EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL OF CHARACTER.AI APPLICATION FOR SELF-REGULATED LEARNING (SRL) IN DEVELOPING EFL STUDENTS' CREATIVE WRITING SKILL

DEBBY APRILIA
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2025

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A THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of *Sarjana Pendidikan* in English Education

By:

DEBBY APRILIA
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ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
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K.H. ABDURRAHMAN WAHID PEKALONGAN
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di
PEKALONGAN

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Judul   : **"EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL OF CHARACTER.AI APPLICATION FOR SELF-REGULATED LEARNING (SRL) IN DEVELOPING EFL STUDENTS' CREATIVE WRITING SKILL"**

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Wassalamu'alaikum Wr.Wb.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is with utmost gratitude that I express my sincere thanks to the Almighty for bestowing upon me the gift of good health throughout this endeavor and for granting me the invaluable opportunity to conclude my academic journey through the completion of this thesis. I also wish to extend my profound appreciation to all the individuals whose unwavering support, guidance, and companionship have been a constant source of strength and inspiration. Their contributions have been vital in the successful completion of this academic achievement.

1. Firstly, gratitude is extended to my mother and stepfather, who, in my view, embody the role of a father figure, for their unwavering support, both emotional and practical, throughout the entirety of my academic journey.

2. Secondly, I must acknowledge my own contribution to this endeavor, for I have persevered through the demanding journey of completing this thesis, demonstrating resilience and determination every step of the way.

3. Thirdly, sincere appreciation is directed towards Mr. Ahmad Burhanuddin, M.A., my supervisor, whose direction and guidance have been instrumental in the completion of this thesis.

4. Gratitude is extended to friends for their unwavering support, invaluable advice, and vital information, particularly from the esteemed 'Cahaya Maju Group', close friends from the same department, and close friends from the KKN community.

5. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my *husbu*, Nanami Kento, Suguru Geto, and others, for their unwavering support and encouragement throughout the challenging process of completing this thesis. Their presence has been a source of strength and inspiration.

MOTTO
"Later's better than never"
- **Lana Del Rey**

ABSTRAK

Penerapan kecerdasan buatan (AI) dalam pendidikan membuka peluang baru dalam pengembangan pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing (EFL). Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi pengalaman mahasiswa dalam menggunakan Character.ai, sebuah aplikasi percakapan berbasis AI, dalam mengembangkan keterampilan menulis kreatif. Menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus dan analisis tematik, serta didukung oleh teori Self-Regulated Learning dari Zimmerman dan model proses menulis Flower & Hayes, penelitian ini melibatkan tiga mahasiswa EFL berusia 18–25 tahun yang telah menggunakan Character.ai selama minimal enam bulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa aplikasi ini membantu mahasiswa dalam menghasilkan ide, mengembangkan alur cerita, memperluas kosa kata, serta meningkatkan motivasi dan kepercayaan diri dalam menulis. Namun, ditemukan pula tantangan seperti ketergantungan terhadap AI, gangguan fokus, dan kesenjangan konteks budaya. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan tentang potensi dan keterbatasan penggunaan AI dalam pengajaran menulis kreatif serta rekomendasi untuk penggunaannya secara reflektif dan terarah.

***Kata kunci:** Character.ai, menulis kreatif, pembelajaran mandiri, mahasiswa EFL, AI dalam Pendidikan.*

ABSTRACT

The application of artificial intelligence (AI) in education has created new opportunities for developing English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction. This study explores EFL students' experiences in using Character.ai, an AI-based conversational tool, to improve their creative writing skills. Using case study and thematic analysis, and grounded in Zimmerman's Self-Regulated Learning theory and Flower & Hayes' writing process model, this study involved three EFL students aged 18–25 with at least six months of experience using the platform. The findings indicate that Character.ai supports idea generation, narrative development, vocabulary enrichment, and boosts students' motivation and confidence in writing. However, challenges such as overreliance on AI, distraction, and cultural-context mismatch also emerged. This research provides insights into the potential and limitations of AI in creative writing instruction and offers recommendations for its reflective and strategic use in EFL contexts.

Keywords: *Character.ai, creative writing, self-regulated learning, EFL students, AI in education.*

PREFACE

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. All praise is due to Allah SWT, by whose grace and guidance this thesis entitled **"Exploring the Potential of Character.ai Application for Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) in Developing EFL Students' Creative Writing Skill"** could be completed. This thesis is submitted as a partial requirement for obtaining the degree of Bachelor of Education in the English Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education. The writer fully realizes that the completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the support, guidance, and prayers from many parties. Therefore, the writer would like to express sincere gratitude to:

1. Prof. Dr. H. Zaenal Mustakim, M.Ag., Rector of UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan , for the support and academic facilities provided during the writer's study.
2. Dr. Prof. Dr. H. Muhlisin, M.Ag., Dean of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, for the encouragement and support toward students in completing their final projects.
3. The head of the English Education Department and Teachers' Training Faculty of UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan and the thesis advisor, Ahmad Burhanuddin, M.A, who have patiently guided and provided valuable input throughout the writing process.
4. All of the lectures of the English Education Departement in UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid.

The writer is fully aware that this thesis is far from perfect. Hopefully, this thesis can offer useful insights, especially for the writer and generally for readers and educators in the field of English language learning.

Pekalongan, 03 Juni 2025

The writer

Debby Aprilia
2521059

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The 21st century is characterized as an era of technological development. In this era, technological developments have had a significant impact on various aspects of education, including English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. One of the main challenges in learning EFL is developing students' ability to write creatively. This skill requires a combination of language skills, critical thinking and imagination that is often difficult to achieve in traditional learning. To meet this challenge, it is necessary to implement alternative learning that is both interesting and modern, such as Character.ai.

Character.ai was founded by Noam Shazeer and Daniel de Freitas, it is a computer program designed to imitate human conversation via text messages with a wide selection of fictional characters ranging from celebrities to anime characters to chat with. The application aims to allow users interact with characters that are designed to respond naturally in text-based conversations for develop their writing skill, with a particular focus on creative writing. It achieves this through the exploration of ideas, dialogue, and narrative (Shazeer & de Freitas, 2022).

In the early process before determining the focus of the research, the researcher encountered the use of Character.ai indirectly through peer observation. The researcher noticed several fellow students actively using Character.ai for text-based roleplay activities, where they engaged in building stories and characters using English. Through informal discussions, these students expressed that the app helped them overcome writer's block and also provided new language style references.

Additionally, the researcher found similar phenomena on social media, especially TikTok, where many users shared their experiences using Character.ai to practice writing or improve their English proficiency. Several comments mentioned that they felt more confident in writing because they regularly interacted with AI characters. These initial findings indicate the potential use of text-based AI applications in supporting creative writing skills, particularly in the EFL learning context.

This application of Character.ai to EFL learning offers a unique opportunity to overcome the limitations of traditional learning methods. This is in contrast to traditional methods, which often rely on rigid structures and standardized materials. This app enables students to participate in meaningful, personalized and creative interactions that are both engaging and dynamic. These interactions not only develop students' writing proficiency but also encourage critical thinking and imaginative thinking when crafting original ideas. Moreover, the non-judgmental nature of AI-based interactions allows students to experiment with language and ideas without fear of making mistakes, thereby increasing their confidence and motivation to write.

The application is relevant if it is associated with the theory of Self-Regulated Learning developed by Barry J. Zimmerman. According to (Zimmerman, 1989), self-regulated learning is an idea, attitude, and activities designed to help students to achieve their goals. This theory stated that self-awareness, goal setting, self-monitoring, targeted tactics, and self-evaluation are important regulators. In the context of creative writing, students using Character.AI can design their storylines, monitor the quality of their interactions with the chatbot, and reflect on how ideas generated through dialogue with the AI can enrich their writing. The approach and application usage not only facilitate students' skills in English

learning, but also encourage students' independence and responsibility in the process of learning language.

This application is considered to have the potential for learning creative writing skill through self-regulated learning. However, there is limited research on their potential in developing EFL students' creative writing skill. Research conducted by (Apriani et al., 2024; Pratama & Hastuti, 2024; Supeno et al., 2024; Waziana et al., 2024; Woo & Guo, 2023) show some significant similarities in the context of using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to develop writing skills, especially among EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students.

This research gap provides an opportunity for the author to further explore how Character.ai application can be used effectively in an educational context. Given its ability to stimulate realistic conversations and provide immediate feedback, Character.ai can provide a dynamic and interactive platform for EFL students to practice in a way that is unusual or does not involve traditional methods. With the involvement of this app, it is expected to develop students' potential in language skills, especially in creative writing skills.

Therefore, this research aims to explore the potential of Character.ai in developing EFL students' creative writing skills as well as its challenges through its users' perceptions. It aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of practical applications and limitations of the application. As such, this research will make a valuable contribution to the understanding of the role of AI in language education and provide practical recommendations for educators who wish to use the technology to develop EFL learning outcomes.

1.2 Formulation of the Problems

Based on the background described above, the following problem formulations there are:

1. How does the Character.ai application for self-regulated learning help EFL students in developing their creative writing skill?

2. What are the challenges that need to be considered in implementing this application for self-regulated learning in developing EFL students' creative writing skill?

1.3 Aims of the Study

1. To explore the potential of Character.ai for self-regulated learning in developing EFL students' creative writing skill.
2. To explore the challenges that need to be considered in implementing this application for self-regulated learning in developing EFL students' creative writing skill.

1.4 Operational Definitions

1. Self-regulated learning	:	Self-regulated learning is an idea, attitude, and activities designed to help students to achieve their goals (Zimmerman, 1989).
2. Character.ai	:	Character.ai is a computer program designed to imitate human conversation via text messages with a wide selection of fictional characters ranging from world celebrities to anime characters to chat with (Shazeer & de Freitas, 2022).
3. Creative writing	:	Creative writing is the action of writing creatively, informed by the human imagination and the creative and critical understanding of the creative writer, influenced by personal history and by culture, guided by forms and types of individual knowledge that so often do not stay within the disciplinary boundaries of colleges or universities or schools as they have been defined in the late modern period. There are different

types of creative writing, such as poetry, short stories, novels, and screenplays (Harper, 2015).

4. Writing skill   :   Writing is the ability to combine ideas and communicate them in writing. It involves language structures, critical thinking, and adapting to social and cultural contexts (Hyland, 2004).

5. EFL students   :   EFL students are people who learn English in countries where it is not the main language. Learning objectives usually focus on communication for work, education, or personal reasons (Harmer, 2007).

1.5 Significances of the Research

The significance of this research is divided into several points:

1. Theoretical significance   :   This study contributes to the theory of AI in education by using Zimmerman's theory of self-regulated learning with Character.ai. This research explains how Character.ai can help learners develop their creative writing skill.

2. Empirical significance   :   This study explore how Character.ai helps EFL learners in creative writting better while also helping them learn on their own. This evidence is important for understanding how AI technology affects education.

3. Practical significance   :   The findings help educators add Character.ai to language teaching. Educators can use this knowledge

to develop strategies that engage students while managing the risks of over-reliance on technology or unequal access.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

As a basis for compiling the research, this chapter consists of several theories related to the topic.

2.1.1 Self-Regulated Learning Theory

Zimmerman (1989) defines self-regulated learning as a process where learners take control of their learning. In order to be considered self-regulated, student learning must involve the use of prescribed strategies to achieve academic goals based on perceptions of self-efficacy. This definition assumes the importance of three elements: students' self-regulated learning strategies, perceptions of self-efficacy towards performance skills, and commitment to academic goals. Self-regulated learning strategies are defined as actions and processes directed towards acquiring information or skills that involve perceptions of agency, purpose and instrumentality by the learner. These strategies involve methods such as organizing and transforming information, self-consequences, searching for information, and practicing or using memory aids.

Zumbrunn (2011) defines Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) as a process in which students assume responsibility for their own learning by establishing objectives, evaluating their progress, and contemplating the outcomes. They underscore the significance of SRL as a crucial predictor of motivation andacademic accomplishment. However, many students do not inherently cultivate these competencies without expert guidance.

Literature highlights several processes that can be involved in effective self-regulated learning (Kitsantas & Dabbagh, 2011; Zimmerman, 2008; Zumbrunn, 2011). SRL has three phases: forethought (setting goals and planning strategies), performance (monitoring learning and

implementing strategies), and self-reflection (evaluating outcomes and adapting for improvement).

1) Forethought phase

The forethought phase precedes learning and involves strategic preparation. During this stage, learners engage in task analysis, setting specific goals (e.g., "I will summarize this chapter in my own words") and selecting appropriate strategies, such as outlining or self-quizzing (Zimmerman, 2002). Simultaneously, they draw upon self-motivational beliefs, including self-efficacy (confidence in their ability to succeed) and intrinsic interest, which fuel persistence (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2013). For instance, a student with high self-efficacy might approach a challenging math problem with greater determination, believing in their capacity to master it. Without this phase, learning efforts risk becoming disorganized or half-hearted.

2) Performance phase

The performance phase centers on real-time execution and monitoring. Learners employ self-control strategies like focused attention (e.g., minimizing distractions) and self-instruction (guiding themselves through steps verbally or mentally) to maintain progress (Zimmerman, 2000). Concurrently, they practice self-observation, tracking their comprehension through methods like journaling or error logs. This metacognitive awareness allows them to adjust tactics mid-task—for example, switching from passive rereading to active recall if they realize they retain little information. Research underscores that such monitoring is pivotal for deep learning (Winne & Hadwin, 1998, as cited in Zimmerman, 2002).

3) Self-reflection phase

After completing a task, learners enter the self-reflection phase, where they evaluate outcomes and derive lessons. Self-judgment involves comparing results to initial goals (e.g., "Did my quiz score meet expectations?") and attributing causes to effort, strategy, or external factors (Weiner, 1985). These attributions trigger self-reactions, ranging from satisfaction to frustration, which shape future behavior. Adaptive learners, for instance, might revise their study techniques after poor performance, while defensive learners might avoid similar tasks altogether (Zimmerman, 2002). This phase closes the loop, as insights feed back into the forethought phase for subsequent tasks, creating a cycle of continuous improvement.

They are sustained cyclically by a self-regulatory feedback loop, with self-reflection processes influencing forethought as a learner attempts to master a goal (Zimmerman, 2008). Goals can be short-term and long-term which can be linked to each other to enhance students' learning (Kitsantas & Dabbagh, 2011). For instance, self-regulated learners initiate the process by establishing strategic goals, subsequently selecting appropriate task strategies to facilitate their achievement.

Furthermore, they systematically self-monitor and evaluate their progress towards achieving these goals. Depending on the self-evaluation judgment, students will then revise or continue to use previous task strategies to facilitate the desired outcome. By engaging in this cyclical phase of self-regulation, students become more interested in the task and feel confident in their ability to achieve those goals successfully (Zimmerman, 2008).

In the context of EFL, this theory can be used to explain how learners use technology like Character.ai to set

goals for developing creative writing skills, monitor their language output, and evaluate their progress. For example, a student might use Character.ai to practice writing, review the AI's corrections, and adjust their writing strategies.

2.1.2 Writing in EFL Contexts

Writing is a crucial skill in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, serving as both a productive and cognitive activity. It enables learners to communicate effectively, think critically, and engage in academic and professional discourses. Hyland (2004) defines writing is the ability to combine ideas and communicate them in writing. It involves language structures, critical thinking, and adapting to social and cultural contexts. However, writing in a second language involves complex processes and presents unique challenges that require theoretical and pedagogical considerations. The following section details the challenges of writing in an EFL context:

1) Linguistic Factors

It is evident that EFL learners frequently encounter challenges related to their vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, and the use of idiomatic expressions. These difficulties have a significant impact on their capacity to produce coherent and fluent texts. Flower & Hayes (1981) views writing as a recursive process involving three key stages: planning, translating, and reviewing. In the context of EFL (English as a Foreign Language), the progression through these stages is influenced by the linguistic proficiency and cognitive load of the students. The existence of limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge has been shown to constrain the ability to articulate ideas, highlighting the need for strategies that reduce cognitive demands while supporting language acquisition.

2) Cultural and Rhetorical Differences

The existence of differences in rhetorical conventions between the students' native language and English has been shown to have the potential to create challenges. For example, learners may encounter difficulties with English's linear structure in comparison to the more circular patterns commonly found in other languages (Subandrijo, S. & Susilo, 2007; Van Aertselaer, 2006).

3) Affective Factors

Affective factors such as writing anxiety, a lack of confidence, and low motivation, have the capacity to hinder learners' performance. It is therefore essential that these factors are addressed through the implementation of supportive practices, with a view to fostering a positive writing experience.

The manifestation of writing anxiety can take various forms, including somatic anxiety (with physical symptoms), cognitive anxiety (concerns about performance), and avoidance behavior (complete avoidance of writing tasks). A recent study revealed that 66% of students exhibited avoidance behavior, suggesting a significant tendency to avoid writing activities due to fear or a lack of confidence (Nawawi et al., 2024; Sulfiana et al., 2022).

2.1.3 Writing Creatively in EFL Context

According Harper (2015) creative writing is the action of writing creatively, informed by the human imagination and the creative and critical understanding of the creative writer, influenced by personal history and by culture, guided by forms and types of individual knowledge that so often do not stay within the disciplinary boundaries of colleges or universities or schools as they have been defined in the late modern period. There are different types of creative writing, such as poetry, short stories, novels, and screenplays. Creative writing, on the other hand, provides opportunities for learners to explore

language freely and use it in meaningful ways, according to Harmer (2004).

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), creative writing encompasses several essential elements that enhance students' language skills and foster creativity. These elements are crucial for facilitating effective communication and self-expression among EFL learners. The following is based on (Browne & King, 2010; Kiteley, 2005):

a) Point of View

Point of view in creative writing is important because it helps students understand different narrative perspectives, such as first, second, and third person. Students are encouraged to experiment with how different points of view can affect the way the story is told and how readers connect with the characters (Kiteley, 2005). Browne and King (2010) added that the emphasis on consistency of point of view in the narrative is important. Students are taught how to choose the right point of view for their story and how to maintain consistency in the use of that point of view.

b) Narrative Structure

Kiteley (2005) explained that encouraging students to explore different forms and storylines, including linear and non-linear structures. This helps students create dynamic and engaging narratives and understand how structure can affect rhythm and tension in stories.

c) Character Development

Kiteley's pedagogical approach, as outlined in his book, emphasizes the development of profound and intricate characters. To that end, writers must delve into their characters' backgrounds, motivations, and internal conflicts, thereby endowing them more alive and authenticity.

d) Setting

The setting is a crucial element in literary works, as it provides a backdrop for the action and serves as a foundation for the development of the plot. In order to create a setting that fulfills its role as more than a mere backdrop, writers must employ effective description, including elements such as time, place, and atmosphere. This setting serves a crucial function, providing a foundation for the thematic elements and character development within the narrative (Kiteley, 2005).

e) Dialogue

In creative writing, writers are required to create dialog that is natural and relevant to the characters as much as possible (Kiteley, 2005). According to Browne and King (2010), effective dialog is dialog that is not stiff or natural. Both books detail techniques for creating a unique voice for each character, as well as how to use dialog to express emotion and conflict.

f) Language Style

The use of language style and rhythm in creative writing is necessary to enhance the appeal and beauty of writing. It allows students to experiment with word choice, sentences, and writing style (Kiteley, 2005). It can also help students increase their vocabulary.

g) Theme

The approach to integrating the theme in the story is done in a subtle way and does not seem forced. In this process, students are directed to insert themes through various narrative elements, such as character actions, dialog, and character development itself. In this way, the theme can emerge naturally in the

storyline, giving more depth and meaning to the overall narrative (Kiteley, 2005).

h) Exposition

Exposition is a technique to convey background information without overwhelming the reader. In this case, writers are given guidelines to subtly insert exposition through narrative elements such as dialog, action, and description. With this approach, important information can be conveyed effectively without disrupting the flow of the story (Browne & King, 2010).

i) Interior Monologue

Interior monologues are the utilization of a character's thoughts and feelings that serve to give depth to the narrative (Browne & King, 2010). This teaches students the technique of writing effective interior monologues, so that readers can better understand the motivations and internal conflicts faced by the characters.

j) Show vs. Tell

Show vs. tell emphasizes the importance of showing action and emotion rather than simply telling. In their book, Browne and King (2010) teach students to use descriptions and actions to illustrate feelings and situations, so that readers can experience the characters directly.

k) Tight Prose

To avoid wordy writing and improve the clarity and power of writing, students can eliminate unnecessary words or sentences. Every word and sentence should have a clear purpose and contribution to the overall text (Browne & King, 2010).

l) Pacing

Pacing is the organization of the story's pace, which is essential to maintain the reader's interest. In

creative writing, strategies for managing pacing are necessary, so that the storyline remains interesting and can keep the reader engaged throughout the narrative .

It is imperative to acknowledge that, in addition to the elements of creative writing, there are challenges that must be given due consideration. Hyland (2004) has described the common challenges faced by EFL learners, which often include limited vocabulary, grammatical errors, and a lack of exposure to authentic texts. Maley (2012) further adds that these issues can be attributed to a lack of motivation and students' difficulties in generating creative ideas during the learning process.

Incorporating these elements and challenges into creative writing exercises can significantly enhance EFL students' language proficiency while fostering a love for storytelling. By encouraging self-expression through creative writing, educators can create a dynamic learning environment that nurtures both linguistic skills and personal growth.

2.1.4 AI in Language Learning

AI in language learning involves the use of artificial intelligence technology to enhance the language learning process, including applications such as chatbots, adaptive learning systems, and automatic translation tools designed to help students learn a new language in a more interactive and personalized way. (Cardona et al., 2024) defines AI (Artificial Intelligence) as 'association-based automation,' which includes the ability of computers to automate thought processes based on patterns detected in data. In this context, AI plays an important role by providing tools and applications that can enhance students' learning experience, enable personalization of learning, provide quick and constructive feedback, and increase student engagement through dynamic interactions (Patty, 2024; Rusmiyanto et al., 2023).

One such application that utilizes artificial intelligence (AI) in the context of language learning is Character.ai. This

application enables users to engage with virtual characters that possess the capacity to articulate themselves verbally and communicate in multiple languages. Utilizing natural language processing technology, Character.ai is capable of comprehending and reacting to user inquiries and statements in a realistic and contextualized manner. Users can select characters aligned with their interests, thereby enhancing the personalized and engaging nature of the learning experience.

In the context of creative writing, Character.ai can serve as a very useful tool. For example, students who wish to develop their creative writing skills can collaborate with virtual characters to create stories, dialogues, or scenarios. This interaction has been shown to assist students in the development of new ideas and to provide immediate feedback on narrative structure and character development. Consequently, students can learn about effective writing techniques while practicing their target language.

The utilization of AI-based chatbots has been demonstrated to be efficacious in facilitating the enhancement of writing skills among EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students (Apriani et al., 2024) and in the development of ideas and writing structure (Woo & Guo, 2023). Furthermore, AI has been demonstrated to provide constructive feedback on students' writing, aiding in the identification and correction of errors, thereby enhancing their writing proficiency (Escalante et al., 2023). With Character.ai, students can engage in targeted language practice through interaction with characters that offer immediate feedback, thereby enhancing their communication abilities.

However, there are also challenges that need to be considered when using AI such as Character.ai in the context of developing the creative writing skills of English as a foreign language (EFL) students. This is in line with researchs and books conducted by (Amal et al., 2024; Carr, 2010; Dillard, 2009; Hwang & Chang, 2023; Tharp, 2009; Yang & Evans,

2019; Yazid & Dzulfikri, 2024). Here are some of the challenges that can be identified:

a) The Importance of Originality and Authenticity

It has been observed that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students may encounter challenges in generating original ideas when utilizing Character.ai. The app provides character and dialogue suggestions, but there is a risk that students will rely excessively on the results generated by the AI, thereby diminishing the distinctiveness of their own voices. Hwang & Chang (2023) emphasize the importance of maintaining originality in writing, and the use of AI should be done carefully so as not to sacrifice individual creativity.

b) The Issue of Over-reliance

Over-reliance on character.ai can hinder the development of students' writing skills. Yang & Evans (2019) suggest that while AI can provide quick and helpful feedback in character development, students need to learn to evaluate and revise their writing independently. If students rely too much on AI to generate characters and dialogue, they may miss opportunities to develop more in-depth writing skills. Tharp (2009) added that habit and discipline are significant in creating a creative process. The overreliance on artificial intelligence has the potential to hinder the optimal development of creativity.

c) The Limitations in Understanding Cultural Context

Character.ai may not fully comprehend the cultural nuances that are important in creative writing. Yazid & Dzulfikri (2024) note that EFL students need to develop a deeper understanding of cultural context to produce relevant and meaningful writing. AI, including Character.ai, may not be able to capture the cultural complexities that are required to create authentic characters and appropriate dialogue. In his book, Carr

(2010) discusses how technology can affect the way we think and understand information. The limitations of artificial intelligence in understanding context can lead to superficial thinking.

d) The Role of the Teacher in the Learning Process

Although Character.ai can be considered a useful tool, the role of the teacher remains important in the guidance of students. As Amal et al. (2024) emphasized, human interaction and feedback from teachers can assist students in overcoming the challenges encountered in creative writing. Teachers can facilitate students' comprehension of how to utilize AI effectively without compromising their own voice and writing style.

e) The Development of Critical Skills

Students need to be trained to think critically and creatively when using Character.ai. Research shows that the integration of AI in learning should be accompanied by the development of analytical skills so that students can utilise the technology wisely. Students should be taught to evaluate the results provided by AI and integrate them with their own ideas, so that they do not just become passive consumers of technology.

f) The Lack of Emotional Nuance

Artificial intelligence is often unable to capture complex emotional nuances in writing, such as character portrayals or settings. This can reduce the depth and authenticity of the writing. Dillard (2009) explores the creative process and the importance of authenticity in writing and emphasizes that the depth and emotionality of the human writing experience is difficult for AI to replicate.

Despite the challenges associated with the integration of AI in educational settings, including the reliance on technological infrastructure (Yang & Evans, 2019), the

potential for AI to enhance language learning is substantial (Haristiani, 2019). Consequently, the integration of AI in language learning, exemplified by applications such as Character.ai, enhances teaching efficacy and offers a more engaging and adaptive learning experience for students, particularly in the context of creative writing. Utilizing AI allows students to explore the world of writing in a more innovative and enjoyable manner, which can subsequently increase their motivation and skills in language.

2.2 Previous Study

There are several studies that have explored the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in English language education. These studies have demonstrated the potential of AI to enhance students' creativity, engagement, and language skills in creative writing.

The study conducted by Woo & Guo (2023) entitled "Exploring an AI-supported approach to creative writing: effects on secondary school students' creativity" measured the effects of this approach on secondary school students' creativity in narrative story writing. The findings indicated that the AI-supported approach significantly contributed to students' creative writing, particularly enhancing the elaboration aspect of creativity. However, the impact varied among students, suggesting that the AI tool influenced more skilled and less skilled writers differently.

Another research by Supeno et al. (2024) entitled "Integrated artificial intelligence and critical thinking in promoting students' writing skills" investigated the effectiveness of integrating AI and creative thinking in promoting students' writing skills, particularly in descriptive text. Their findings indicated a significant positive effect of AI-supported teaching media on students' writing performance, suggesting that AI can be a valuable tool in enhancing language learning outcomes.

Similarly, research by Pratama & Hastuti (2024) entitled "The use of artificial intelligence to improve EFL students' writing skill" showed that using AI platforms like Gencraft and ChatGPT can be effective in improving EFL students' writing skills in descriptive text

composition. There is a significant increase in writing skills after using AI platforms. Students demonstrated positive attitudes towards using AI for writing.

Then, research by Apriani et al. (2024) entitled "Impact of AI-powered chatbots on EFL students' writing skills, self-efficacy, and self-regulation: A mixed-methods study" highlighted the need for balanced integration of AI tools to support, rather than replace, critical and creative thinking in the writing process. The study demonstrates the positive impact of AI-powered ChatBot-based writing instruction on EFL writing proficiency, self-efficacy, and self-regulation.

Last, research by Waziana et al. (2024) entitled "Students ' perceptions of the impact of ai chatbots on vocabulary and grammar in EFL writing" revealed that the majority of students reported improvement in vocabulary range, syntactic variety, and overall writing quality through the use of AI chatbots, and they attributed this to the helpfulness, ease of use, and efficiency of these tools. The most frequently used chatbots were ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Gemini, which were seen as beneficial for brainstorming, providing grammar suggestions, and access to information. They also found that AI chatbots had a positive impact on grammar, leading to improvements in grammatical accuracy, reduced repetition, and enhanced clarity and coherence.
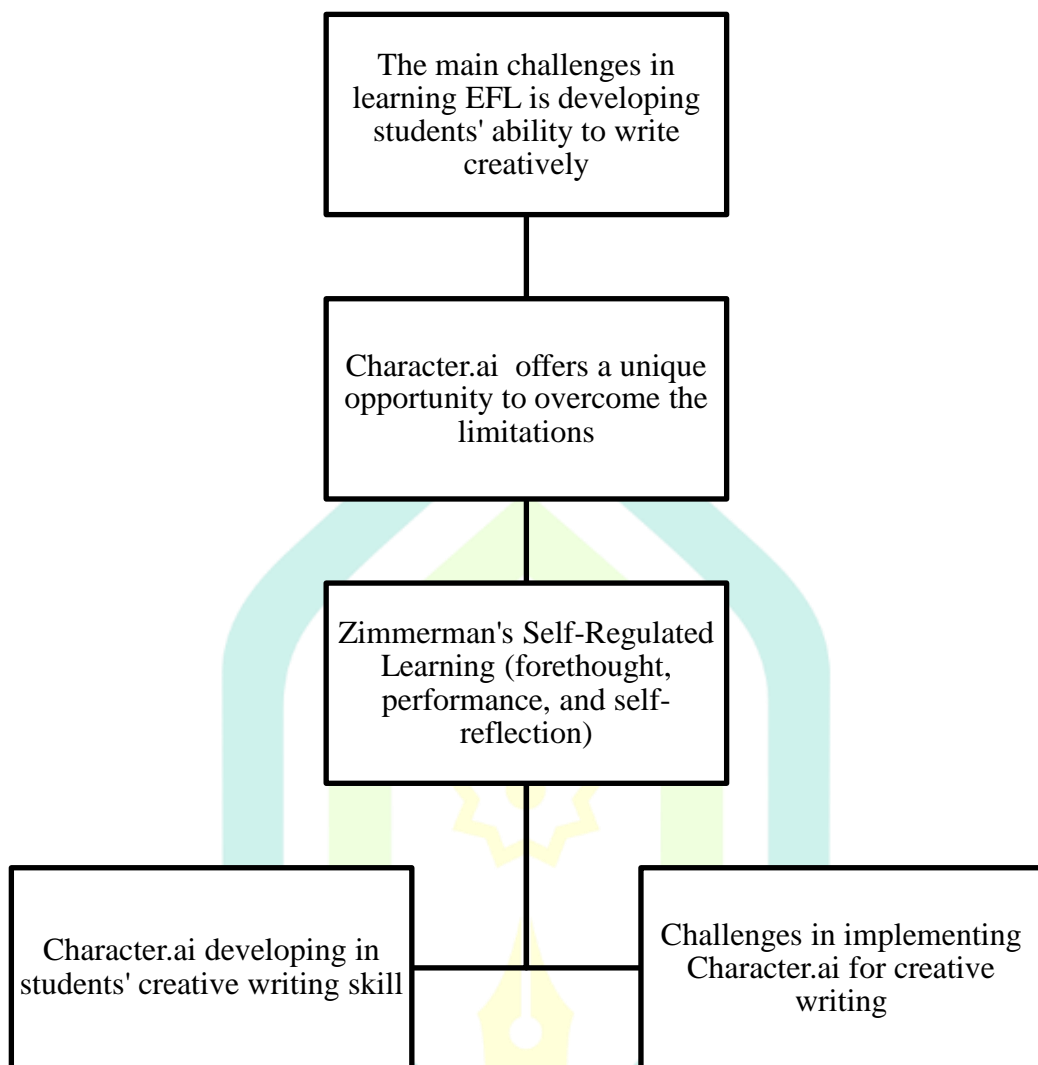
Those previous studies are different from this research; the first study focuses on the impact of an AI-supported approach on students' creativity in writing narratives. The second focuses on integration of AI and critical thinking to improve students' writing skills, particularly in descriptive text. Third, the study focuses on the use of AI platforms such as Gencraft and ChatGPT to improve EFL students' writing skills in descriptive text composition. Fourth, the study explores the impact of AI ChatBot-based instruction on EFL writing skills, as well as on students' self-efficacy and self-regulation by emphasizing the importance of a balanced integration of AI tools to support critical and creative thinking in the writing process. Last, the study focuses on students' perceptions of the impact of AI chatbots on vocabulary and grammar in EFL writing. Meanwhile, this study

focuses on exploring the potential of Character.ai in developing students' creative writing skills and the challenges that need to be considered in implementing this app to develop EFL students' creative writing skills.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

This research discusses the process of developing creative writing skills through a tool in the form of the Character.ai application. Creative writing skills are often a challenge for many individuals, both students and professional writers, who often have difficulty in expressing their ideas effectively and compellingly. Therefore, it is important to find methods that can help improve this ability. In the context of creative writing, the use of tools such as Character.ai can provide an interactive experience that supports the learning process, where virtual characters serve as discussion partners, provide feedback, and help stimulate students' creativity and imagination.

In this intervention, participants will use Character.ai to practice writing by communicating with characters who have different backgrounds and personalities, hopefully increasing their imagination and writing ability. Data was collected through interviews with participants involved in the intervention as well as their self-reflection after using Character.ai. The interviews aimed to explore the participants' experiences, while the self-reflections provided insights into the changes they felt in their writing skills. The data collected was analyzed using a qualitative approach, where findings from the interviews and self-reflections were organized to identify patterns and emerging themes, with the aim of understanding the impact of the intervention on participants' creative writing skills.

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┌─────────────────────────┐
│  The main challenges in  │
│ learning EFL is developing│
│  students' ability to write│
│        creatively        │
└─────────────────────────┘
             │
┌─────────────────────────┐
│  Character.ai  offers a unique│
│ opportunity to overcome the│
│        limitations       │
└─────────────────────────┘
             │
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Zimmerman's Self-Regulated│
│  Learning (forethought,  │
│  performance, and self-  │
│        reflection)       │
└─────────────────────────┘
             │
┌──────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Character.ai developing in│ │ Challenges in implementing│
│ students' creative writing skill│ │ Character.ai for creative│
│                      │   │        writing       │
└──────────────────────┘   └──────────────────────┘
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Picture 1 Conceptual Framework of Research

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

This study aimed to explore how the Character.ai application supports EFL students' self-regulated learning (SRL) in developing their creative writing skills, and what challenges may arise in the process. By using a qualitative case study approach, this research collected data from three participants through interviews and reflection journals designed based on Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle. The analysis was conducted using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis framework.

The findings showed that Character.ai facilitates various phases of SRL. In the forethought phase, students used the app to set goals, find inspiration, and plan their writing strategies. In the performance phase, Character.ai helped students practice grammar, expand vocabulary, and maintain motivation during writing. Finally, in the self-reflection phase, students evaluated their progress, recognized their improvements, and adapted strategies for future tasks. These results reflect the synergy between Kolb's experiential learning stages and Zimmerman's SRL model.

However, the study also identified several challenges, such as cultural and emotional misalignment in AI responses, overreliance on the app that may hinder originality, and time management issues due to the immersive nature of roleplay. Pedagogical and technical concerns were also noted, particularly regarding classroom integration and content control.

In conclusion, while Character.ai shows great potential as a tool for enhancing SRL in creative writing, its implementation requires reflective awareness, strategic usage, and teacher support to ensure meaningful learning outcomes.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, several recommendations are proposed:

1. For Students

    It is recommended that students use Character.ai wisely, while maintaining originality and critical thinking. They are encouraged to set time limits and define clear personal strategies when using AI as part of their self-regulated learning process.

2. For Educators

    Character.ai and similar AI tools can be used as alternative media to support writing activities, but their use should be reviewed and adapted according to the curriculum and learners' characteristics. Teachers should provide explicit guidance to prevent students from becoming overly dependent on AI.

3. For Future Researchers

    Future studies can expand on this research by involving more participants or focusing on specific types of creative writing. It is also recommended to explore the affective or ethical aspects of AI use in language learning more deeply.
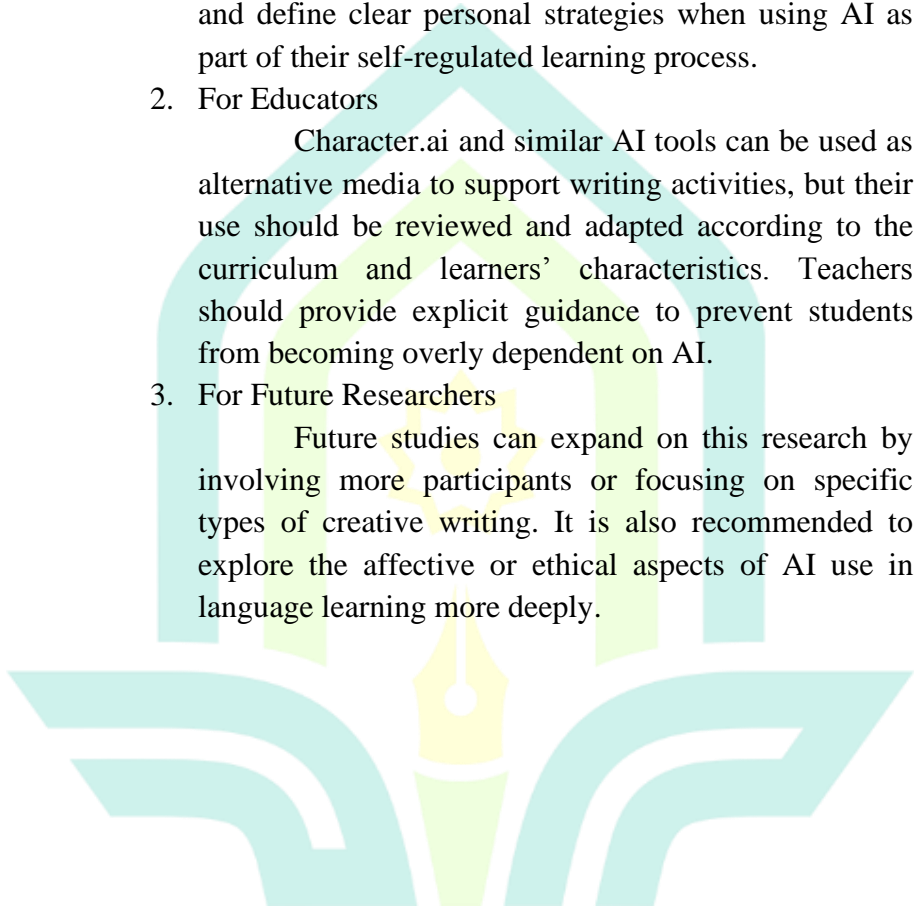
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