutions and the accountability of scholarly work are highly appreciated when the integrity of academic work is upheld. The ethical conduct is vital for the institution's reputation and an individual's prestige. Academic dishonesty, such as data falsification, plagiarism or cheating can severely lead to unreliable educational outcomes, leading to individual's punishment, influencing educational institutions' credibility. As such, upholding the honesty of academic work is fundamental which educational institutions, academists, and learners must commit to such conventions in their intellectual activities.

### *Impact of AI Writing Tools on Academic Integrity*

It is obvious that technology is generated in order to support users, so are the AI-powered writing tools. The integration of AI technology into writing platforms and applications in academic contexts enables instructors and learners to enhance teaching and learning process, changing the learning landscape. Nevertheless, along with the growing interest in AI writing tools, the potential for misuse has raised concerns regarding academic misconduct and dishonesty.

### *Positive Impacts: Enhanced Learning and Writing Assistance*

AI writing tools support students by enhancing language learning and creating writing products. The tools offer real-time feedback and writing assistance, such as grammar and spell checker. The integration of auto check and correction functions into any document and writing platform such as Microsoft word or Google docs help students refine their writing by correcting grammatical and spelling errors, giving feedback of syntax, word choice and writing styles. The development of tools like Grammarly or Hemingway Editor and the competition of these service providers benefit language learners with various supportive applications to improve their writing experience, leading to enhanced writing skills. In a research study of Parra and Calero (2019), learners were encouraged to use Grammar and Grammarly for grammar checkers, word usage, and the findings revealed that the tools worked as writing assistance, benefiting students' writing skills, providing feedback and recommendations to better their grammar, spelling, writing styles and writing mechanics. Another study conducted by Jin (2023) found that Grammarly promoted English writing development by offering practical tips about grammar, vocabulary, and punctuation. Such findings aligned with the reports by other researchers (Huang, Li, & Taylor, 2020; Tambunan et al. 2022; Yang, 2018).

In addition to the improvement in writing skills, students have enjoyed the convenience as a content generator that the tools provide. AI powered content generation tools such as ChatGPT, Gemini, or JasperAI assist in brainstorming ideas, generating outlines, and organizing arguments in a reasonable way. The study conducted by Marzuki and his colleagues in 2023 found that content created by AI-based writing tools positively fostered idea creation, improved coherence, and enhanced logical arguments in writing.

Similarly, Gültekin Talayhan and Babayiğit (2023) explored EFL instructors' perceptions of AI writing tools. The instructors participating in the study employed various AI tools, including Quillbot, Jenni, ChatGPT, WordTune, Copy.ai, etc. to enhance students' writing skills. Their findings revealed that the AI tools positively impacted content writing by offering valuable prompts and suggestions for idea generation and expression. Such betterment has been supported by Garg (2024), Mahapatra (2024), Jacob, Tate, and Warschauer (2023).



Besides, AI writing tools bring great attention to academic community by their accessibility and inclusivity, which help learners and educators easily access to the tools with diverse choices and services (Ghafar et al., 2023). These writing tools are integrated with plentiful functions into one platform such as grammar checker, content generator, feedback provider, translation, summary tool, etc., and learners can do many tasks with just a request.

### *Negative Impacts: Potential for Plagiarism and Ethical Concerns*

Despite their benefits, AI writing tools pose significant risks to academic integrity. The ease of access to advanced writing assistance can lead to over-reliance and potential misuse, raising ethical and legal concerns.

Recent growing concern is the academic dishonesty which researchers have been discussing when mentioning AI-powered writing tools. Language instructors are worried about the situation when students may use paraphrasing functions or content generators to create written text without any attention to the authority or originality of information, or even they do not know if the information is synthesized from various sources or newly generated. Such facilitation of plagiarism is the primary issue of many researchers. Cong-lem and colleagues made a research study to explore the instructors' opinions towards academic integrity issue and revealed that EFL teachers expressed their great concerns of students' usage of AI writing tools in their work and considered different actions such as copying ideas, improper citation of sources, taking other's production as their own work, etc (2024). In addition, the study of Adiguzel et al. (2023) highlights that the integration of AI technology into academic writing context made it easier for students to perform plagiarism and other forms of cheating. Other issues have been raised while researchers carried out the studies, including over-reliance on AI, the ignorance of academic integrity (Chan & Lee, 2023; Pudasaini et al., 2024).

From the misuse of AI writing tools, ethical problems are being the subject of questioning. The evolution of technological education has made the powerful capacity of these AI writing tools become negative. Students are using the tools to paraphrase and rewrite the content, without realizing the matter of genuine intellectual engagement. Also, the sophisticated AI writing tools make it challenging to distinguish human's own work and AI generated one. Several studies have been carried out to compare and identify the student's own written text and tool-powered text, and the conclusions are drawn with a difficulty in the detection between the two types, as what mentioned in the article of Alexander and colleagues (2023), even though the researchers employed popular AI detectors or experienced teachers, the results of such identification were not as accuracy. Similarly, other articles confirmed the challenges when identifying student-written and AI-generated texts, highlighting the limitations of current detection tools (Herbold et al., 2023; Ibrahim et al., 2023; Walters, 2022).

Lastly, the concern of students' excessive reliance on AI-based tools is another unfavorable challenge to academic integrity. Writing is a productive skill that requires students to independently articulate their ideas. However, the convenience of AI writing tools, which provide content and information easily, declines this critical process. Research suggests that overdependence on such AI-powered tools can hinder creativity and critical thinking abilities in academic writing. For instance, Marzuki et al. (2023) highlight that students who overuse AI tools may fail to focus on the subject matter, learning to a downturn in their analytical skills, deteriorating their writing quality. Furthermore, Gültekin Talayhan and Babayiğit (2023) emphasize that long-term reliance on these technologies can ignore originality and reduce the students' ability to develop coherent content. Similarly, Ismail (2024) underscores the unreasonable implications of this habit, including lessened writing competence and a lack of

intellectual autonomy. These findings call attention to the necessity of fostering balanced and cautious use of AI technologies in academic context.

AI writing tools obviously have both beneficial and detrimental effects in the context of academic integrity. On one hand, they provide great opportunities for fostering language learning and teaching, improving writing quality. On the other hand, their potential for technological misuse is an increasing concern among the academic community.

To sum up, AI writing tools have significantly influenced academic integrity. They promote language teaching and learning processes, improving learners' ability of writing but pose academic risks of misuse and over-reliance, requiring more attention and clear guidance among educational institutions and scholars.

### *Perceptions of Students Towards AI Writing Tools and Academic Integrity*

Recent research highlights different views on the use of AI writing tools and issues related to academic honesty among students. A number of studies have identified students' positive attitudes towards AI writing tools, appreciating the impact of these tools on supporting students' writing skills. For example, Zhou et al. (2024) found that students perceived Grammarly, Quill bot, ChatGPT serve as effective writing assistance tools in expressing their thoughts, especially through grammar correction, tone enhancement, sentence structuring, and paraphrasing. Similarly, research by Phan (2023) discovered that students regard AI-based writing tools as valuable learning aids in achieving the quality of their writing paper by enriching their grammar and vocabulary range, thereby fulfilling their learning objectives.

While research on the substantial benefits of the AI writing tools integration in the realm of ESL education has quickly emerged, there remains several studies exploring students' reluctance to embrace these technologies. For instance, a study by Chan (2023) explored the concept of 'AI-giarism,' referring to AI-assisted plagiarism. The findings revealed that students disapproved of directly creating content through AI but exhibited ambivalence toward subtler applications. This highlights the need for ethical guidelines in academic settings. In addition, Chan and Hu (2023) conducted a research study investigating university students' perceptions of generative AI technologies like ChatGPT, in higher education. The research revealed that some students showed negative attitudes towards AI, leading to reluctance in fully engaging with AI-assisted tasks. The reasons for this hesitation were concerns about accuracy, privacy, ethical issues, and the potential impact on personal development and societal values. Such findings align with other studies, which highlight that some students are hesitant to utilize AI writing tools to improve their writing abilities, fearing that reliance on these tools might lose their original voice (Wang, 2024; Cummings et al. 2024).

What is more, some studies revealed the negative perceptions of students regarding their concerns about writing quality and originality and academic integrity issues. A research by Woo et al. (2023) examined English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' attitudes towards machine-in-the-loop writing, where AI suggests ideas during composition. The study found that while some students appreciated the assistance, others were apprehensive about the quality and originality of AI-generated content, fearing it might hinder their language autonomy and personal expression. Similarly, Burkhard (2022) pointed out that students' skepticism about the careless use of AI tools stems from their potential to facilitate plagiarism.

The literature reveals a significant gap in studying students' perceptions, especially those of English-majored students, of how these AI-powered writing tools may affect intellectual integrity. This gap warrants further investigation to gain deeper insights into how students perceive and balance the pros of AI writing tools with the urgency to maintain academic

honesty.

### *Research Questions*

The study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of English-majored students towards AI writing tools?
2. How do these tools impact academic integrity from their perspective?
3. What practical solutions can be proposed to maintain academic integrity?

## **Methods**

### *Research Design*

In this study, the researchers employed a qualitative research design, which used a descriptive and exploratory approach. The descriptive nature aims to delve into the perceptions and experiences of English-majored students regarding the impact of AI writing tools on academic integrity. The exploratory approach is used to explore in-depth insights and potential solutions. The research was carried out between May and August, which was the summer semester at university. At the semester, English-majored seniors were taking an advanced writing course. During the course, students were instructed to write different types of academic writing papers. The data collection phase took place on the last day with the help of instructors.

### *Participants*

The subjects involved in the present study were 114 Vietnamese students who are English-majored seniors at HCMC University of Foreign Languages-Information Technology (HUFLIT). Among, 60.5 % of students are female while 37.7% are male, and 2 students (1.8%) prefer not to reveal their gender. Their ages ranged from 18–26. As their major is English Linguistics, all of the participants must complete various compulsory writing courses and are exposed to different academic writing assignments. The study was conducted in summer semester, and all students were willing to take part in the study and provided informed consent. In addition, due to the aim of this study, the subjects show varied levels of familiarity and experience with AI writing tools.

### *Data Collection Methods*

The researchers employed surveys and interviews to explore the perceptions of English-majored seniors regarding the impact of AI writing tools on academic integrity and identity insightful opinions.

### *Surveys:*

A comprehensive survey was conducted to gather data on students' perceptions and lived experiences with AI writing tools. The survey included both closed-ended and open-ended questions to capture a wide range of responses. The surveys were distributed via an online platform, Google Form, to 114 English-majored students with the instructions of lecturers. There are five sections in the questionnaire.

- Demographic information.
- Awareness and usage of AI writing tools.



- Risks and benefits of using AI tools in academic settings.
- Perceptions of AI tools' impact on academic integrity.
- Practical solutions for addressing related challenges.

### *Interviews:*

Among 114 participants who completed the questionnaires, a subset of ten students was randomly selected to take part in the interview. The semi-structured interview consisted of 8 questions, which were divided into 3 parts to explore students' experiences, perceptions, and suggestions regarding AI writing tools and academic integrity. The interview section lasted around 6-8 minutes, and it included the interviewer's introduction and instructions. Students were completely aware of the purpose and questions of the interview. To fully comprehend the questions, the interviewer and interviewees conducted the interview in Vietnamese.

### *Data Analysis*

The qualitative data collected from surveys and interviews was analyzed using a thematic analysis approach, in which the data would be identified, coded, analyzed, and reported into sub-topics based on the research questions. Open-ended responses and interview transcripts were categorized by identifying patterns. Therefore, the focus of the analysis will be on:

- Exploring students' perceptions of AI writing tools and their impact on academic honesty.
- Identifying the perceived challenges and benefits when using AI writing tools.
- Obtaining solutions suggested by students to maintain academic integrity associated with AI writing tools.

By combining survey and interview in collecting data, this methodology provided a thorough exploration of the research topic, uncovering students' perceptions and identifying practical solutions for responsible use of AI writing tools in academic settings.

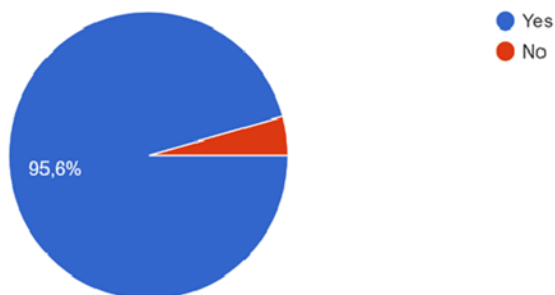
## **Results/Findings and discussion**

### *Reality of HUFLIT students using AI writing tools*

Figure 1 delineates the percentage of HUFLIT students using AI writing tools for their educational purposes. A significant majority, 95.6%, confirmed their utilization of AI-powered writing applications, with only 5 out of 114 participants said they did not employ these tools. Given this familiarity, researchers selected some popular tools - ChatGPT-4, QuillBot, Gemini (Google Bard), Copy.AI - to explore the frequency of usage. The result in Figure 2 shows that ChatGPT-4 and QuillBot highly received the identification from students, followed by Gemini (Google Bard); while the least familiar AI writing tool is Copy.AI. In the interview, 8 out of 10 interviewees reported to be familiar with these tools, and ChatGPT, QuillBot and Grammarly are mostly mentioned, whilst two other students revealed that they have heard of the tools but did not use too much as they prefer their own writing experience.

**Figure 1**

*Participants' overall perceptions of AI writing tools*



**Figure 2**

*Participants' familiarity with AI writing tools*

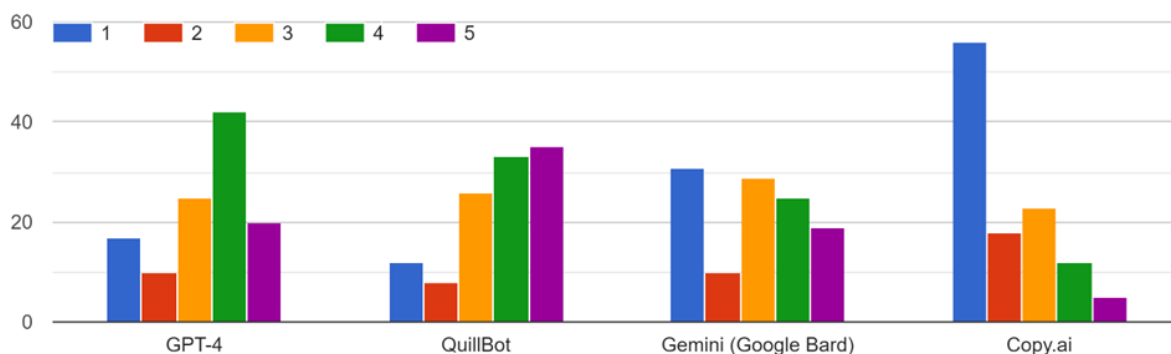
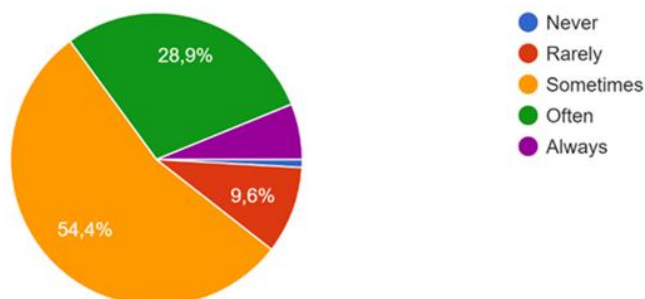


Figure 3 examines the frequency of AI writing tool usage, revealing that over half of the participants (54.4%) used these tools occasionally in their academic work, nearly 30% showed a frequency utilization of these tools, and 6% employed the tools extensively. This indicates that AI writing tools are becoming an important application for student’s writing activities.

**Figure 3**

*Frequency of the use of AI writing tools*



With a significant frequency of AI tool usage, the researchers wanted to explore their main utilization of these tools. Figure 4 highlights that most students chose AI writing tools primarily for grammar and spelling checks, aligning with findings in the Literature Review section. This indicates that these AI writing tools are becoming reliable writing assistants that help students

examine their own writing work. Other popular types include paraphrasing (76,3%) and generating ideas (64%). The results reported the growing number of users who employ AI writing tools for their text rewriting and assistance of content generation. The findings partly reflect the concerns of educators and researchers, which revealed that language learners are expecting AI writing tools on doing more than just a tool to check their papers, showing their over-reliance on the tools in doing more writing skills.

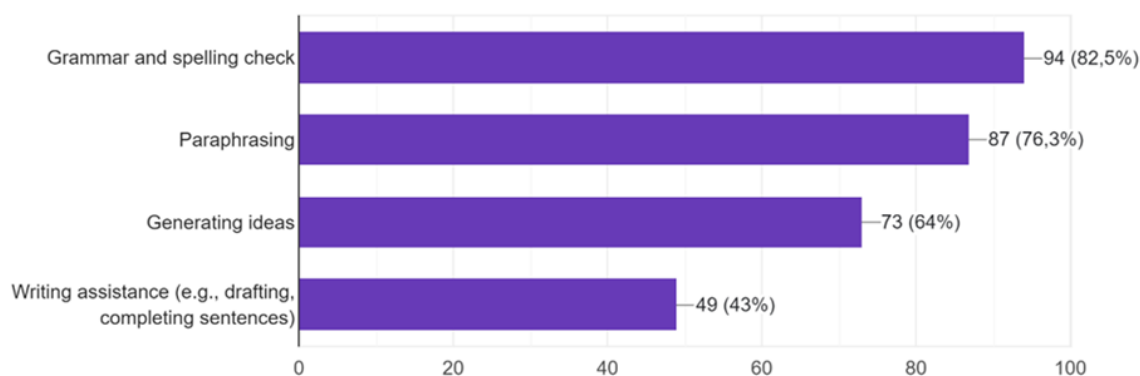
During the interview, 6 out of 10 students emphasized using AI tools for grammar and spelling check due to their accurate suggestions. Five participants gave commands to AI writing tools for the content generation, helping them develop their ideas. Additional functions mentioned included paraphrasing, giving outline and structure, and researching specific information. Notably, some interviewees indicated they do not use AI tools frequently but find them helpful when needed.

*I mostly use these tools to check grammar, structure, to add suggestions on expressing ideas for my academic writing, and to paraphrase the content. (S5)*

*I often use AI tools for searching specific information. Previously, I used Google, but the keywords were not accurate, making the results rather scattered, which wasted a lot of time searching for information. Despite hearing about the benefits of AI tools, I hesitated to use them for fear of becoming dependent. However, due to various reasons (deadlines, busy schedules), I've used AI tools to search for information using keywords. I input writing task prompts into ChatGPT to analyze the topics, read model essays, and learn scoring structures and vocabulary. (S8)*

#### Figure 4

*The purpose when students use AI writing tools*



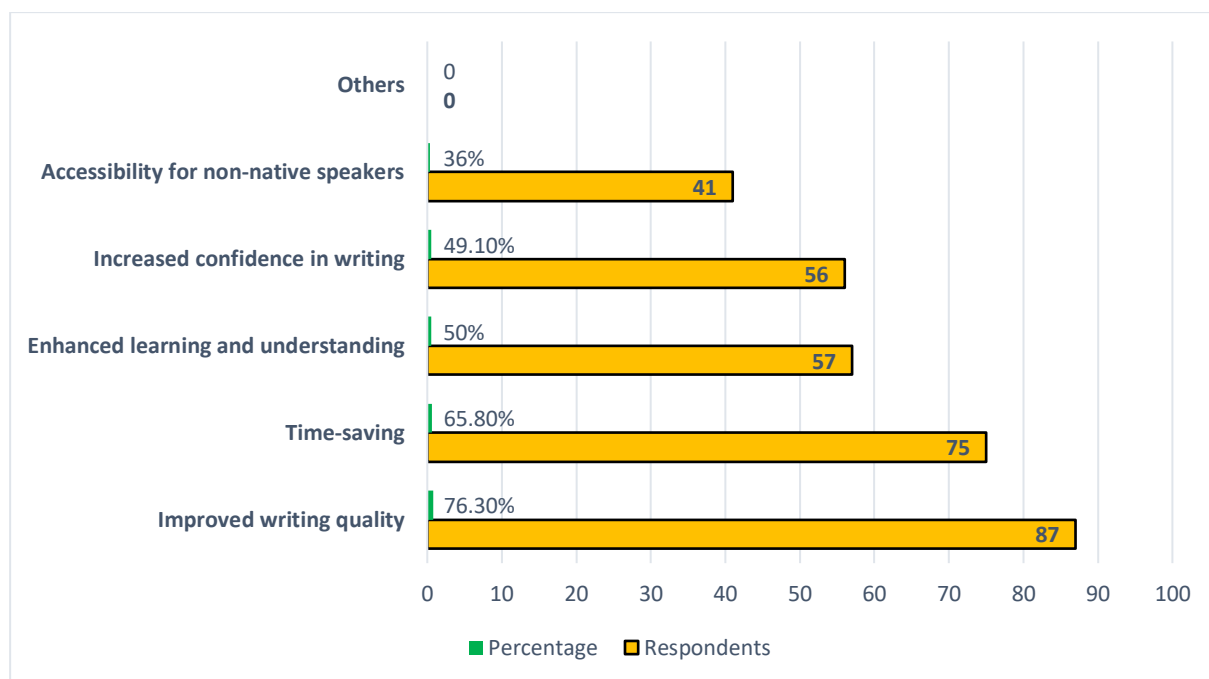
**Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of English-majored students towards AI writing tools?**

As mentioned in the Data Collection and Data Analysis, the third section of the survey focuses on English-majored students' perceptions towards the benefits and risks of using AI writing tools in academic settings. The results obtained from the survey are shown in Figure 5.

As can be seen in Figure 5, a significant number of respondents (87 out of 114) believed that the usage of AI writing tools can lead to the improvement in students' writing quality.

## Figure 5

### *English-majored students' perceived benefits of using AI writing tools*



In response to students' experiences with AI writing tools in the context of academic tasks mentioned in interviews, it is demonstrated that such these tools have become powerful resources in students' academic experiences, particularly in enhancing writing quality. Most students confirmed the value of these tools in helping them produce more refined pieces of writing by suggesting topic-related lexical resources and correcting grammatical errors.

*These tools are extremely helpful, especially in writing courses. When working on longer articles, students are likely to encounter repetition, or the limited range of grammatical structures used. These tools provide suggestions for alternative vocabulary and a variety of grammar points. (S1)*

*I think AI writing tools are particularly helpful in the course of Research Methodology, where students are required to write a 10,000-word paper. For students with lower competency levels, AI tools assist in using appropriate academic terminology, ensuring accurate and smooth sentence structures, and making the content more coherent and well-connected. (S4)*

This result is in accord with recent studies indicating that thanks to AI writing tools, students can enhance their writing ability, enriching lexical resources, grammatical range, cohesion, and coherence (Phan, 2023; Sumakul et al., 2022; Tran, 2024). This is not difficult to explain because the purpose of integrating technology into learning is to achieve students' learning goals and improve their language competence.

Regarding the efficiency of AI writing tools, time-saving is acknowledged by 75 respondents in the survey. To illustrate this point, interviewed students explained that the time-saving benefit is valuable for students in academic settings, where students often face the struggle to meet the deadlines and heavy academic tasks. Both student 6 and student 8 shared that when tasked with writing on unfamiliar topics with a tight deadline, AI tools can help generate ideas and produce

a sample. Instead of spending time starting from scratch, they can paraphrase the content offered by the AI and submit their paper on time. In a study conducted by Selim (2024), an analysis of the questionnaire responses from 50 EFL university students in English language programs at Al-Baha University offers significant insights into their perceptions regarding the primary advantages of using AI writing tools for academic writing. A considerable majority of these students believe that using these tools can save their time when proofreading and editing their work; moreover, students find these tools useful for meeting the deadlines of their academic writing assignments, with 76% and 83.6% agreeing and strongly agreeing to this point, respectively.

Selim's research (2024) also reveals that students are less convinced about the impact of these tools on enhancing their confidence in producing high-quality papers. This is reflected by the lowest mean score of 2.9, ranking tenth out of the ten benefits provided by AI writing tools. Interestingly, as depicted in Figure 5, only half of the respondents reported boosting confidence in writing, along with enhancing learning and understanding, as key advantages. However, students in the experimental group of a study conducted by Chang et al. (2021) claimed that they gained more confidence in essay writing for future language exams thanks to the automated writing feedback provided by Grammarly, a popular AI writing tool. These studies indicate that in education, while some students perceive such these tools can ensure individuals to obtain the effectiveness and the depth of learning process, empowering students to gain more confidence in their writing abilities, a notable number of students remain uncertain about these merits.

Additionally, a smaller number of respondents (36%) acknowledge the tools' ability to access easily for learners, particularly non-native speakers. This finding is contrary to previous studies which have suggested that students did not find any obstacles in accessing AI-based learning tools owing to their technology literacy (Utami et al., 2023). The questionnaire's analysis on the ease of accessing indicates that although the potential for AI writing tools exposure is instrumental in helping non-native English students overcome language barriers, non-native students in general and Vietnamese in particular, are likely to face several challenges in accessing these resources, possibly including limited digital/AI literacy and subscription costs.

While the study underscores English-majored students' perceptions towards benefits of AI writing tools, it also acknowledges potential risks associated with AI writing tools in academic settings. According to the data presented in Figure 6 below, the highest concerns perceived by students are their over-reliance on technology and the potential for reducing learning and critical thinking skills, which account for 79,8% and 67,5% respectively. These results show a substantial apprehension about technology dependency, potentially limiting their ability to think critically, work independently, and developing overall academic performance. Additionally, the plagiarism-related issue received more concerns, with 68 respondents (59,6%), expressing the fear of fostering academic dishonesty. The risk of AI generating inaccurate or biased information, difficulty in understanding and tracing references generated by AI, the misuse of tools for dishonest purposes, and ethical concerns, including fairness and authorship also present significant risks (with 52, 50, 50, and 40 participants expressing respectively in the survey).

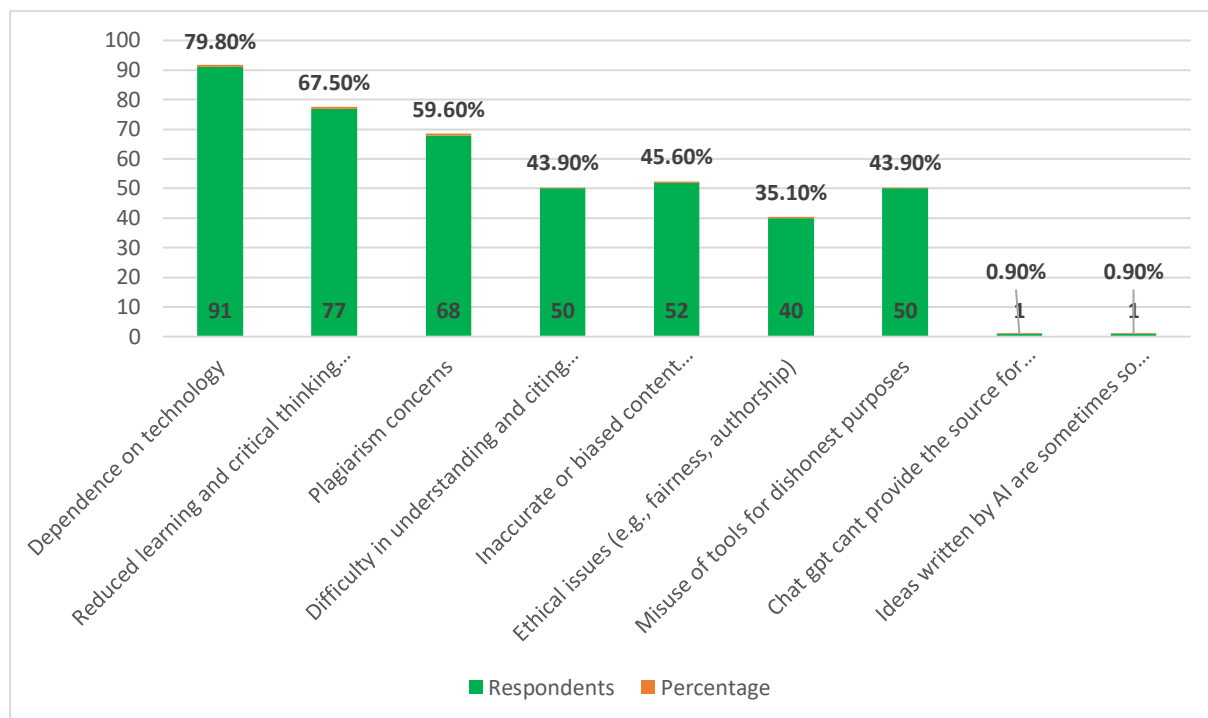
The findings from this data raise concerns indicated in the existing body of literature. Prior studies reveal that the risk of over-reliance that students heavily depend on AI writing tools can erode their development of essential abilities such as generating original ideas, thinking innovatively, and solving problems (Marzuki et al., 2023). For this reason, Pham and Le (2024) support AI writing tools as valuable supplements rather than the replacement for the traditional learning techniques. Similarly, findings related to ethical considerations, including potential for



plagiarism, authorship attribution, dishonest purposes were noted by Aljuaid (2024), who advocate that the increasing prevalence of AI writing tools in academic settings can result in the violation of academic dishonesty. A possible explanation for this is that the rise to unintentional ethical dilemmas, including plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and data manipulation might happen if users utilize outputs from AI writing tools without thoroughly scrutiny (Nykyoprets, 2023). The study will deeply delve into how students perceive the impact of AI writing tools on these ethical issues in the following section.

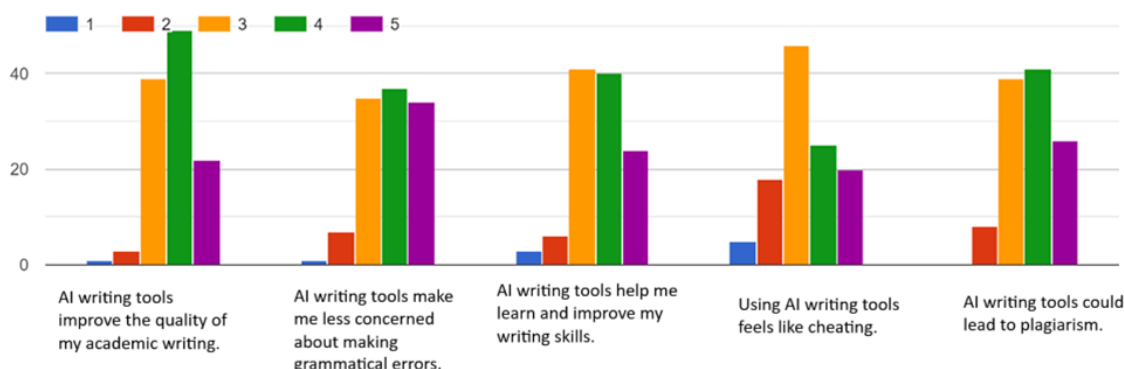
**Figure 6**

*English-majored students' perceived risks of using AI writing tools*



*Research Question 2: How do these tools impact academic integrity from their perspective?*

The analysis of student responses from section 4 in the questionnaire, along with insightful findings from the interview, reveals diverse attitudes towards the usage of AI writing tools. According to Figure 7, many students appreciate these tools for improving their writing quality, particularly in grammar correction and writing style enhancement. Many responded with their positive views on AI writing tools as a supportive writing assistant rather than a means of plagiarism. The findings support previous research studies, indicating that students often consider these tools as beneficial for improving these writing areas (Bin-Nashwan et al., 2023; Fitria, 2023; Huang et al., 2020; Phan, 2023).

**Figure 7***Students' perceptions towards the usage of AI writing tools*

On the other hand, the data in Figure 7 reflects mixed perceptions among students about whether using AI writing tools constitute cheating or leads to plagiarism. To be more specific, a significant portion of students rated 3, showing their skepticism about one of the ethical implications of using AI, cheating. In addition, a substantial number of students expressed their uncertainty (also rating 3) and agreement about the potential for AI tools to facilitate plagiarism. This highlights both their doubt and strong awareness of how these tools might be misused.

Similarly, categories presented in Figure 8 reveal varied perspectives indicating the complexity of students' understanding of how these tools influence academic practices. While just over one third of the participants showed their positive view on how AI writing tools impact academic integrity, the almost equal proportion of "unsure" students underscores a significant gap in understanding. Additionally, a minority of students (12.3%) viewed AI writing tools as detrimental to academic dishonesty, indicating considerable worries among certain students. These worrisome ethical issues are delineated in Figure 9. The highest proportion of students (62.3%) believe that AI writing tools might lead to plagiarism and diminish their writing skills due to over-reliance on them. Also, the function with which AI can easily generate human-like content may threaten academic dishonesty (61.4%). This capacity challenges students to maintain their original work and choose to employ the generated content or use it as a reference. Moreover, over half (57%) of students posed their concerns towards the fairness in evaluation, while AI writing tools obviously refine students' writing quality and help them with better content generation, it is unequal to evaluate a paper with the help of educational technology and student's own written text. The results resemble concerns from previous studies, which emphasize the potential of academic dishonesty if being over-rely on such educational technology (Burkhard, 2023; Cotton et al.; 2023; Perkins, 2023).

The findings from the interview corroborate these concerns. When students gave their opinions on the question of whether using AI writing tools in their academic work is the act of plagiarism, most said that it could be considered a form of cheating if students overuse the tools and take ideas from other sources as their own, or even using the paraphrasing ideas from AI writing assistance. Students in the interview revealed their acceptance on using AI writing tools to research information as a reference and combining with their own critical thinking to develop their own paper; however, if a learner chose to take the whole content from AI writing tools for their assignments, the interviewees expressed their firm disagreement.

Though the majority expressed their concerns on challenges when overusing AI tools might lead to plagiarism, other interviewees confirmed AI can be utilized in writing assignments and

this behaviour is not academic dishonesty.

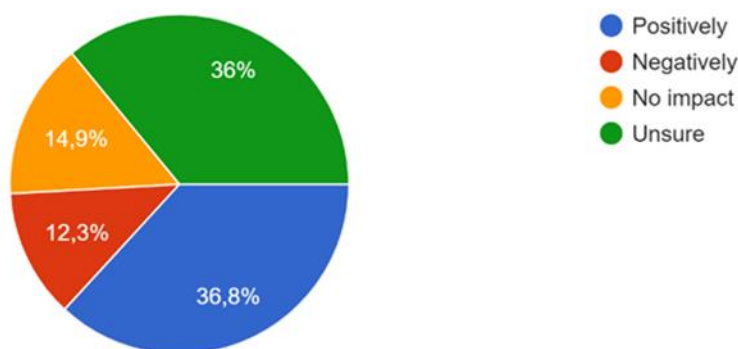
*Using AI tools cannot be considered a form of cheating, if you use them properly. For example, I can use the tools to check grammatical errors, add ideas to writings, or paraphrase, and the content is still my own ideas. However, copying entire content from AI without any of my own input would then be considered cheating. Taking ideas from many other sources and then paraphrasing would be considered cheating. (S5)*

*I don't think using AI tools is a form of cheating. Because knowledge is vast, humans cannot understand all areas, AI then is a helpful and cost-effective tool. Whether it is cheating depends on one's mindset and individual consciousness. If someone submits a piece written entirely by AI, it's obviously considered cheating. (S8)*

The diverse opinions reflect the acceptance in AI tool usage among students and gives more suggestions to educators and policymakers to consider clear guidelines on what activity or to what extent the use of AI writing tools may cross the line of ethical writing practice. Such findings are aligned with the results by Yusuf *et al.* (2024). The researcher reported varied perceptions of participants on the issue of cheating and plagiarism, confirming an ongoing discussion on this matter.

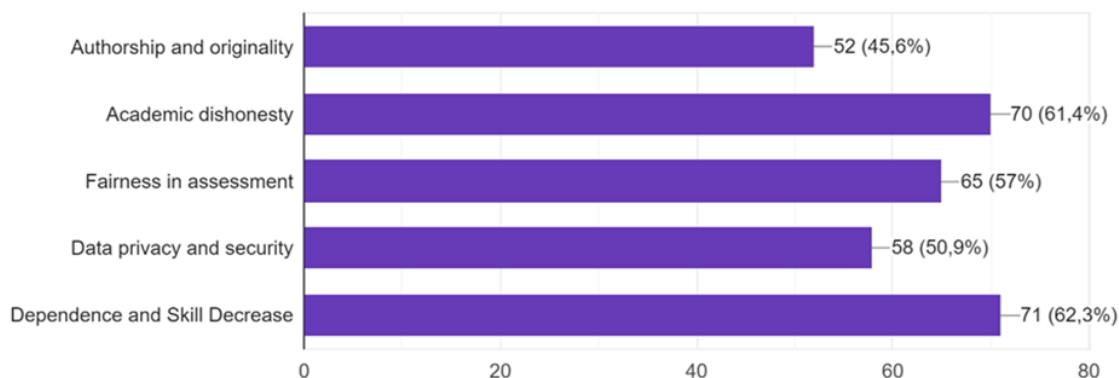
**Figure 8**

*Student's belief on how AI writing tools impact academic integrity.*



**Figure 9**

*Ethical issues with the use of AI writing tools*

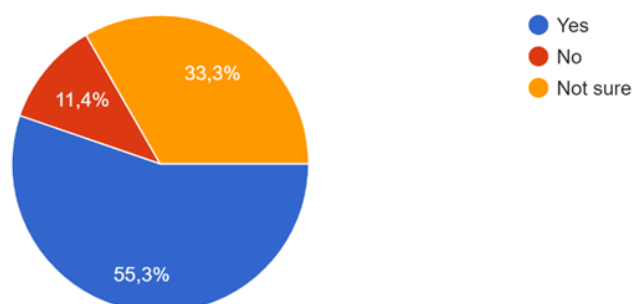


In terms of the students' perception of AI writing tools in the academic setting at HUFLIT, more than 50% of the participants showed their affirmative confidence in responsibly using AI tools,

as shown in Figure 10, indicating the awareness of maintaining their academic integrity in the context of HUFLIT. However, many lack clarity on ethical usage guidelines, as reflected in interview responses. The insights from the interview sections also showed that the participants were uncertain about the ethical line of AI usage, concerning citing AI-generated content or ideas provided by AI. When being encouraged to describe a situation of having crossed their ethical line, students described their own situation or their classmates' while exploiting AI writing tools to generate ideas or content and use the results without reviewing or checking sources although this behavior was not allowed by the instructor. One student revealed "I have never experienced this, but a classmate has, he/she used AI to copy and paste an entire essay for a thesis writing class" (S10). Some other students said they used AI to do their assignments due to their limited time. This indecision suggests that students might misunderstand their commitment to academic integrity if they are not instructed with proper education on the responsible application of AI-powered tools.

**Figure 10**

*Students' perceptions on the ethical use of AI writing tools at HUFLIT*



As can be seen, the findings reported that while AI writing tools have the educational potential to both promote and threaten academic integrity, their impact generally depends on student usage. The findings underscored the necessity for clear ethical guidelines and proper interventions to ensure the responsible use of AI writing tools in academic context, promoting ethical writing practice and upholding the principles of academic integrity.

*Research Question 3: What practical solutions can be proposed to maintain academic integrity?*

More importantly, the analysis of the data from the questionnaire and interview have also revealed students' comprehensive insights on practical solutions recommended for students, educators, and universities/educational institutions to ensure that the use of AI writing tools at universities does not compromise academic integrity.

*For students:*

Responses from the questionnaire and the interviews show a balanced approach to the use of AI writing tools. While students acknowledge these genuine needs, they stress the importance for a thoughtful use of AI. Most interviewees suggest employing tools to check grammar, generate ideas for complicated or unknown topics, organize content, or even comment on the essay but not copying AI's entire outputs to submit as their own final work. Most main steps in the writing process are encouraged to complete independently to reflect students' own thoughts. Indeed, depending on how and where AI tools can be used, they are believed to enhance or 'spark' creativity (Marrone et al., 2022).

Moreover, many students put a greater emphasis on avoiding over-reliance on technology. Similar to the findings in students’ perceived risks of using AI writing tools, students in the interviews are also concerned that excessive reliance on AI can hinder critical thinking and original idea development. It is reinforced by suggestions that AI should serve as a supplementary tool to enhance the learning process, but not replace students’ intellectual effort. This is in agreement with 61.4% of questionnaire respondents who supported the idea of integrating AI tools during the learning process but with limitations. These findings match those observed in the early study by Huang and Tan (2023), who suggested that people should use AI tools to assist in writing but should not entirely depend on AI-generated text. It is crucial to review and edit this text to ensure its accuracy and relevance to the assigned topics. These raise a pressing need for heightening student awareness of ethical challenges associated with AI that would help them navigate the risks while using AI responsibly.

*For educators and universities/educational institutions*

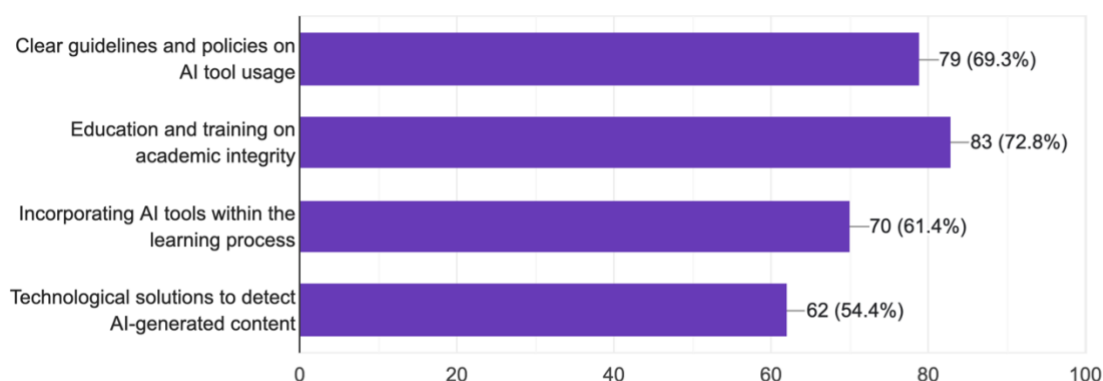
As can be seen in Figure 11, a large proportion of questionnaire respondents (72.8%) recommended education and training on academic integrity as optimal solutions to mitigate the ethical risks related to AI. Accordingly, instead of imposing outright bans or punishments for detecting plagiarism,

*universities and instructors should organize workshops, talk shows, training sessions, or design courses and modules that guide students on how to use AI appropriately and avoid overdependence (S9 & S10)*

These events are expected to provide valuable insights on how to use AI tools effectively in academic contexts, thereby promoting the benefits of AI tools while eliminating the risks that they bring. Educators or experts can introduce helpful AI tools, sharing their individual experiences with AI and offering guidance on properly incorporating these tools into learning without being against ethical concerns such as citing AI-generated content and prevent plagiarism. More than that, Chan (2023) claimed that adequate training and support are necessary for both teachers, staff and students to develop AI literacy. While training sessions can help teachers feel more confident and competence in handling the challenges posed by AI in teaching, a comprehensive AI literacy programme teaching students how to use the tools properly and critically is probably crucial for the successful integration of AI in education.

**Figure 11**

*Approaches to address ethical concerns of AI writing tools by educational institutions*





The second most selected solution is the need for clear guidelines as well as institutional policies regarding the use of AI tools, accounting for 69.3% of the total participants. This sentiment is echoed by interview responses, suggesting universities should specify when and how students can use AI tools. For example, some responses agree on setting specific limits, such as permitting students to use AI for 10-20% of their assignment, particularly in writing paragraphs or essays on difficult topics. A first-time violation may result in a warning, but with repeated misconduct leading to more serious disciplinary actions. Additionally, some responses disagree with the idea of completely banning AI tools, arguing that while misuse is an inevitable issue, there is no doubt about their assistance for students in their self-study. The aim of these institutional policies was to establish an inclusive environment for integrating modern digital tools and to establish a framework for the use of AI in education (Spivakovsky et al., 2023). They clearly stated that this would help all the participants of the educational process, including lecturers and students, familiarize themselves with the current AI resources, develop a professional attitude towards AI tools, and consider the results of their final work.

Another key aspect of addressing ethical concerns is integrating AI tools into the learning process. This solution is supported by over 61% of the respondents, suggesting that students view AI tools as a supplement or learning aid in academic environments. This involves familiarizing students with AI tools and making them a common part of education. As Khreisat (2024) points out that AI tools not only provide instantaneous and targeted feedback, identifying areas for development, but also offering a conducive environment for fostering decision-making adhering to ethical accountability. To do this, universities are tasked with creating curricula that can empower students with necessary AI skills and knowledge they need for the future AI-driven workplace (Chan, 2023). In fact, integrating AI tools into educational practices can truly transform how students have perceived these tools, from a threat to a valuable resource.

Last but not least, students perceived that universities should invest in technological solutions to identify AI-generated content. Half of the questionnaire respondents supported this idea, presenting a practical approach to uphold integrity. Tools like Turnitin or other AI detection applications could be employed by lecturers while marking students' papers. Some students proposed that each institution can develop and customize its own AI chatbot with filters tailored for academic purposes. To be more specific, if a student prompts for a complete assignment or a full research paper, the chatbot's filter can limit its answer to only an outline or basic ideas and structures. Interviewees also added that instructors and universities could use these tools to detect potential plagiarism and implement proper penalties for repeated violations as mentioned above. However, as Elkhatat (2023) points out, detection tools should not be the optimal solution to minimize the risks of academic misconduct. Various strategies involve encouraging self-transcendent values, designing alternative assignments that gather from visual sources, or incorporating spoken discussions into the assessment process to show insights into students' understanding of their final products.

To effectively address ethical considerations with AI in educational settings, all stakeholders involved must collaborate, such as students, lecturers, faculty, administrators, and policymakers. It is vital for a comprehensive approach that takes into account issues mentioned above.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the comprehensive perspectives of English-majored students at HUFLIT towards the impact of AI writing tools on academic integrity. Integrating AI writing tools into EFL university education offers extensive advantages, such as improving academic writing quality, saving time, increasing learning and understanding, boosting confidence, and accessing many sources. However, it underscores the need to be aware of potential risks, including depending on technology, impeding critical thinking, citing sources, dealing with biased/inaccurate content, and violating plagiarism, among other ethical issues. The research reveals varied viewpoints on the utilization of AI writing tools within the limit of academic integrity. While some fully grasp the issue, others express their confusion and request further guidance. By addressing students' concerns and their suggested solutions, educators and educational institutions can effectively harness the power of these assistance learning tools to enhance students' learning outcomes.

However, this study retains some limitations that should be considered. First, the sample size was relatively small, which may limit the generalizability of the broader population of students from other majors in HUFLIT. Also, this study did not delve into how students were exposed to a specific AI writing tools, then measure the impact of this tool on academic integrity, which would contribute to a more in-depth understanding of upholding academic honesty while integrating technology in teaching and learning contexts. Therefore, further research should address these limitations by employing a more diverse sample, conducting a longitudinal study that tracks students' engagement, performance, and ethical use of AI writing tools over several semesters. Besides, there is a need for further research to investigate the effectiveness of recommended institutional policies in maintaining academic honesty.

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### Biodata

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## Appendix

### Questionnaire

#### Section I: Demographic Information

- What is your age?

- Under 18
- 18-20
- 21-23
- 24-26
- Over 26

- What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

- What is your major or field of study within English

- Translation - Interpretation
- Office Administration
- Language Teaching Methodology
- Business English
- Bilingual English – Chinese
- Logistics English

#### Section II: Awareness and Usage of AI Writing Tools

1. Have you ever used an AI writing tool for academic purposes (e.g., essays, research papers)

Yes                      No

2. How familiar are you with the following AI writing tools? (Rate on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 = Not familiar at all and 5 = Very familiar)

- Grammarly
- GPT-4
- QuillBot
- Gemini (Google Bard)
- Copy.ai
- Others (please specify)

3. How frequently do you use AI writing tools for your academic work?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

4. For what purposes do you typically use AI writing tools? (Select all that apply)

- Grammar and spell check
- Paraphrasing
- Generating ideas
- Writing assistance (e.g., drafting, completing sentences)

- Others (please specify)

### Section III: Risks and Benefits of AI Writing Tools

5. What do you think are the main benefits of using AI writing tools in academic settings? (Select all that apply)

- Improved writing quality
- Time-saving
- Enhanced learning and understanding
- Increased confidence in writing
- Accessibility for non-native speakers
- Others (please specify)

6. What do you think are the main risks associated with using AI writing tools in academic settings? (Select all that apply)

- Dependence on technology
- Reduced learning and critical thinking skills
- Plagiarism concerns
- Difficulty in understanding and citing sources
- Inaccurate or biased content generation
- Ethical issues (e.g., fairness, authorship)
- Misuse of tools for dishonest purposes
- Others (please specify)

### Section IV: Perceptions of AI Writing Tools on Academic Integrity

7. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (Rate on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 = Strongly disagree and 5 = Strongly agree)

- ✓ AI writing tools improve the quality of my academic writing.
- ✓ AI writing tools make me less concerned about making grammatical errors.
- ✓ AI writing tools help me learn and improve my writing skills.
- ✓ Using AI writing tools feels like cheating.
- ✓ AI writing tools could lead to plagiarism.

8. How do you believe AI writing tools impact your academic integrity?

- Positively
- Negatively
- No impact
- Unsure

9. What ethical issues do you associate with the use of AI writing tools? (Select all that apply)

- Authorship and originality
- Academic dishonesty
- Fairness in assessment
- Data privacy and security
- Dependence and Skill Decrease
- Others (please specify)

10. Do you believe AI writing tools can be used ethically in the academic setting at HUFLIT?

- Yes

- No
- Not Sure

### **Section V: Practical Solutions**

11. How do you think institutions should address the ethical concerns related to AI writing tools? (Select all that apply)

- Clear guidelines and policies on AI tool usage
- Education and training on academic integrity
- Incorporating AI tools within the learning process
- Technological solutions to detect AI-generated content
- Others (please specify)

12. What practical solutions would you suggest to minimize the negative impacts of AI writing tools while maximizing their benefits?

### *Interview*

#### **Introduction**

1. Can you tell me a little about yourself and your academic background?
2. How familiar are you with AI writing tools like Grammarly, GPT-4, or Quillbot?

#### **Perceptions of AI Writing Tools, academic integrity, practical solutions**

3. Briefly describe how you typically use AI writing tools in your academic work.
4. Do you believe that using AI writing tools can be considered a form of cheating? Why or why not?
5. Can you share an experience where an AI writing tool significantly helped you with an academic task?
6. Can you describe a situation where you felt using an AI writing tool might have crossed an ethical line?

#### **Closing Thoughts**

7. How do you balance the benefits and risks when deciding whether to use an AI writing tool for an assignment?
8. Do you have any suggestions for other students, or educators, and the university regarding the use of AI writing tools?