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**LEARNERS' AND TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES IN THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ESSAY WRITING: BASES FOR PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION**

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**ABSTRACT**

This qualitative-phenomenological study was conducted to explore learners' and teachers' experiences in the use of artificial intelligence (AI) as bases program recommendation in one of the Science High Schools in the Fourth Congressional District in the province of Iloilo. Learners revealed that AI helps them generate and organize ideas and makes essay writing clearer and understandable; helps learners improve grammar, makes writing less stressful, and improves critical thinking skills; helps manage time; overdependence on AI, weakening of critical thinking skills, ethical concerns and academic integrity and risk of misuse and inaccurate information. Teachers viewed AI improves essay writing performance, helps learners analyze and think critically, helps improve language accuracy, stimulates mental processes, develops interactive learning, overdependence on AI, loss of authenticity in writing and decline in critical thinking and idea generation. A program was formulated as a basis of this study, offering practical strategies for teachers and learners to maximize the benefits of AI while maintaining academic integrity in essay writing.

**Keywords:** *Artificial Intelligence, Experiences, Essay Writing, Program Recommendation*

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## INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has quickly changed many facets of education, especially writing and communication. The advent of AI-powered writing helpers like ChatGPT, Grammarly, QuillBot, Gemini, and others in recent years has given students quick and easy feedback on grammar, structure, and content creation. Essay writing is now quicker and more effective, thanks to these technologies which provide assistance that was previously only available from human teachers or peer reviewers.

Empirical studies show that AI is having a bigger and bigger effect on writing instruction. For example, a study by Ramli, et al. (2024) found that 78 % of students said their writing got better when they used AI-assisted tools, especially when it came to grammar and organization. Research also shows that students who use AI-based feedback systems make much bigger improvements in their revision skills and overall writing performance than students who only use traditional methods.

AI-powered tools such as grammar checkers, language models, and essay generators are increasingly used by learners to support their writing tasks. These technologies provide immediate feedback, assist in organizing ideas, improve language accuracy, and reduce the cognitive burden of essay writing. For English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, AI offers valuable scaffolding that enhances clarity, confidence, and overall writing performance.

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Despite these advantages, educators, students, and legislators are still debating on the use of AI in academic writing. AI tools can improve learning by helping non-native English speakers, encouraging creativity, and improving writing mechanics (Ramli, et al., 2024), improper use of AI can result in over-reliance, a decline in critical thinking, and possible problems with academic dishonesty (Haber, et al., 2025; Cuyugan, 2025). Concerns regarding authenticity and originality in written work are raised by the fact that many students frequently rely too much on AI-generated outputs without properly evaluating or comprehending them.

The researcher also observed that students frequently use AI in their essay writing tasks. This reality underscores the need for clear guidelines that will allow teachers to check and assess learners' outputs when AI is permitted. By establishing structured policies, schools can ensure that AI integration enhances learning without compromising authenticity.

This study was conducted to explore the experiences of learners and teachers in using AI for essay writing, as bases for program recommendation. By examining both the advantages and limitations of AI-assisted writing, this research aimed at providing evidence-based recommendations for schools to optimize AI's benefits while minimizing its risks.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Research Methodology

This chapter presents the underlying processes of phenomenological research and discusses following: Research Method, Research Design, Participants in the Study,

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Sampling Design, Research Instrument, Validity of the Research Instrument, Data-gathering Procedure, and Data Analyses.

## Research Method

The research method used in this study was qualitative research method, specifically using phenomenological approach. A questionnaire guide containing open-ended questions was used to gather information about learners' and teachers' actual experiences using artificial intelligence in essay writing. The goal of this method was to better understand the benefits and drawbacks of writing essays with AI assistance. This knowledge was used to implement guidelines (Creswell & Poth, 2021).

## Research Design

This research adopted a phenomenological framework, employing in-depth interviews as the primary tool for eliciting nuanced, first-hand accounts from the participants. As a qualitative methodology, phenomenology seeks to uncover the shared essence of a specific lived experience among a designated group. Its primary objective is to synthesize these individual narratives into a cohesive, universal description of the phenomenon under study (Creswell & Poth, 2021).

## Participants of the Study

The total population of seven (7) English teachers at one of the Science High Schools in the Fourth Congressional District of the province of Iloilo were requested to offer a range of viewpoints. Purposeful sampling, which entails specifically picking participants who can

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offer rich and pertinent data for the study, was used to choose the learners in the interim (Maxwe11, 2025). Three (3) students were chosen from each of the seven teachers, for a total of twenty-one learners (21). For purposes of confidentiality and anonymity, the learner participants were identified as participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21 and the teacher participants as 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, and 28.

### Sampling Design

This study employed a mixed sampling design that combined total sampling and purposeful sampling. The study involved all of the teachers at one of the Science High Schools in the Fourth Congressional District of the province of Iloilo who teach the pertinent subject using AI. This method guaranteed that all educators' viewpoints on the application of AI in essay writing were taken into account, thus offering a thorough comprehension of the phenomenon from a teaching standpoint.

Meanwhile, the learners were carefully purposely chosen according to certain standards, especially their prior experience in writing essays with AI assistance. Three (3) students were chosen from each of the seven teachers, for a total of twenty-one learners. The creation of program recommendation was based on the responses of both the teachers and the learners with the end and view of regulating, facilitating, and harnessing the use of AI to maximum advantage.

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## Research Instrument

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## Validity of the Research Instrument

Validity is defined as the capacity of a research tool to precisely measure what it intends to capture (University of Baguio Research and Development Center, 2021). To achieve this, the study's custom-made questionnaire was reviewed by an adviser and further validated by a panel of experts for both face and content accuracy. The final instrument reflects the comprehensive incorporation of all corrections and technical suggestions provided during this evaluative phase.

## Data Gathering Procedures

The data-gathering phase began once the study received approval from the panel of experts. Following this, formal permissions were obtained from the Dean of the Graduate School, the School Head of the Science High School, and the parents of the participating students. The data were collected from seven (7) teachers and twenty-one (21) learners using the validated interview guide.

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To interpret the findings, thematic analysis was employed, allowing the researcher to extract significant patterns of meaning and emerging themes from the collective responses.

## Data Analyses

The collected data were analyzed using a thematic approach, allowing for the identification and comprehensive discussion of emerging themes. As a qualitative method, thematic analysis involves finding patterns within the data by systematically coding and interpreting meanings to address the core research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Ayton, 2021).

To maintain a rigorous and widely accepted standard, the six-step analysis process was followed. This procedure began with data familiarization and the generation of initial codes, followed by a search for broader themes. These themes were then reviewed, defined, and named before the final report was produced. This systematic framework ensured that the participants' experiences were accurately represented and that the findings provided a meaningful interpretation aligned with the study's purpose.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study determined the learners' and teachers' experiences in using Artificial Intelligence in essay writing as bases for program recommendation during the school year 2025-2026.

The study followed a qualitative approach and utilized a phenomenological research design. The participants consisted of the entire population of seven (7) junior and senior high

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school English teachers and twenty (21) purposively selected students from a Science High School in Iloilo. Data were gathered using a researcher-made interview schedule that was validated by a panel of experts. Before the study began, all required permits were secured and consent was obtained from the participants. The interviews were conducted in a paper-and-pencil format, and the resulting data were transcribed and processed through thematic analysis to identify and interpret the findings.

The following are the findings of the study:

Based on the result of the in-depth interview on the experiences of learners in using Artificial Intelligence in essay writing, five positive themes were identified. These were: AI Helps Generate and Organize Ideas, Makes Essay Writing Clearer and Understandable, Helps Learners Improve Grammar, Makes Writing Less Stressful and Improves Critical Thinking Skills, and Helps Manage Time. On the other hand, four negative themes were drawn. These were: Overdependence on AI, Weakening of Critical Thinking Skills, Ethical Concerns and Academic Integrity and Risk of Misuse and Inaccurate Information.

For the experiences of teachers in using Artificial Intelligence in teaching essay writing to learners, five positive themes were also identified. These were: AI as Tool in Improving Essay Writing Performance, Helps Learners Analyze and Think Critically, Helps Improve Language Accuracy, Stimulates Mental Processes, and Develops Interactive Learning. Negative themes were also identified. These were: Overdependence on AI, Loss of Authenticity in Writing and Decline in Critical Thinking and Idea Generation.

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A program recommendation was proposed as a result of the study.

## Conclusion

Learners' experiences with Artificial Intelligence in essay writing revealed a complex interplay of benefits and challenges within the classroom context. Many participants emphasized that AI tools helped them generate and organize ideas more effectively, thus making their essays clearer and more understandable while also improving grammar and reducing the stress often associated with writing tasks. These affordances contributed to better time management and, for some, even fostered critical thinking by prompting reflection on content and structure.

However, the interviews also highlighted risks, particularly the tendency toward overdependence on AI, which in certain cases weakened learners' independent critical thinking skills. Ethical concerns such as plagiarism, academic integrity, and potential misuse of AI-generated content were also raised, alongside the danger of inaccurate information being incorporated into academic work. Taken together, these insights suggest that while AI can serve as a valuable support tool in the classroom, its integration requires careful guidance to balance efficiency and skill development, ensuring that learners benefit from technological assistance without compromising originality, ethical responsibility, or deeper cognitive engagement.

Teachers' perspectives on the use of Artificial Intelligence in essay writing underscored both its pedagogical potential and its inherent risks within the classroom. Many teachers

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recognized AI as a valuable tool for improving learners' essay performance, particularly in enhancing language accuracy, stimulating mental processes, and fostering interactive learning environments. They observed that AI could support learners in analyzing texts more critically and in refining their writing through clearer expression and grammatical precision. At the same time, however, teachers expressed concern about the risk of overdependence on AI, hence noting that excessive reliance may lead to a decline in authentic writing and weaken learners' ability to generate original ideas.

The possibility of diminished critical thinking skills and loss of authenticity in student work was highlighted as a pressing issue, thus raising questions about how AI should be responsibly integrated into classroom practice. These insights suggest that while AI can enrich teaching and learning by scaffolding performance and engagement, its use must be carefully moderated to preserve originality, critical thought, and the integrity of academic writing.

The overall findings of the study highlight the need for a structured program to guide the integration of Artificial Intelligence in essay writing instruction. In response, the proposed program recommendation is designed to ensure that AI is used as a supportive educational tool that enhances writing performance, fosters critical thinking, and promotes language development. At the same time, the program emphasizes the importance of maintaining learners' originality by enabling them to develop their own writing voice and ideas while using AI responsibly.

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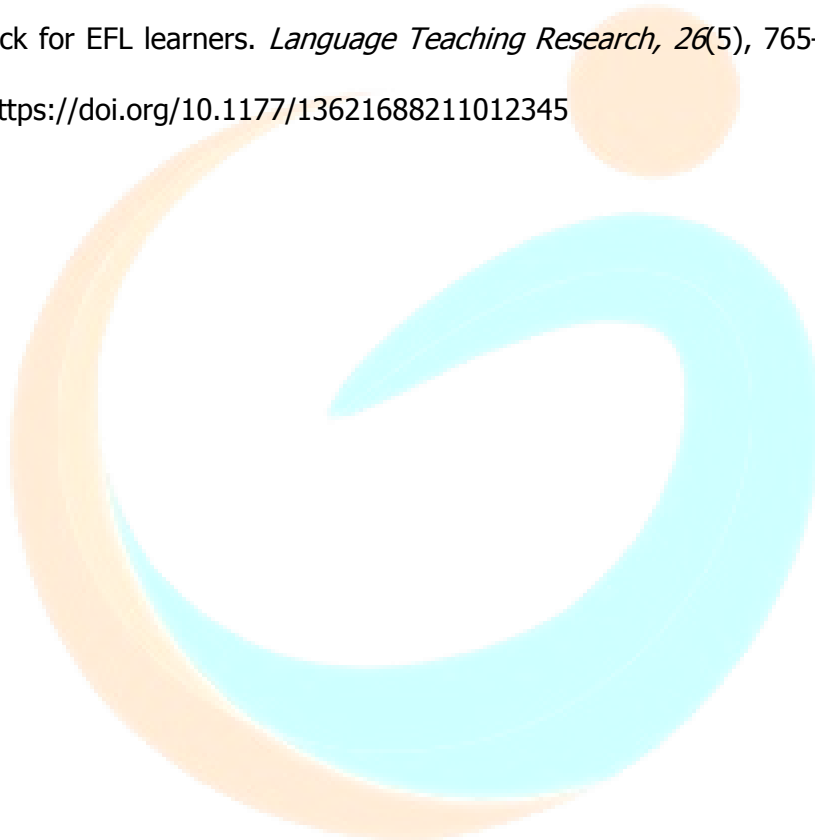
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