


Chapter 6

EFL Learners' Views About the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Giving Corrective Feedback on Writing: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

This chapter presents a qualitative study the aim of which is to explore EFL learners' views about the use of artificial intelligence for giving corrective feedback on their written works. Artificial intelligence use was addressed through one of recent and popular chatbots: ChatGPT. The data were gathered through semi-structured and stimulated-recall interviews, also videorecording of the participants' ChatGPT use for writing feedback. In the interviews, the participants reflected on their individualized language studies, and also having practiced the use of artificial intelligence in receiving corrective feedback on their writing assignments via ChatGPT for five weeks, they expressed their thoughts about this experience. The findings indicated codes and themes about learner characteristics and preferences, and benefits and pitfalls of artificial intelligence use for corrective feedback, which leads to several language teaching implications specifically concerning writing to be proposed in the chapter.

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INTRODUCTION

Transforming lifestyles, technological advances have led to changes in core systems of society. Thus, specific to changes reflecting in the educational system, computers and mobile tools have been integrated to support learning and/or teaching of any school subject. Thus, benefitting from becoming partially or totally online, new teaching approaches and methods such as blended learning and flipped classroom have brought about. Furthermore, bulk of digital tools and mobile applications have become part of educational programs particularly to help students conduct independent out-of-class studies. Consequently, in accordance with recent developments highlighting the beginning of a new digital era, artificial intelligence (AI) has been promoted in teaching, and ChatGPT, “a chatbot with a conversational artificial intelligence interface that was developed by OpenAI” (Tili et al., 2023, p. 1) has currently been one of the trendiest AI tools. Since it has been a very popular AI chatbot, also considered as revolutionary, empirical research has started to provide evidence of how it is used or could be used for varied educational purposes (Lancaster, 2023). Concerning language learning and teaching, it is possible for autonomous learners to conduct self-regulated language studies by using ChatGPT to improve their vocabulary knowledge, study grammar or to practice conversational patterns (Fryer et al., 2020; Kohnke et al., 2023). As for writing practice, this chatbot could be used to generate written texts, which undoubtedly raise ethical concerns. As an acceptable use, it could be used to get feedback for written products, and it is the focus of the study presented in this chapter.

In language learning, writing is considered as the most complex language skill due to cognitive processes and social interaction involved (Ghonsooly & Shalchy, 2013). With this regard, writers activate working memory by generating and organizing ideas, monitoring while writing and evaluating the written work. Additionally, within the scope of second language (L2) learning, written corrective feedback (WCF) defined as “error correction on L2 student writing” (Bitchener, 2008, p. 102) is provided by the teacher in traditional writing classes in which L2 learners could ask the teacher for corrective feedback or give peer feedback, which contributes to constitute social dimensions of writing. Furthermore, engaging in corrective feedback includes cognitive aspects as L2 writers try to grasp what is wrong and why in their papers, and they figure out how to fix it. WCF is provided in various forms while their effects and the extent of which they are preferred by learners differ. For instance, direct/indirect corrective feedback (indicating existence of an error by underlying), metalinguistic corrective feedback (use of error code to indicate an error) are two forms that could be used to give corrective feedback on writing (Ellis, 2009), and as for students' preferences for corrective feedback on writing, there is a tendency towards benefitting from different types of feedback basically

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