

ChatGPT: An Enabling Model for English Creative Writing in the Eleventh Grade of Phuentsholing Rigsar Higher Secondary School

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Abstract

In today's digital era, education has undergone a significant transformation, particularly in English learning, where creativity plays a crucial role. However, Bhutan's eleventh-grade curriculum primarily emphasizes grammar, comprehension, and writing skills, with minimal focus on creative expression. Similarly, at Phuentsholing Rigsar Higher Secondary School (PRHSS), creative writing is primarily confined to classroom assessments, which may inadvertently prioritise performance over student wellbeing by fostering stress and limiting intrinsic motivation. Moreover, while the school is equipped with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) facilities, it has yet to explore the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to enhance creative writing. Thus, this action research explores the integration of ChatGPT, a generative AI tool, as a model to guide creative writing among 37 eleventh-grade students (18 females and 19 males) of varying English proficiency, selected through convenience sampling. A quantitative approach was employed, using pre- and post-intervention creative writing assessments. The intervention was grounded in Albert Bandura's Observational Learning and the Modeling Process of attention, Retention, Reproduction, and Motivation (ARRM). Students were engaged in AI-assisted feedback, prompt-based writing, and collaborative poetry exercises over the study period, and the findings revealed a statistically significant improvement in writing proficiency, with mean scores increasing from 4.29 to 8.81 ($p < .001$). This suggests that ChatGPT can effectively enhance creative expression in writing. However, progress varied among individuals, indicating the need for differentiated support. Moreover, concerns regarding overreliance on AI and ethical use remained. Therefore, teacher intervention for balanced AI integration and professional development for educators is recommended to ensure effective implementation.

Key Words: ChatGPT, creative writing, generative AI, modelling process, feedback.

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's technology-driven world, the landscape of teaching and learning has evolved rapidly, especially in English education, where creativity and self-expression play a vital role. Creativity is increasingly recognized as central to language learning, not just as a skill but as a mode of communication that enables deeper engagement (Thomas, 2014). However, unlocking students' creative potential remains a challenge. Scholars such as Morley (2007) and Gaffield (1998) highlight that while individuals possess ideas and emotions, many struggle to translate these into compelling narratives. Indira (2017) advocates for structured support through modeling, guided practice, and self-assessment to nurture students' creative writing abilities. Unlike academic writing, creative writing values imagination and emotional depth (Harper, 2015),

and is shown to enhance language competence, critical thinking, and student confidence (Furniss & Bath, 2020).

To support this, digital tools are increasingly being used to enhance creativity and engagement in the classroom. One such tool is ChatGPT—a generative AI model developed by OpenAI—that represents a breakthrough in educational technology. With its ability to understand and generate human-like text, ChatGPT offers a dynamic and interactive platform for fostering creative writing (Smith, 2022; Mohammad Aljanabi, 2023). This research investigates how ChatGPT can support students' creative writing development at Phuentsholing Rigsar Higher Secondary School.

2. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Phuentsholing Rigsar Higher Secondary School (PRHSS) in Bhutan boasts a diverse student body

with varying levels of English proficiency, creating a dynamic learning environment. The school fosters inclusivity through differentiated instruction and a wide range of extracurricular activities. However, the Eleventh-grade curriculum prioritizes grammar, comprehension, and structured writing over creative expression. Despite efforts to balance academic rigor with student well-being, creative writing opportunities remain largely confined to traditional classroom assessments. While PRHSS has access to ICT facilities, it has yet to fully leverage AI tools to enhance learning outcomes. This gap presents an opportunity to explore the potential of AI in improving creative writing skills. This study aims to integrate ChatGPT into creative writing activities for 37 Class XI students to enhance engagement, creativity, and academic growth while tapping into the untapped possibilities of AI in creative writing.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite growing recognition of the importance of creativity in language learning, many students, particularly at the secondary level, continue to struggle with creative writing. This issue is evident in their limited vocabulary, weak narrative structure, and inability to express original ideas effectively. Traditional approaches to teaching creative writing often emphasize formulaic techniques and rote learning, failing to engage students or foster imaginative expression (Harper, 2015; Furniss & Bath, 2020).

In recent years, researchers have explored various strategies to address this problem. Indira (2017) advocates structured support through modeling, guided practice, and regular feedback to develop creative writing skills. Similarly, Mahapatra (2024) employs a mixed-methods approach to evaluate the impact of instructional interventions on ESL learners' writing performance, showing improvements in content quality and structure. These studies, while useful, often focus on teacher-led strategies and overlook the role of self-directed learning or technological tools in fostering creativity.

Emerging research has begun to explore the potential of artificial intelligence (AI), particularly ChatGPT, in enhancing language instruction. Meniado (2023) finds that ChatGPT offers advantages such as instant feedback, interactive language use, and improved speaking and writing fluency. Prasetya and Syarif (2023) support these findings, emphasizing ChatGPT's

utility in supporting grammar, vocabulary, and personalized learning in self-directed contexts. Further, Rahma and Fithriani (2024), through interviews with EFL teachers, report that ChatGPT boosts students' confidence and writing quality but also raise concerns about cheating and over-reliance on AI. At the same time, Lo (2023) and Sharma and Yadav (2022) caution that ChatGPT may promote plagiarism, generate factual inaccuracies, and reduce critical thinking if not used with proper guidance.

Although these studies present useful insights, they leave several gaps. Most focus on general language proficiency or academic writing rather than specifically addressing creative writing in secondary education. Furthermore, there is limited exploration of how ChatGPT can be embedded into established pedagogical models like Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which emphasizes learning through observation, imitation, and modeling. This research addresses these gaps by focusing specifically on the use of ChatGPT to enhance creative writing among eleventh-grade students at Phuentsholing Rigsar Higher Secondary School. Uniquely, it adopts Bandura's Social Learning Theory as a framework to explore how students can model and refine creative writing skills through interaction with AI-generated content. It also integrates teacher guidance, peer interaction, and iterative writing tasks to promote originality and minimize dependence on AI.

Thus, the current study offers a balanced, pedagogically grounded, and context-specific approach to leveraging ChatGPT for improving creative writing, addressing both the limitations and opportunities highlighted in prior research.

4. METHODOLOGY

This research employs a quantitative approach to assess the integration of ChatGPT into the eleventh-grade English curriculum at Phuentsholing Rigsar Higher Secondary School (PRHSS). It is a descriptive analysis of pre- and post-intervention assessments using Jamovi software. Through convenience sampling, a section of Eleventh-grade students from PRHSS participated, ensuring diversity in English writing proficiency, who underwent a pre-intervention assessment to establish baseline writing proficiency and creativity, followed by a post-intervention test after the intervention. Then, during the intervention, students engaged with ChatGPT in designated writing sessions, receiving samples, prompts, and comments when

the teacher facilitated the sessions following the observational learning model from Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory. So, the statistical analysis examines changes in proficiency and creativity to evaluate ChatGPT's efficacy in enhancing creative writing instruction.

5. BASELINE DATA

Table 1 compares the percentage of students' performance scores in the Grammar Test and the Poetry Creation Test, offering insight into their technical versus creative language abilities.

The comparison highlights a clear gap between the technical language proficiency and creative expression abilities of the students. In the Grammar Test, 62.2% of students achieved high scores, demonstrating a strong command of grammar, while only 5.4% performed poorly, reflecting overall competence in language rules. In contrast, the Poetry Creation Test revealed that 67.6% of students scored in the lowest range, and none reached high performance, indicating significant challenges in applying language creatively. Notably, 32.4% of students fell into the middle range in both tests, suggesting a group with the potential to improve in both areas with appropriate guidance. These findings reveal that while students are well-versed in grammar, they struggle to express themselves creatively, highlighting the need for a more balanced approach to teaching that supports both linguistic accuracy and imaginative thinking.

Table 1 Frequency Distribution of Grammar and Poetry Creation Test

Aspect	Grammar Test	Poetry Creation Test
High Performers (7+)	62.2%	0%
Middle Range (5–6)	32.4%	32.4%
Low Performers (<5)	5.4%	67.6%

6. INTERVENTION

In response to the baseline findings, a structured intervention plan, shown in Table 2, was implemented to enhance students' creative writing. It is rooted in Bandura's Social Learning Theory, following the modeling sequence:

attention, retention, reproduction, and reinforcement, to employ Chat GPT as a model for the students to enhance their creative expression in English writing. ChatGPT was introduced as a digital model offering writing prompts, examples, and formative feedback.

Students engaged in teacher-guided sessions where they observed the use of ChatGPT to generate poetry and creative texts. They then co-created content with the AI, practiced creative techniques, and received feedback. The intervention culminated in the publication of a sonnet compilation, which served as a motivational reinforcement.

Table 2: Intervention plan

Sl.no.	Activity	Strategy
1	Observational learning (Attention)	Prompt-based writing exercise with ChatGPT Instant feedback and revision Reading creative articles from ChatGPT
2	Imitation (Retention)	Copying vocabulary, formats, and expressing skills in writing to adapt to different topics and genres for originality.
3	Modelling (Reproduction)	Collaborative writing with ChatGPT-cocreation
4	Motivation (Reinforcement)	Publishing an original creative writing article in a school magazine

To ensure objective evaluation, a rubric-based assessment was used for both pre- and post-tests. The rubric included clearly defined criteria for creativity, language use, coherence, imagery, and originality to ensure consistency and minimize potential bias while scoring.

7. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results shown in Table 3, which display the average assessment scores based on a rubric, indicate a significant improvement in students' creative writing performance across three evaluation stages:

Item 1: Score before the intervention

Item 2: Score after the initial exposure to ChatGPT

Item 3: Score following extended use of the tool
The mean score increased from 4.29 to 7.16, and then to 8.81, with a corresponding median increase from 4.29 to 9. This notable improvement indicates that repeated and scaffolded use of Chat GPT can significantly enhance creative writing skills.

Table 3: Pre and Post-Data Analysis

	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3
N	37	37	37
Missing	0	0	0
Mean	4.29	7.16	8.81
Median	4.29	7	9

Further, statistical analysis in Table 4 using a paired samples t-test confirms the significance of this improvement. It was calculated using Jamovi software, which also follows the calculation formula mentioned below in Table 4. So, the p-value < .001 indicates strong statistical evidence that the intervention positively impacted students' creative writing performance.

Table 4: Paired Sample T-Test

			statis tic	df	p
Pre inte rve ntio n	Pos t inte rve ntio n 2	Stud ent's t	- 50. 0	36. 0	<.0 01

Formula: $t = (\bar{x}_d - \mu_d) / (\sigma_d / \sqrt{n})$

Where:

t = t-value,

\bar{x}_d = sample mean of the differences between the paired observations,

μ_d = population mean difference,

σ_d = sample standard deviation of the differences,

n = number of paired observations.

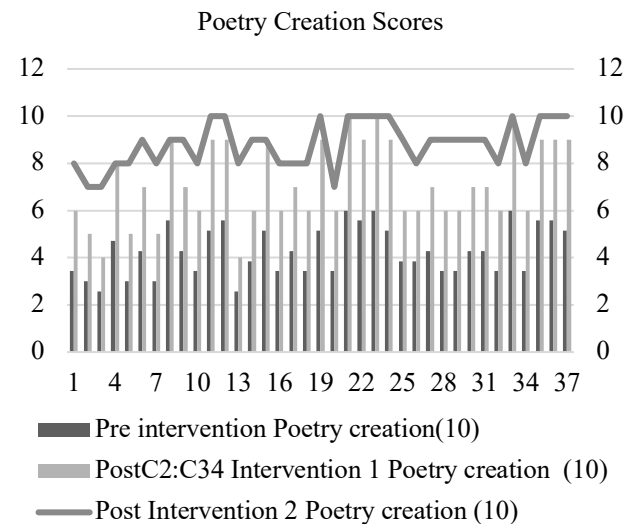


Fig.1: Pre and Post-Assessment Scores of Poetry Creation

Fig. 1 presents a comparison of the poem creation scores of 37 eleventh-grade students at PRHSS before and after the intervention. The increased score by every student shows measurable progress across multiple assessment points, supporting the intervention's effectiveness. Therefore, the answers to the research questions are found:

7.1. Challenges in Students' Creative Writing

Baseline data from the Poetry Creation Test suggests that students' lower performance may be attributed to a combination of cognitive, linguistic, and emotional factors. These may have affected their ability to generate ideas, organize content, and revise drafts effectively. This interpretation aligns with writing process models presented by Graham and Perin (2007) and Flower and Hayes (1981), who emphasize the complexity of composing. Additionally, a limited vocabulary and lack of exposure to diverse literary styles may have restricted their capacity to express creative and emotional depth. As Hyland (2003) explains, without foundational elements like vocabulary and genre awareness, students struggle to produce meaningful written expression.

7.2. Causes of Students' Challenges in Creative Writing

These challenges appear to stem from both instructional and cultural conditions. Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory emphasizes the need for observation and imitation, yet many

students lacked exposure to model texts and peer samples. Schunk (2012) emphasizes that consistent feedback and reinforcement are crucial for writing development. Furthermore, the school's focus on grammatical precision over creativity, as discussed by Grainger (2005), may have unintentionally limited expressive freedom. Hennessey and Amabile (2010) also highlight how cultural expectations can discourage creative risk-taking. Thus, while students showed a basic command of language, they lacked a structured, supportive environment to develop creative expression.

7.3. Impact of ChatGPT Integration in English Creative Writing

ChatGPT acted as an interactive model offering structured guidance, prompt suggestions, and formative feedback, aligning with the attention, retention, reproduction, and reinforcement framework of Bandura's (1977) modeling theory. Its integration provided students with repeated, low-pressure opportunities to practice and refine their writing. Findings from this study are consistent with research by Meniado (2023), Prasetya and Syarif (2023), and Vijay (2023), who report improvements in vocabulary, grammar use, and writing confidence. Still, ethical concerns persist. Lo (2023) and Mahapatra (2024) warn about issues like overreliance, plagiarism, and content authenticity. These concerns highlight the need for balanced implementation, supported by teacher training and policy guidelines. When appropriately used, ChatGPT proved to be a valuable complement to traditional writing instruction, boosting both engagement and creativity.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study recommends the thoughtful integration of AI tools like ChatGPT to enhance creative writing and student engagement. Routine use of AI in writing instruction can serve as a catalyst for idea generation and stylistic exploration. However, it is essential to maintain a balance between AI assistance and traditional instruction, preserving foundational writing skills. Struggling students should be given differentiated support, including AI-assisted scaffolding, to bridge learning gaps. Educators also require professional development and digital literacy training to effectively integrate AI in a pedagogically sound and ethical manner.

Emphasis must also be placed on originality, helping students to develop a personal voice rather than depending on machine-generated content. Finally, longitudinal research is recommended to assess the sustained impact of AI on writing performance and creativity.

9. CONCLUSION

This study explored the integration of ChatGPT in creative writing lessons for eleventh-grade students at PRHSS. Analysis of pre- and post-intervention scores revealed significant gains, especially in creativity, engagement, and written expression. Students who interacted consistently with ChatGPT showed measurable improvement, while those with lower starting points would benefit from ongoing guidance. These findings validate ChatGPT's potential as an educational aid, but also emphasize the importance of teacher oversight. To maximize impact, AI tools should be used as supplements—not substitutes—for personalized instruction. In summary, ChatGPT represents a promising tool in fostering creativity, particularly when paired with effective pedagogy, differentiated support, and ethical safeguards.

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