

Teaching L2 Writing Using Generative Artificial Intelligence: Practices of Southeast Asian Language Teachers

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Abstract

The integration of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) into English language teaching and learning, particularly in second language (L2) writing, has been widely explored in recent years. However, many of these explorations lacked substantial representations of integration practices in Southeast Asia and in-depth analyses of the factors influencing them. To fill this gap, this study investigated how Southeast Asian English language teachers integrated GAI tools across various stages of L2 writing instruction and the challenges they encountered in doing so. Analyzing qualitative data from 14 selected participants across nine Southeast Asian countries, the study found that participants used GAI tools at different stages of L2 writing instruction, primarily to scaffold the development of various writing skills. They commonly used the tools to generate model texts as instructional materials, to facilitate activities for brainstorming and outlining of ideas, drafting, proofreading, and editing of drafts, and to provide immediate corrective feedback. While the participants in this study reported different GAI-integration practices in teaching L2 writing, the practices appeared limited in variety and complexity, reflecting a lack of the requisite technological and pedagogical knowledge and competencies for systematic, transformative GAI-enhanced L2 writing instruction. Implications of the findings for language teacher education and professional development programs are discussed.

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1 Introduction

In recent years, Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) technologies have evolved with more sophisticated affordances for English language teaching and learning. Many English language teaching (ELT) practitioners have explored the potential applications of these technologies, particularly in teaching second language (L2) writing. Based on existing literature, GAI tools can be used by teachers to generate model texts that illustrate the structure, components, and language of a particular text type (Barrot, 2024; Meniado, 2023). Additionally, these tools can also be used by learners to gather information about a certain topic, to understand difficult words or unfamiliar concepts in a reading text, to translate their ideas from their native language to the English language, and to get feedback on their drafts focusing on content quality, organization, and accuracy in language and style (Barrot, 2024; Mali, 2025; Meniado, 2023; Su et al., 2023). In large classes, these tools are also helpful for teachers in providing immediate, personalized corrective feedback on every student's

output and in designing independent out-of-class writing tasks to develop fluency (Barrot, 2024; Kohnke et al., 2023; Meniado, 2023; Su et al., 2023).

While the affordances of GAI tools for teaching writing are well recognized and widely discussed in the existing literature, only a few empirical studies have reported how these tools are systematically integrated across various stages of the L2 writing process, leaving the relevant literature largely conceptual and perspective-based. In addition, most empirical studies on the use of GAI in teaching writing have mainly investigated students' and teachers' perceptions of the potential applications and impacts of GAI tools on teaching, learning, and the assessment of L2 writing in a specific context in a single country, leaving the findings isolated and invisible. None of these studies has investigated, at a macro level, how these GAI tools are used in practice by classroom teachers across various stages of L2 writing instruction, with a focus on broader geographical regions such as Europe, North America, the Middle East, East Asia, and Southeast Asia. In Southeast Asia in particular, no study has, so far, investigated the common practices in teaching L2 writing using GAI tools, involving English language teachers from multiple countries in the region in order to articulate a shared regional perspective and framework that can influence the current and future global discourses on the use of GAI in L2 writing instruction. This study aimed to fill this gap by investigating how Southeast Asian English language teachers integrate GAI tools across the stages of writing instruction to identify good practices to address common L2 writing issues and challenges in the region. Specifically, it aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. How do Southeast Asian English language teachers integrate Generative AI (GAI) tools into the different stages of L2 writing instruction?
2. What challenges do they encounter in integrating GAI into their L2 writing instruction, and how do they overcome them?

The Southeast Asian region comprises 11 culturally and linguistically diverse countries (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste, and Vietnam). Though these countries have their own English language education systems, they operate in largely comparable English language teaching (ELT) environments, with English taught either as a second or a foreign language. As a regional bloc sharing common educational aspirations, goals, issues, and constraints, these countries harmonize their language policies and reforms under the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Integration Framework. This regional harmonization or integration encourages a macro-level investigation of educational practices throughout the region (e.g., the use of GAI in teaching L2 writing) to standardize practices and address common issues under a unified regional policy or framework. This study contributes to regional harmonization by identifying common GAI-in-L2-Writing-Instruction practices and issues across Southeast Asia and by establishing a unified regional perspective on integrating GAI into L2 writing instruction.

In addition, this study contributes to the growing literature on the use of GAI in English language teaching, particularly in L2 writing instruction, while empowering English language teachers worldwide by offering effective GAI-integration practices and insights that can be adopted or adapted across various ELT contexts. It can also inform education policymakers as they revise language teacher education and professional development programs by uncovering what L2 teachers know and do not know about GAI integration, as well as the issues they encounter in integrating GAI into L2 writing instruction. Lastly, it can be useful for curriculum developers as they rethink how GAI can be systematically integrated into a language curriculum.

2 Literature review

2.1 *Teaching L2 writing*

Writing in English is a struggle for many ESL/EFL learners, as it requires orchestrating multiple skills and strategies throughout the process. To be successful in writing, learners should have sufficient knowledge about the content or topic of what they are writing, the rhetorical situation in which the writing is made, and the genre or text type that fits the rhetorical situation (Ferris, 2018). In addition, they should have a high degree of control over the linguistic and extralinguistic features appropriate to the text's content, genre, and target audience. Lastly, they should have a range of strategies to effectively manage their writing tasks (Ferris, 2018). In short, L2 learners should have adequate knowledge of the content and context, language system, writing processes, and genres to become proficient and effective L2 writers (Hyland, 2007).

To develop the abovementioned writing knowledge, skills, and strategies, L2 writing teachers should create an ideal learning condition by following Paul Nation's Four Strands framework (Nation & Macalister, 2021). Based on this framework, teachers should provide learners with meaning-focused input to help them activate their prior knowledge and prepare for what they are going to write. They should also be given ample opportunities to produce meaning-focused written outputs across varied genres that fulfil relevant goals and communicative tasks. In addition, they should be exposed to language-focused learning situations in which they receive feedback on language accuracy and the clarity of ideas. Finally, they should be given opportunities to develop their writing fluency through repetitive and engaging practice both in and out of the classroom. However, based on Zein's (2022) ASEAN regional study, these teaching-learning conditions are largely unattainable in many ASEAN English language classrooms due to limited resources and untrained or non-proficient English teachers. Given the popularity of GAI technologies across many parts of Southeast Asia, it is worth examining how these technologies are used to create ideal learning conditions and how teachers leverage them to address the pedagogical challenges, constraints, and shortcomings in their contexts.

2.2 *Teaching L2 writing in the age of Generative Artificial Intelligence*

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) tools such as ChatGPT, Copilot, Gemini, and Claude can support English language teaching and can potentially address common issues such as providing meaningful input, fluency development opportunities, and providing immediate feedback (Javier & Moorhouse, 2023; Kohnke et al., 2023; Mali, 2025; Meniado, 2023; Yang & Li, 2024). These tools can enhance language learners' learning experiences when integrated following Puentedura's (2020) Substitution-Augmentation-Modification-Redefinition (SAMR) model, a framework that describes, in progressive stages, how technology can transform learning from simple to complex activities (Kohnke & Zou, 2025). For example, in the case of GAI technologies, at the substitution level, GAI tools are used as digital replacements for traditional resources like textbooks or dictionaries, while at the augmentation level, these tools are progressively integrated as a real-time grammar checker, style checker, idea generator, or outliner (Kohnke & Zou, 2025). At the modification level, GAI tools are then integrated for collaborative and iterative writing processes, while at the redefinition level, the tools are used for unique writing tasks previously inconceivable (Kohnke & Zou, 2025). Given the significant role of the SAMR framework in ensuring an effective and transformative GAI-supported L2 writing instruction, it is crucial to identify the existing integration practices of English language teachers in teaching L2 writing, so that their integration competency levels are mapped out vis-à-vis the framework for appropriate institutional support and professional development training, hence this study.

In formal L2 writing instruction, GAI tools can be integrated in various ways at different stages (Su et al., 2023; Wang & Dang, 2024; Zou & Huang, 2023). These tools can be used at various stages of product, process, and genre approaches to teaching L2 writing. For example, they can be used to brainstorm ideas, generate model texts, explain unfamiliar concepts, and simplify complex texts. They can also be used to help learners develop their topic outlines, write their first drafts, receive feedback on language accuracy, and achieve clarity and cohesion (Bok & Cho, 2023; Ngo, 2023). Lastly, they can be used to design and facilitate writing fluency development activities that can be done individually or in groups, in or out of class (Liu et al., 2025). However, they have limitations and issues that may affect the extent of adoption and integration into L2 writing instruction. They sometimes generate inaccurate, fabricated, or biased responses and pose threats to academic integrity and data privacy (Aljohani, 2026). Overreliance on these tools can also lead to the deterioration of critical and creative thinking as well as problem-solving skills (Meniado, 2023). These practices and issues are commonly observed or reported in various ELT contexts. However, it is not yet well established whether these are common recurring regional practices and issues in Southeast Asia.

In many ELT contexts, teachers use GAI tools to facilitate activities in the pre-writing, during-writing, and post-writing stages of L2 writing instruction. They use these tools to generate model texts, help students brainstorm and organize their ideas, and provide immediate feedback (Han & Li, 2024; Tseng & Lin, 2024; Yang & Li, 2024). For example, in the United States (North American context), some university lecturers integrate the use of Generative AI into a professional writing course to help their students “invent ideas and counterarguments, organize information, draft particular genres for particular audiences, and copyedit” their work (Bedington, et al., 2024, p.10), while in Spain (European context), some English teachers use GAI to help learners engage in pre-writing activities (e.g., reading sample texts, understanding target vocabulary) and give immediate feedback on students’ writing (Octavio et al., 2024). In Saudi Arabia (Middle Eastern context), teachers also use GAI to provide real-time feedback on grammar, vocabulary, and coherence of learners’ written outputs (Alangari, 2025), while in China (East Asian context), some lecturers use GAI tools to help university students generate ideas relevant to a given topic, provide feedback on their outlines and drafts following some criteria, and correct language and syntactical errors (Su et al., 2023). In Southeast Asian countries like the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, some teachers use GAI across various stages of L2 writing instruction to help their students brainstorm, outline, and organize their ideas, and revise their whole written outputs (Barrot, 2024; Meniado et al., 2024; Wiboolyasarin et al., 2024). However, despite the number of relevant studies published from Southeast Asia, recent systematic literature reviews reveal that the region remains underrepresented in the global literature (Jin et al., 2025).

To grow professionally in the age of GAI, teachers should be familiar with emerging teacher roles and use them as a basis for self-directed training and development (Meniado, 2025). Zhai (2024) outlines the evolving roles of teachers across levels, with increasing knowledge and competencies. At the lowest level, in the Observer role, teachers are aware of what GAI tools can do but do not commit to using them in their classrooms. At the second level, the Adopter role, teachers experiment with integrating GAI tools, but not systematically and consistently. At the third level is the Collaborator role, in which teachers use GAI consistently and purposefully to enhance instructional outcomes and students’ learning experiences. Teachers at this level possess intermediate to advanced knowledge of various GAI tools – their practical applications, ethical considerations, and potential challenges. The highest level is the Creator role, where teachers become pioneers and innovators in the use of GAI in language teaching. They take a leading role in researching innovative applications of GAI in language teaching and learning. To determine the common roles assumed by Southeast Asian language teachers in integrating GAI into L2 writing instruction, it is important to identify their current practices and experiences with GAI in this context. The identified common

roles of teachers in the instructional process can help leaders and policymakers design appropriate support and programs for teachers.

2.3 Issues and challenges in using GAI to teach L2 writing

While GAI tools have been found to be helpful in teaching L2 writing skills across contexts, many English teachers do not use them in their classrooms for L2 writing instruction for the following reasons. First, they lack the technical and pedagogical knowledge to use and integrate these tools into their writing instruction (Klein, 2024; Kohnke & Zou, 2025; Ma et al., 2024; Moorhouse et al., 2024). Second, they feel that integrating various GAI tools into their L2 writing instruction is less important, given their heavy workload and limited instructional time in the language curriculum (Klein, 2024). Their priority is to cover all the lessons in the curriculum so that their students will pass the high-stakes exams. Third, they are unsure how to use or integrate these tools into their teaching because there are no clear-cut school policies or guidelines for their appropriate use (Klein, 2024). Fourth, these tools are inaccessible due to limited resources or institutional restrictions such as data privacy and security concerns, ethical issues, and potential threats to academic integrity and skills development (Klein, 2024; Ma et al., 2024; Peachey, 2024). Some teachers and school administrators remain skeptical of the use of these tools in L2 writing instruction due to persistent concerns and issues (Klein, 2024). While these are the issues widely reported in the global literature, they may not fully capture the more complex picture in Southeast Asia. It is crucial to find out, through broader and deeper exploration, what other issues Southeast Asian language teachers encounter, what causes these persistent issues, and how to address them.

3 Methods

This study utilized the qualitative research design, where the participants could describe and illustrate in depth their contextual practices in integrating GAI tools (ChatGPT, Copilot, and Gemini) into the different stages of L2 writing instruction and discuss the issues they encountered in integrating GAI into their teaching of writing, along with the strategies they used to overcome them. Since the study involved collecting, analyzing, and interpreting narrative data to gain insights into a particular phenomenon, in this case, the use of GAI tools in teaching L2 writing and the issues attached to it, a qualitative research design was deemed appropriate (Lew, et al., 2018; Mertler, 2019).

3.1 Context and participants

This qualitative study was conducted in Southeast Asia, with participants from nine countries, including Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Since the main purpose of this study was to draw a deeper understanding of why and how Southeast Asian language teachers integrate GAI into their L2 writing instruction, rather than generalizing findings applicable to all teachers in the region, it involved only a small sample of 14 participants who are lecturers and professors teaching English and communication courses in premier higher education institutions in their respective countries. Moreover, since the study also aimed to identify common, recurring GAI integration practices and insights that can represent the Southeast Asian context in the global literature, it included at least one participant from each ASEAN country. The participants were purposively selected upon the recommendation of their respective College Deans and Language Centre Directors. The study required that participants have actually integrated GAI into their L2 writing instruction. To ensure that this requirement is met, the researcher contacted school/university administrators (Deans, Directors, School Heads) to recommend teachers or lecturers whom they know have used GAI in their L2 writing instruction. This

protocol ensured that the data gathered were valid and reliable by identifying the right participants from the relevant context. Table 1 presents the profiles of the participants, including their corresponding countries, designations, and years of experience.

Table 1. Profile of the participants

Participants*	Country	Designation	Teaching Experience
Hannah	Brunei	Lecturer	16 years
Piseth	Cambodia	Lecturer	17 years
Mohammed	Indonesia	Lecturer	34 years
Fauzi	Indonesia	Assistant Professor	5 years
Farah	Malaysia	Senior Lecturer	28 years
Sufi	Malaysia	Assistant Professor	14 years
Zin Min	Myanmar	Lecturer	7 years
Mary Grace	Philippines	Assistant Professor	20 years
Kent	Singapore	Teaching Fellow	15 years
Miki	Singapore	Teaching Fellow	23 years
Wat	Thailand	Assistant Professor	5 years
Somt	Thailand	Assistant Professor	10 years
Uyen	Vietnam	Lecturer	14 years
Huong	Vietnam	Lecturer	9 years

**Pseudonyms*

3.2 Research instrument

A researcher-made questionnaire with open-ended questions was used to gather the needed data. The questionnaire comprised three questions asking participants to describe and illustrate how they integrated GAI tools into the different stages of their writing instruction (e.g., pre-writing, while-writing, and post-writing stages) and discuss the problems and difficulties they encountered in teaching writing using these tools, along with the solutions they implemented to overcome such difficulties. To ensure the instrument's validity, two experts (academics/teacher-trainers) were asked to evaluate the items and comment on their appropriateness and relevance to the study's purpose, as well as their alignment with the research questions. The questionnaire was also piloted with five volunteer teacher-trainees, primarily to check clarity and probe the efficacy of the questions. Based on the feedback from the experts and try-out volunteers, the questions were revised accordingly.

3.3 Data collection and analysis

To collect data from participants, initial emails were sent to college deans and directors of language centers at reputable universities in Southeast Asia, seeking their recommendations for potential study participants. Once recommendations were received, individual emails were sent to recommended participants inviting them to participate in the study. Each email explained the purpose of the study, its contributions to the field of English language teaching, the types of data it seeks to collect, and how the collected data will be treated and protected. After obtaining consent from each

participant, an email containing the open-ended interview questions was sent. Participants were given up to two weeks to complete and return the questionnaire.

The qualitative data gathered through the open-ended questionnaire were analyzed using inductive thematic analysis, which involved coding the data to identify recurring themes or patterns of meaning with a relevant coding scheme (Mertler, 2019, pp. 180-182). The initial codes, such as brainstorming, modeling, outlining, drafting, proofreading, giving feedback, and revising, were clustered into themes and then organized into a framework of pre-, while-, and post-writing stages of L2 writing instruction. The analysis was guided by the underlying question of how teachers use GAI to facilitate the activities across various stages (pre-writing, while-writing, and post-writing) of L2 writing instruction. To ensure reliability in analyzing the qualitative data, another coder was asked to assist with the analysis. Before starting the data analysis, the researcher familiarized the second coder with the purpose, research questions, research method, codes, and coding scheme to be used in the study. A calibration session was also conducted to ensure the accuracy and consistency of qualitative data analysis. Confusions or disagreements in coding the qualitative data were resolved through discussion.

4 Findings

4.1 How did the participants use GAI tools to teach writing in the pre-writing stage?

The participants used GAI tools to explore potential topics or writing tasks. According to Uyen, the participant from Vietnam, using GAI to explore topics or design writing tasks helped her save time for lesson planning. Other participants also used GAI tools to generate model texts (e.g., essays, business letters, and reports), especially when they were using the genre approach. They instructed GAI tools to generate model texts appropriate to their students' contexts and proficiency levels. When contextualized, level-appropriate model texts were generated and participants guided their students to analyze them for content, language, and structure using a checklist. As Zin Min from Myanmar shared, *"GAI helps me prepare a sample writing for my students. When students are introduced to a new writing format such as 'Blog Writing', I can share the sample blogs provided by GAI with my students."*

Participants who usually asked their learners to research and gather information about a particular writing topic also allowed the use of GAI tools to simplify lengthy, complex articles compiled from different sources. This was intended to help their students gain more knowledge about the topic during the brainstorming stage. Some participants also used GAI tools to pre-teach target vocabulary that learners should be able to use in their target written output. As shared by Sufi from Malaysia, *"I introduce them to a set of words. And they have to find the meaning and how they are used in sentences."*

Most participants integrated GAI tools to facilitate the brainstorming stage of the writing process. Mohammed from Indonesia shared that he allows his learners to use ChatGPT to generate ideas, plot points, character profiles, or alternative perspectives. For example, in writing a persuasive essay on technology's impact on society, he allowed his learners to use ChatGPT to brainstorm pros and cons, potential counterarguments, and supporting evidence. Some participants started the brainstorming stage with their learners first, then continued with the help of GAI tools. They asked their learners to brainstorm ideas on a given topic. Then, they asked them to use GAI tools to generate relevant ideas or different perspectives on the given topic. After that, they asked their learners to compare their ideas with those that were generated by GAI tools. This was evident in the case of Wat from Thailand, narrating, *"The students usually work in groups/pairs or individually to brainstorm ideas about the topic assigned. They are required to discuss on their own first, then in pairs or groups. After that, each group is allowed to use some Generative AI tools to expand their ideas."*

Participants also integrated GAI tools to help learners organize or outline their ideas. For example, Hannah from Brunei shared, *"I would ask ChatGPT to come up with essay outlines that I can use to show as a sample for students."* Other participants allowed their learners to ask GAI tools to generate sample outlines based on a given topic. Then, they asked their learners to evaluate the GAI-generated outlines using a checklist. Conversely, some participants asked their students to initially develop their outlines independently and then use GAI tools to evaluate or suggest improvements based on a given set of criteria. Using the GAI tools' feedback, the students revised the outline individually, in pairs, or in groups.

4.2 How did the participants use GAI tools to teach writing in the while-writing stage?

During the while-writing stage, the participants allowed their learners to use GAI tools to reinforce vocabulary and grammatical accuracy while writing their first draft. For example, Uyen from Vietnam asked her students to enter their draft sentences or paragraphs into the text box in ChatGPT or Gemini as they drafted. The GAI tools identified potential grammatical errors and suggested alternative language and structure. This helped learners immediately identify the appropriate word or phrase for a particular concept in a specific context and ensured grammatical accuracy, especially when unsure how to structure their sentences. This was also observed in Kent's narrative from Singapore, where he said, *"I use GAI (students' choice of tool) for real-time grammar and style suggestions, helping students refine their drafts."*

Since the participants were teaching learners who use English as their second/foreign language, they also allowed the use of GAI tools to help them translate their ideas/sentences from their first language (L1) to English while drafting. This allowed learners with limited English proficiency to express their ideas more effectively while writing in their first language, with the writing later translated into English. As Sufi from Malaysia shared, *"If they got stuck on how to say something in L2 from their L1, I would allow them to ask GAI to generate the sentence for them. I would ask them to create more than 3 options, and they had to decide which version is best."* The participants also allowed the use of GAI tools to provide scaffolding or support while their learners were writing their first draft. For example, when teaching a descriptive paragraph about personal experiences, Mohammed from Indonesia allowed his learners to use Google Gemini to help them build and connect sentences. His learners fed Google Gemini key moments and emotions. The GAI tool suggested descriptive language and helped them craft clear sentences.

4.3 How did the participants use GAI tools to teach writing in the post-writing stage?

The participants integrated GAI tools in the proofreading and editing stages of the writing process. They allowed their learners to use GAI tools to get feedback on their written outputs regarding content, coherence, structure, and other aspects of their writing based on specific criteria. They gave their students corresponding evaluation rubrics for each written task and had them use these rubrics as part of the prompts that elicited feedback on their drafts. For example, Mohammed from Indonesia allowed his students to upload their drafts to either ChatGPT or Copilot and asked the tools to suggest ways to improve their writing, including clarity, coherence, cohesion, word choice, grammar, and mechanics.

Participants also trained their students to ask questions or design prompts to get relevant and effective feedback from GAI tools. For peer feedback sessions, participants allowed their learners to use GAI tools to identify strengths and areas for improvement in a particular written output using a set of criteria. Sufi from Malaysia narrated, *"I also asked the students to use AI to help them give feedback to their friends."* Participants also integrated post-writing activities in which students discussed feedback from GAI tools with their peers to critically evaluate the feedback's relevance, accuracy, and acceptability. Some participants also integrated an activity where learners can reflect

on their experiences with GAI tools throughout the writing process. Again, Sufi from Malaysia shared, *“After completing the writing, I usually would ask students to reflect on how they used the AI based on the conversation between them and the AI.”*

As L2 writing teachers, participants also used GAI tools as assistants to expedite the provision of corrective feedback on their students’ output. This was reflected in the narrative of Wat from Thailand, *“Sometimes, I adopt GenAI tools to help me give feedback on content, organization, language use, and mechanics, but I have to reread them to ensure the accuracy of feedback.”*

4.4 What challenges did the participants encounter in integrating GAI into their L2 writing instruction?

Participants encountered challenges in integrating GAI tools into the different stages of L2 writing instruction due to limited technological pedagogical knowledge and skills. They struggled to design varied activities to support or scaffold writing throughout the process because they were not fully aware of what GAI tools could do in writing instruction and how to seamlessly integrate their affordances to support the theories, principles, and approaches to teaching L2 writing. Another challenge they encountered was the varying levels of digital literacy, AI literacy, and English proficiency of their learners – some were very advanced, others were average and low. They had to design varied instructional activities and learning support mechanisms suited to a language class with mixed levels of literacy and proficiency, which took up most of their time, given their limited knowledge of GAI-related pedagogies. As Zin Min from Myanmar shared, *“The very first challenge I encounter is I myself having very limited knowledge on the AI tools available online, so as my students.”*

The learners’ attitudes and behaviors toward the use of GAI were also among the challenges the participants had to deal with, as these affected the level of engagement with the tool and the overall effectiveness of the GAI-supported writing activities aimed at developing critical skills and competencies. They observed that some learners had trust issues with GAI tools due to inaccurate or irrelevant responses, thereby leading to lower engagement with these tools. This is why Miki from Singapore mentioned, *“I think my students need to be educated more on how AI tools can be used ethically and to their advantage.”* Some learners were also less engaged with these tools because they lacked the needed language proficiency to design effective prompts. The other challenge the participants faced was their own attitudes toward the tools. They chose not to fully integrate the tool throughout the writing process because they also had trust issues with these tools. Some were afraid that the tools might lure their learners into committing academic dishonesty, as Mary Grace from the Philippines narrated: *“As much as I want my students to maximize the potential of AI, the students get tempted to plagiarize by submitting entirely copied and pasted written outputs from AI.”* Others were also scared that GAI tools could diminish their learners’ critical and creative thinking skills. As Uyen from Vietnam noted, *“Students bypass intensive reading by solely relying on AI tools to generate the information they need, neglecting the development of critical reading skills, comprehension, and a deeper understanding of the material.”*

4.5 How did the participants overcome the challenges they encountered in integrating GAI into their L2 writing instruction?

The challenges encountered by the participants centered on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of their learners and themselves regarding the use of GAI tools in teaching and learning L2 writing. To address the issue of limited knowledge about GAI tools and skills in integrating them into teaching writing, they tried to read relevant articles from different sources, or watch webinars and YouTube video tutorials about integrating GAI tools into teaching writing. They tried to adopt these tools in teaching writing and gained insights about their use. To address limited AI literacy, the participants integrated AI literacy sessions into their courses. As Wat from Thailand shared:

“Basically, what I have done is that I provide some training and guidance on how to use GenAI tools appropriately to my students. It is important to teach students the appropriate use of GenAI tools and to emphasize the importance of academic integrity. Also, I teach them how to critically evaluate and supplement AI-generated content with their own ideas and insights (in the brainstorming or outlining stage).”

To prevent or minimize potential cases of cheating or academic dishonesty with the use of GAI tools, some participants tried to make their assessment process-based with frequent monitoring and consultation/feedback sessions along the way. For example, Zin Min from Myanmar shared, *“Asking concept-checking questions to the students related to their assignments they have written also helps prevent students from copying essays using AI tools.”* Some participants included personal reflections on the use of GAI tools as an additional component of the written assignments, while others relied on similarity checkers like Turnitin, combined with performance-based mechanisms, to counter plagiarism attempts. Farah from Malaysia reported, *“The students need to submit a plagiarism report for each written assignment. The students need to do a presentation to display their comprehension of the topic.”*

5 Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that the participants integrated GAI tools into the different stages of L2 writing instruction in many ways. These integration practices are aligned with the studies by Aljohani (2026), Barrot (2024), Han and Li (2024), Mali (2025), Su et al. (2023), Wang and Dang (2024), and Yang and Li (2024), where GAI tools particularly ChatGPT were used to facilitate activities in various stages of the L2 writing process like brainstorming, outlining, drafting, proof-reading, and editing, though the intensity and frequency of GAI integration in these activities may differ from those in other regions, given that Southeast Asia remains a predominantly high-stakes, exam-oriented EFL context that limits beyond-the-book teaching-learning activities and heavily mistrusts GAI’s outputs. The integration practices of the participants are also aligned with the studies by Bok and Cho (2023) and Tseng and Lin (2024), where teachers used ChatGPT in the post-writing stage to provide immediate feedback on learners’ written outputs. Theoretically, the GAI-integration practices are also in conformity with the Four Strands framework for L2 writing instruction by Paul Nation (see Nation & Macalister, 2021, pp. 93-95). When the participants facilitated brainstorming and outlining of ideas and provided model texts using GAI tools, they adhered to the principles of the meaning-focused input. In addition, when they used GAI tools to simplify and scaffold writing tasks, they applied the principles of meaning-focused output. Moreover, when they facilitated self-assessment and peer feedback using GAI tools and when they themselves used these tools to provide immediate feedback on their learners’ outputs, they also applied the principles in language-focused learning. Lastly, when they were able to motivate and engage their learners in many writing tasks by allowing GAI tools to serve as a Collaborator, writing assistant, and real-time feedback provider, they applied the principles within the fluency development strand.

While it is apparent that the GAI-supported activities conform with the L2 teaching principles (i.e., Four Strands) and the findings of previous studies, it is also observed that most teaching activities of the participants were aligned under the meaning-focused input and language-focused learning, and fewer activities under the meaning-focused output and fluency development strands. There was no balanced distribution of activities across the four strands when using GAI tools. Further, when the teaching practices were mapped against the Substitution-Augmentation-Modification-Redefinition (SAMR) technology integration framework (Puentedura, 2020), most were under the Substitution and Augmentation levels, the lower levels of the framework, where GAI tools were used as direct tool substitutes with no functional change or with functional improvement. Fewer activities can be categorized under the Modification and Redefinition levels, where the tools were used to

transform how students write and to create unique writing tasks previously inconceivable. Moreover, when the practices were analyzed based on the framework of evolving roles of teachers in the era of generative AI (Zhai, 2024), most participants seemed to be at the Adopter level, where active engagements and experimentations of applications of GAI tools in L2 writing instruction were apparent, though not systematic and consistent in various stages and aspects of teaching L2 writing. Participants still need to develop and advance to the Collaborator and Creator levels (see descriptions in the literature review).

These shortcomings can be attributed to the fact that GAI technologies were still relatively new at the time the study was conducted, and few empirical studies were available to illustrate how they could be creatively and effectively integrated into the different stages of L2 writing instruction. Consequently, the participants lacked the comprehensive knowledge and practical skills to design and facilitate GAI-enhanced activities for L2 writing instruction. This implies the need for relevant and sustainable language teacher education and training programs focusing on GAI-enhanced L2 writing instruction at the pre-service and in-service levels. This also calls for a continuing exploration of innovative practices in teaching L2 writing using GAI technologies (Meniado, 2025).

In terms of challenges encountered by the participants in integrating GAI tools into teaching L2 writing, they struggled to design GAI-supported activities to facilitate L2 writing instruction, given the varying levels of digital literacy, AI literacy, and English language proficiency among their learners. Some of them also struggled to motivate and engage their learners and themselves in using GAI tools to facilitate writing instruction due to negative perceptions and experiences with the tool. For example, Miki from Singapore and Mary Grace from the Philippines felt that their students were misusing the tool to their advantage. Moreover, Uyen from Vietnam feared that the tool would eventually erode her students' essential thinking skills. The challenges were more pedagogical and attitudinal. These are similar to the findings of Klein (2024), Kohnke and Zou (2025), and Moorhouse et al. (2024). Given that the participants were lecturers and assistant professors at well-funded government-supported universities, they had the means to access and use GAI tools. However, when it comes to integrating them effectively and efficiently into writing instruction, they seemed to have limited ideas/knowledge and practical skills in doing so. Again, this affirms the need for language teacher preparation and ongoing training in the use of GAI tools for effective and efficient L2 writing instruction.

The attitude-related challenges encountered by the participants can also be attributed to limited knowledge of GAI technologies, their affordances, and the associated issues. This same observation was also noted in the studies by Meniado (2023), Klein (2024), Kohnke and Zou (2025), and Moorhouse et al. (2024). Both participants and their learners had trust issues with the tools because they lacked comprehensive knowledge of how to design effective prompts (prompt engineering) and of GAI-supported pedagogies. Again, this implies the need for GAI literacy for both language teachers and learners. It was interesting to see a few participants who integrated AI literacy into their language/communication courses. However, to ensure a more systematic and sustainable integration of GAI literacy into writing instruction, relevant policies and implementation guidelines should be formulated and implemented at the regional, national, and institutional levels.

6 Conclusion

The findings of this study proved that GAI tools can support L2 writing instruction in Southeast Asian ELT contexts from pre-writing, while-writing, and post-writing stages, and that Southeast Asian language teachers can use them to generate model texts, facilitate brainstorming and outlining of ideas, drafting, proofreading, and editing of drafts, and provide immediate corrective feedback. While the participants in this study reported different practices for teaching L2 writing using GAI tools, their practices appeared limited in the variety and complexity of their integration designs and implementations. Based on Puentedura's (2020) SAMR integration model, the reported practices

were mostly at the Substitution and Augmentation levels, suggesting a need for L2 teachers to be trained to integrate GAI tools systematically and creatively at the Modification and Redefinition levels for more transformative GAI-enhanced L2 writing instruction. Based on Zhai's (2024) proposed framework for the evolving roles of teachers in the age of generative AI, the participants, with their GAI integration practices, appear to be at the Adopter level, meaning they are still in the exploring and experimenting stages of GAI integration. Many factors led to these findings, as reflected in the challenges shared by the participants. Some of these include a lack of professional/formal training in integrating GAI technologies into L2 writing instruction and limited AI literacy among both language teachers and learners.

The findings of this study reflect the situations or conditions of other language teachers in many ESL/EFL contexts, not only in Southeast Asia. To expand and enhance the practices of English language teachers in integrating GAI tools into L2 writing instruction in Southeast Asia, education leaders and policymakers should formulate and implement relevant macro-, meso-, and micro-level policies encouraging and incentivizing language classroom practitioners (L2 writing teachers) to engage, explore, experiment, and innovate practices in teaching L2 writing using GAI tools. They should allocate more funds for research grants/scholarships to design innovative GAI-enhanced writing pedagogies, establish research/innovation hubs for GAI-enhanced L2 writing instruction, and develop GAI-friendly curricula. Language teachers should explore additional ways GAI tools can be used to enhance scaffolding activities for producing various types of writing, following both conventional and modern approaches to teaching L2 writing (e.g., Process-Genre Approach, Teaching-Learning Cycle Approach, Rhetorical Genre Studies Approach). In addition, they should explore more innovative ways to integrate GAI tools at the Modification and Redefinition levels of the SAMR model, involving more human-AI collaboration techniques (Meniado, 2024), while upholding ethical practices. Lastly, language educators and teacher-trainers should empower English language teachers by transforming them from passive observers of GAI integration activities to active collaborators and creators of innovative practices in GAI-enhanced L2 writing instruction. This can begin at the language teacher education programs where pre-service language teachers are formally trained on how to design and implement innovative practices for GAI-enhanced L2 writing instruction through formal courses (e.g., Teaching and Assessing L2 Writing using GAI), followed by relevant language teacher professional development activities at the in-service level (e.g., coaching or mentoring, collaborative action research, and industry partnership).

While this study offers new insights into current GAI-integration practices for teaching L2 writing in Southeast Asia, along with implications for language teacher education and professional development, it has methodological limitations that affect the generalizability of its findings. It employed a qualitative research design with a limited number of participants. Though their narratives are rich sources of data, they may be insufficient to comprehensively describe and explain the problem under investigation. Therefore, future studies along this line of inquiry may consider a larger group of participants from each Southeast Asian country or expand the scope to cover other geographical regions beyond Southeast Asia. Future studies may also consider employing a mixed-methods research design that combines quantitative and qualitative data gathered through surveys, interviews, classroom observations, and lesson plan analyses to yield more reliable findings. Building on the current study, future studies may also explore innovative strategies for scaffolding AI-supported writing tasks, effective classroom monitoring mechanisms to prevent GAI misuse, or cross-country comparisons of GAI-in-L2-Writing instructional practices within the ASEAN region. This study revealed that practices of integrating GAI technologies to teach L2 writing are still limited, but with continuous exploration and inquiry from ELT professionals and communities and support from various language education stakeholders, these practices can be enhanced and expanded, leading to the development of more confident and proficient L2 writers in the ASEAN region and beyond.

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