
NEWSLETTER

The Role of Generative Artificial Intelligence in the Teaching and Learning of English as Foreign Language: An Empirical Study of GenAI-Based Feedback in Secondary English Writing

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THIS STUDY is an evaluation of the effect of GenAI-based feedback on English writing performance of secondary school students as English-as-foreign-language (EFL) learners, based on experimental data from 201 seventh graders from four classes at J Middle School in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. Using the GenAI software “Doubao,” which is built on the Skylark model, as the experimental platform, the researchers compared the English writing scores of the experimental group (trained with GenAI-based feedback) and the control group (trained with teacher feedback) across four writing assignments.

Research Findings:

- GenAI-based feedback was more effective than teacher feedback in improving the writing’s relevance to the topic in the students with ordinary writing skills, while neither GenAI-based feedback nor teacher feedback showed significant improvement effect on this aspect in the high-performing students.
- Compared to teacher feedback, GenAI-based feedback led to greater improvement in grammatical accuracy in English writing.
- GenAI-based feedback was more effective in improving wording appropriateness of students’ English writing than teacher feedback.
- GenAI-based feedback significantly enhanced the logic of narrative in students’ English writing, whereas teacher feedback showed no measurable effect in this regard.

The research results imply that the introduction of a real-time feedback mechanism is beneficial for students being promptly informed of their performance and deficits in English writing in terms of relevance, grammar, wording, and logic, enabling targeted revisions and improvements; that GenAI-based feedback is more suitable for beginners in English writing; and that GenAI-based feedback has the potential to narrow the gap between students with different levels of English writing proficiency.

Source: China Educational Technology, 2025; 2025(06): 70-79.