THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AI-POWERED FEEDBACK TOOLS IN TEACHING RECOUNT TEXT WRITING

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ABSTRACT

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in English language instruction has introduced new opportunities to enhance feedback practices in writing classrooms, particularly through AI-powered feedback tools or Automated Writing Evaluation (AWE) systems. This study investigates the implementation of AI-powered feedback tools in teaching writing recount texts and explores students' responses to the feedback they receive during the writing process. This qualitative study involved 32 eleventh-grade students at SMAN 1 Warungkondang, West Java, Indonesia, in the 2024–2025 academic year. Data were collected through classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation of students' writing drafts and revisions. The data were analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that AI-powered feedback tools help students identify grammatical errors, improve vocabulary use, and increase awareness of sentence clarity in recount text writing. Students also reported higher engagement and motivation to revise their writing due to the immediacy of feedback. However, AI-generated feedback was found to be limited in addressing higher-order writing aspects such as coherence and content development, highlighting the importance of teacher guidance and peer feedback. Overall, the study concludes that AI-powered feedback tools can serve as an effective complementary resource in EFL writing instruction when integrated with pedagogical support.

Keywords: AI-powered feedback, recount text writing, EFL writing, qualitative study

INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) has become an increasingly influential element in English language teaching, particularly in the area of writing instruction. One of the most prominent applications of AI in education is the use of AI-powered feedback tools, commonly referred to as Automated Writing Evaluation (AWE) (Nazari et al., 2021). These tools are designed to provide immediate, automated feedback on various aspects of writing, including grammar, vocabulary use, sentence structure, clarity, and coherence. Immediate feedback enables students to revise their writing more frequently and independently, which is considered a key factor in effective writing development (Hyland, 2016). In many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, where teachers are required to manage large classes and heavy workloads, AI-powered feedback tools offer a potential solution to the long-standing challenge of providing timely and individualized feedback (Sriwulandari & Pattiasina, 2025). As emphasized by Creswell and Creswell (2018), educational innovations should be examined not only in terms of learning outcomes but also in terms of how they influence classroom practices, learner engagement, and instructional processes. From this perspective, the integration of AI-based feedback tools represents an important area for contemporary research in language education(Rahman et al., 2024).

Writing is widely recognized as one of the most complex language skills for EFL learners, as it requires the integration of linguistic knowledge, cognitive processing, and discourse organization (Muamaroh et al., 2020) . In the Indonesian senior high school context, writing recount texts is a crucial competency outlined in the English curriculum. Chandra et al. (2024) states that Recount texts require students to retell past experiences by sequencing events chronologically, using appropriate past tense forms, and maintaining narrative coherence and clarity. According to Brown (2015) and Hyland (2003), effective writing involves not only grammatical accuracy but also the ability to organize ideas logically and communicate meaning clearly at the discourse level. However, many Indonesian students continue to struggle with these demands, particularly in relation to grammar, vocabulary choice, and text organization.

In classroom practice, traditional teacher feedback remains the primary source of guidance for student writing. Nevertheless, in many Indonesian classrooms, teachers face constraints such as large class sizes, limited instructional time, and heavy administrative responsibilities (Safitri & Sobah, 2025). These constraints often result in delayed, minimal, or predominantly surface-level feedback. Ferris (2018) notes that while teacher feedback is essential for writing development, its effectiveness can be reduced when students receive it too late or in insufficient detail. In response to these challenges, AI-powered feedback tools have gained attention as a supplementary source of feedback (Helmie 2019). While such tools are effective in identifying grammatical and lexical errors, scholars argue that they are less capable of evaluating higher-order rhetorical features such as

coherence, communicative intent, and genre appropriateness (Ferris, 2018; Cotos, 2023).

In the Indonesian context, writing proficiency remains a persistent challenge for many senior high school students. Previous studies have reported that learners frequently experience difficulties with grammatical accuracy, limited vocabulary, and weak text organization when composing English texts (Widiati & Cahyono, 2006). Classroom observations conducted during teaching practicum further revealed that many Grade 11 students relied heavily on teacher explanations and produced minimal revisions after receiving feedback (Nurrina, Helmie, and Halimah 2018). However, when students were introduced to more interactive feedback practices, particularly those combining AI-powered feedback with peer feedback activities, they demonstrated greater engagement, increased motivation to revise, and a stronger willingness to improve their writing. These practices align with the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes learner autonomy, collaboration, and the meaningful integration of digital technology in the learning process (Cantika et al., 2020).

A growing body of research has examined the use of AI-powered feedback and AWE tools in EFL writing instruction. Benali (2021), in a study entitled *"The Impact of Automated Writing Evaluation on EFL Students' Revision Quality,"* found that AWE tools significantly improved students' grammatical accuracy and reduced surface-level errors. However, the study also reported limited improvement in content development, coherence, and overall organization. This finding supports Ferris's (2018) argument that automated feedback systems tend to prioritize linguistic correctness over deeper rhetorical and communicative concerns.

Another relevant study was conducted by Putra (2023) in *"EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Grammarly and QuillBot in Indonesian Writing Classrooms."* The study explored Indonesian teachers' views on the integration of AI-based tools in writing instruction. The findings indicated that teachers perceived these tools as helpful for addressing mechanical and lexical issues. However, they also expressed concerns regarding students' overreliance on AI-generated feedback and the occasional inaccuracy or lack of contextual sensitivity in the suggestions provided. These concerns are consistent with Hyland's (2019) view that effective feedback must be genre-sensitive, context-aware, and pedagogically grounded—qualities that AI tools do not always consistently demonstrate.

Furthermore, Wibowo, Marbun, and Rahmawati (2024) conducted a comparative study entitled *"Peer Feedback versus AI-Generated Feedback in Indonesian EFL Writing."*

Their findings revealed that peer feedback encouraged deeper reflection, greater audience awareness, and improved idea development, while AI-generated feedback primarily contributed to improvements in linguistic accuracy and surface-level clarity. The authors concluded that combining AI-powered feedback with peer feedback may create a more balanced feedback environment that supports both higher-order and lower-order writing skills.

Despite these valuable contributions, a significant research gap remains. Previous studies have not sufficiently explored how AI-powered feedback tools are implemented in authentic classroom settings where recount texts are taught, particularly at the senior high school level. Moreover, limited qualitative research has examined how students interpret, engage with, and respond to AI-generated and peer feedback during the writing process (Helmie, Nurviyani, and W 2024). Much of the existing literature relies on quantitative measures or focuses primarily on teacher perspectives, leaving students' lived classroom experiences underexplored. As Creswell (2014) and Merriam and Tisdell (2016) emphasize, qualitative inquiry is especially suitable for investigating complex learning processes such as meaning-making, feedback interpretation, and revision strategies. In addition, genre-specific research on recount writing remains scarce, even though narrative coherence and chronological sequencing are areas where automated feedback systems often encounter limitations.

Therefore, addressing these gaps, the present study aims to qualitatively investigate the implementation of AI-powered feedback tools, supported by peer feedback, in teaching recount text writing in Indonesian senior high schools. The study also seeks to explore students' responses to the feedback they receive and how such feedback influences their revision practices and engagement in the writing process.

METHODS

Respondents of the Research

The respondents of this research were 32 eleventh-grade students, consisting of male and female students, from SMAN 1 Warungkondang, West Java, Indonesia, in the academic year 2024–2025. The students were selected because they had learned recount text in English subject and were involved in writing activities using AI-powered feedback tools. In qualitative research, participants are chosen based on their relevance to the research context in order to obtain in-depth information (Creswell, 2014).

Research Variables

This research employed a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is used to understand and interpret the meanings that individuals or groups give to a social

or educational phenomenon (Sugiyono, 2020) It focuses on exploring participants' experiences, perceptions, and learning processes in a natural setting rather than measuring variables numerically (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Therefore, this study did not involve independent or dependent variables. Instead, the focus of the research was on the implementation of AI-powered feedback tools in teaching writing recount texts and students' responses to the feedback they received during the learning process.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data were analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis. In qualitative research, data analysis involves organizing, interpreting, and drawing meaning from data collected from multiple sources (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). The data analysis in this study followed three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction involved selecting and focusing on relevant data related to students' experiences in using AI-powered feedback tools. The reduced data were then presented in descriptive form, and conclusions were drawn based on emerging patterns and themes.

Instruments

The instruments used in this research included classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to obtain information about the teaching and learning process during recount text writing activities. Semi- structured interviews were conducted using ten guiding questions to explore students' perceptions and experiences related to the use of ChatGPT as an AI-powered feedback tool. Semi-structured interviews allow researchers to gain in-depth data while maintaining focus on the research objectives (Bearman, 2019). Documentation was used to support the data, including students' recount text drafts and revisions. To ensure the credibility of the findings, triangulation was applied (Denzin, 1978).

RESULTS

This section presents the findings of the study obtained from classroom observation, analysis of students' writing documents, and semi-structured interviews with selected students. The results describe the implementation of AI-powered feedback tools in teaching recount text writing and students' responses to the feedback.

Implementation of AI-Powered Feedback Tools in Teaching Recount Text Writing

Based on classroom observations involving 32 eleventh-grade students, AI-powered feedback tools were integrated into recount text writing instruction as a complementary learning resource. The tools were introduced after teacher explanation and peer feedback activities. The implementation stages are

summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Classroom Implementation of AI-Powered Feedback Tools

Stage	Teaching Activities	Observation Results
Pre-activity	Teacher explained recount text and past tense	Students were attentive and participated actively
Draft writing	Students wrote first drafts independently	Drafts contained grammar and tense errors
Peer feedback	Students exchanged drafts and gave feedback	Students discussed structure and events
AI feedback	Students used AI-powered tools (ChatGPT)	Feedback focused on grammar and sentence clarity
Revision	Students revised their drafts	Revisions mainly addressed sentence-level aspects

The observation results indicate that AI-powered feedback tools were not used as a replacement for teacher instruction but as a supportive tool in the writing process.

Students' Writing Performance Before and After AI-Powered Feedback

Document analysis of students' recount text drafts shows differences between initial drafts and revised drafts after receiving AI feedback. Table 2 summarizes the observed characteristics of students' writing.

Table 2. Characteristics of Students' Writing Before and After AI Feedback

Writing Aspect	Before Feedback	After Feedback
Verb tense usage	Frequent use of present tense	Past tense forms appeared more consistently
Grammatical accuracy	Incorrect verb forms and auxiliaries	Fewer sentence-level grammatical issues

Vocabulary use	Limited word choice	Vocabulary choices varied in revised drafts
Sentence clarity	Some unclear sentences	Sentences appeared clearer
Content development	Limited elaboration of ideas	Little change observed

The analysis indicates that AI feedback was primarily related to linguistic features rather than idea development.

Types of Feedback Provided by AI-Powered Tools

Analysis of students' revised drafts indicates that AI-powered feedback focused primarily on surface-level writing features. The types of feedback identified are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Types of AI-Powered Feedback Identified in Students' Drafts

No.	Feedback Focus	Description
1	Verb tense	Correction of tense to past form
2	Grammar	Correction of sentence structure
3	Vocabulary	Suggestions for more suitable words
4	Sentence clarity	Revisions for clearer meaning
5	Mechanics	Correction of spelling and punctuation

Students' Responses to AI-Powered Feedback and Peer Feedback

To gain deeper insights, semi-structured interviews were conducted with four selected students (coded as S1, S2, S3, and S4). The interview results revealed students' perceptions of writing activities, peer feedback, and AI-powered feedback. A summary of interview findings is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Interview Findings Based on Student Codes

Theme	Evidence from Coded Students
Attitude toward writing	S1 & S3 found writing difficult; S2 & S4 enjoyed it

Peer feedback usefulness	S1, S3, S4 said peer feedback helped structure understanding
AI feedback usefulness	S1–S4 stated AI helped correct grammar and tense
Feedback clarity	S1 stated AI feedback was clearer than peer feedback
Motivation to revise	S1–S4 felt more motivated
Future preference	All students wanted AI and peer feedback reused

Representative interview excerpts:

"AI feedback helped me correct my grammar and understand past tense better." (S1)

"Peer feedback helped me understand what should be in the series of events in recount text." (S4)

"From AI feedback, I understood grammar and tenses more clearly." (S3)

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that AI-powered feedback tools were integrated into recount text writing instruction as a complementary resource. Classroom observations show that the tools were introduced after teacher explanation and peer feedback, which reflects the role of technology as support within pedagogical practices rather than as a replacement for instruction. This implementation aligns with Hyland's (2019) view that feedback technologies should function within a guided instructional framework.

Document analysis suggests that AI-powered feedback primarily addressed lower- order writing aspects, such as verb tense usage, grammatical structure, vocabulary choice, and sentence clarity. Changes observed in students' revised drafts were mainly related to these linguistic features. This finding is consistent with Benali (2021), who reported that Automated Writing Evaluation tools tend to focus on surface-level aspects of writing. In contrast, content development and idea elaboration showed little variation between drafts, supporting Ferris's (2018) argument that automated feedback systems have limitations in addressing higher-order writing skills.

Interview data further illustrate students' experiences with AI-powered feedback. Students reported that AI feedback helped them identify grammatical issues more clearly and provided direct guidance on sentence-level corrections.

Students who initially perceived writing as difficult described AI feedback as helpful for understanding tense usage and grammatical rules. These responses suggest that immediate and explicit feedback contributed to students' engagement with the revision process, as also noted by Hyland (2016).

Peer feedback played a different role in the writing process. Interview findings indicate that peer feedback supported students' understanding of recount text structure, particularly the organization of events. Students emphasized that discussions with peers helped clarify the sequence of events in recount texts. This finding supports Wibowo, Marbun, and Rahmawati's (2024) claim that peer feedback encourages reflection on content and organization.

Overall, the findings show that AI-powered feedback and peer feedback served complementary functions. AI feedback mainly addressed linguistic aspects of writing, while peer feedback supported students' understanding of text structure. This combination reflects a balanced feedback environment that aligns with the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes collaboration, learner autonomy, and meaningful integration of digital technology in learning.

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