

EFL STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE ON EXPLORING THE ROLE OF PERPLEXITY AI IN SHAPING STUDENT ACADEMIC WRITING

Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for Gaining the
Degree of Bachelor of English Language Education



by:

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Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh

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Title : **EFL Students' Perspectives on Exploring the Role of Perplexity AI in Shaping Students Academic Writing**
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ABSTRACT

Name : Ainun Nur Na'ima
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Title : EFL Students Perspective on
Exploring the Role of Perplexity
AI in Shaping Students Academic
Writing

This study explores the perspectives of EFL students on the use of Perplexity AI as a support tool in academic writing. With the growing integration of artificial intelligence in education, understanding how students perceive its role in writing development is essential. This qualitative research involved 6 undergraduate EFL students from a university in Central Java, Indonesia. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed that students found Perplexity AI helpful for generating ideas, improving vocabulary, and boosting writing confidence. However, concerns were raised about its accuracy and the potential for overdependence. Furthermore, students engaged in metacognitive strategies such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating their writing when using the tool. These insights suggest that while Perplexity AI can support writing development, human judgment and learner autonomy remain critical. The study offers implications for educators in integrating AI tools into academic writing instruction in EFL contexts.

Keywords : *Academic writing, AI-Assisted Learning, EFL Students, Metacognition, Perplexity AI, Students Perspective.*

DEDICATION

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Allah SWT, who has given me the opportunity, strength, and guidance to complete this thesis. Without His will, none of this would have been possible.

My beloved parents, whose endless love, unwavering support, and constant prayers have been my source of strength. My siblings and family, for their encouragement and understanding during the ups and downs of this journey. And to myself, for not giving up, even when it was hard.

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All praise is due to Allah SWT, the Lord of the Universe, for His endless mercy, guidance, and strength, which have enabled the completion of this thesis. Peace and blessings be upon the Prophet Muhammad SAW, whose exemplary life continues to inspire generations to pursue knowledge and live with purpose.

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2. Prof. Dr. Fatah Syukur, M.Ag., the Dean of the Faculty of Education and Teacher Training,
3. Dra. Nuna Mustikawati Dewi, M.Pd. and Lulut Widyaningrum, M.Pd., Head and Secretary of the English Education Department,

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May Allah SWT bless all those who have helped me in this process. May this thesis be of benefit to future readers and researcher

MOTTO

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا فِينَا لِنَهْدِي لَهُمْ سَبِيلَنَا ۖ وَلَوْ أَنَّا لَمُ مَعَ الْمُضِلِّينَ

"As for those who strive in Our cause, We will surely guide them to Our paths. And indeed, Allah is with the doers of good." (QS. Al-‘Ankabūt: 69)

"الحكمة ضالة المؤمن، فحيث وجدها فهو أحق بها"

"Wisdom is the lost property of the believer. Wherever he finds it, he is the most entitled to it." (HR. At-Tirmidzi no. 2687)

Everyone’s version of their best is different, so don’t ever let everyone tell you or make you feel like you are not enough (Jeno Lee)

"This journey is mine, and I will honor every step — including the struggles, the falls, and the strength I found in standing back up." (Ainun Nur Na’ima)

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses background of the study, research question, research objectives, scope and limitations, and significance of the study.

A. Background of the Study

The digital revolution has fundamentally reshaped the educational landscape, ushering in an era of unprecedented transformation. The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into learning processes is no longer a futuristic concept but a present reality, impacting how we teach, learn, and interact with information. This transformation opens up a wealth of new opportunities for deep personalized learning experiences, significant increases in efficiency within educational systems, and the development of crucial 21st-century skills essential for success in the modern world (Holmes et al., 2019). AI is not merely changing

how we learn, but also *what* we learn, enabling educators to tailor instruction to individual needs and prepare students for a rapidly evolving job market. Furthermore, AI-powered tools can facilitate access to education for diverse learners, breaking down barriers and promoting inclusivity.

One area significantly impacted by AI is the development of writing proficiency, a fundamental skill that underpins academic success and effective communication in various aspects of life. A growing number of AI-powered tools and platforms have emerged, offering invaluable assistance with various facets of writing, from ensuring accurate grammar and crafting effective writing styles to organizing ideas logically and even generating relevant content.

Perplexity AI is one such promising innovation, designed to provide personalized feedback and suggestions to writers, empowering them to continuously develop and refine the quality of their writing (Vincent-Lancrin & Van Der Vlies, 2020). These tools not only

help in correcting errors but also foster a deeper understanding of the writing process and the principles of effective communication. By providing targeted feedback, AI tools can help writers identify their strengths and weaknesses, leading to more focused improvement.

Perplexity AI emerges as a potential solution to address these challenges, offering significant support in various aspects of the writing process. By leveraging sophisticated machine learning algorithms, Perplexity AI is capable of analyzing student-written text and providing relevant and specific feedback. This feedback extends beyond basic grammar and spelling checks to encompass effective writing style, logical organization of ideas, and clarity of message, all of which are essential in academic communication (Marzuki et al., 2023).

Moreover, Perplexity AI can also assist students in developing the critical thinking and analytical skills necessary to produce high-quality and persuasive

writing. The personalized feedback provided by Perplexity AI can help students identify areas for improvement and track their progress over time.

Machine-learning algorithms generate this kind of feedback by comparing the produced text to a large library of well-written and poorly-written examples. To put it another way, EFL students can get immediate, personalized feedback on their writing which can help them find errors and fix them more quickly (Marzuki et al., 2023)

This is where Perplexity AI has the potential to play a role. This software can help EFL students overcome these obstacles and improve the quality of their academic writing. Vincent-Lancrin & Van Der Vlies (2020) state that in an era characterized by globalization and interconnectedness, proficiency in English has become increasingly indispensable, serving as a gateway to academic, professional, and social opportunities.

As such, the cultivation of strong writing skills is of paramount importance for EFL learners seeking to

navigate the complexities of language acquisition and communicate effectively in a diverse and multicultural world. In this context, Perplexity AI emerges as a powerful ally, offering a multifaceted approach to enhancing the writing proficiency of EFL students and equipping them with the tools they need to succeed in an increasingly competitive global landscape.

Although AI tools like ChatGPT, Grammarly, and Quillbot have been widely studied in supporting academic writing, limited research has specifically examined Perplexity AI's role in fostering EFL students' metacognitive engagement, such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating their writing. Prior studies often merge multiple AI tools, making it difficult to isolate Perplexity AI's unique contribution. Therefore, this study addresses the gap by focusing on EFL students' experiences with Perplexity AI as a cognitive and reflective partner in academic writing through a qualitative case study approach.

B. Research Questions

1. What are EFL students perspective regarding the use of Perplexity AI in academic writing?
2. How does Perplexity AI assists EFL students in developing an academic writing?

C. Research Objectives

1. To understand EFL students' perspective in exploring Perplexity AI for academic writing
2. To explore how Perplexity AI aids EFL students in developing an academic writing.

D. Scope and Limitations

This study is limited to exploring the perspectives of university-level EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students on the role of Perplexity AI in facilitating the construction of their academic writing knowledge and skills. The research focuses on how Perplexity AI, as a learning tool, supports students in actively engaging with and constructing their understanding of academic writing, particularly in areas such as generating ideas, organizing content,

improving vocabulary and grammar, and developing independent writing strategies.

The study is conducted within the context of higher education, where students are frequently required to engage in academic writing tasks such as essays, reports, or research papers in English. The participants involved are specifically EFL students who have experience using Perplexity AI as part of their learning and writing process. The research aims to gain insight into how students use Perplexity AI to support their active learning and knowledge-building in academic writing.

This study is subject to several limitations. First, it focuses exclusively on Perplexity AI and does not investigate other AI-based writing tools such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, or Quillbot, which may provide different learning experiences and outcomes. Second, the findings are limited to the perspectives of EFL students at the university level, and therefore may not be generalizable to students in other

educational contexts or native English-speaking students.

Third, the data relies primarily on students' self-reported experiences and perceptions, which may be influenced by personal biases or subjective interpretations of how they construct knowledge through AI assistance. Additionally, this research is framed within the constructivist approach and does not explore other learning theories or psychological constructs such as motivation or anxiety. Finally, the study focuses on students' current or recent engagement with Perplexity AI and does not explore long-term effects on writing development or critical thinking skills over time.

E. Significance of the Study

1. Theoretical Significance

By understanding the perspectives and experiences of EFL students regarding Perplexity AI, this research contributes valuable insights to the

field of language education through the lens of constructivist learning theory. The study enriches the discourse on how AI-powered tools like Perplexity AI serve as scaffolding in helping students actively construct knowledge and skills in academic writing.

It provides a theoretical contribution to how AI can be integrated as part of learner-centered and technology-mediated learning environments. Furthermore, this study supports the advancement of constructivist principles in modern classrooms, especially in the context of technology-enhanced language learning (TELL), opening new directions for future research on active learning with AI.

2. Practical Significance

a. For Lecturers:

The findings can help lecturers recognize how AI tools like Perplexity AI function as learning supports that assist students in actively constructing their writing knowledge. This may

encourage educators to integrate AI strategically in writing courses, designing learning activities that foster student autonomy, critical thinking, and active engagement with writing tasks.

b. For Students:

This research offers EFL students insights into how Perplexity AI can be used as a learning partner to aid in the construction of their academic writing skills. By viewing AI as a tool for exploration and knowledge-building, students can develop a more active and independent approach to improving their writing processes and outcomes.

c. For Researchers:

The study serves as a valuable reference for researchers focusing on technology-mediated learning, particularly in the context of constructivist approaches. It highlights how AI tools can facilitate active learning processes in EFL academic writing, and encourages further

exploration of how learners interact with AI to build writing competence.

d. For Future Researchers:

This study provides a foundation for future research on the integration of AI tools within constructivist learning environments. It raises opportunities to explore topics such as the role of AI in promoting learner autonomy, the effectiveness of AI as scaffolding in writing development, and how AI influences the co-construction of knowledge in collaborative or individual learning settings.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the literature review, the researcher discusses some previous researchers relevant to this study and related literature that has contributed to this research

A. Previous Research

1. EFL Students Perspective and Academic Writing

Octaberlina & Muslimin (2020) examined EFL students' perspectives on online learning barriers and their suggested alternatives during the COVID-19 pandemic. Conducted in Indonesia, the study found that students experienced several obstacles, including lack of familiarity with e-learning systems, slow internet connection, and physical discomfort such as eye strain. To address these issues, students proposed solutions such as training on Learning Management Systems (LMS), compressing large files, and including breaks during online classes. This study highlights the importance

of technical support and instructional design that considers learners' physical and cognitive well-being.

Lien (2024) conducted a case study on students' perspectives regarding language choice in EFL classrooms in Vietnam. Although many students reported difficulty understanding their instructors when English (the L2) was used exclusively, they still expressed positive attitudes toward English-only instruction. This suggests a strong learner motivation to immerse themselves in the target language, even if comprehension is initially challenging.

EFL students are learners who study English in a non-native environment. At the university level, they are required to master academic skills, including academic writing. Academic writing is a complex skill that demands the ability to construct arguments, organize ideas, apply appropriate

grammar and vocabulary, and conform to academic conventions (Hyland, 2003).

EFL students often face difficulties in writing academic texts due to language limitations, lack of confidence, and insufficient strategies. Therefore, they require specific strategies and support to improve their writing skills. Moreover, academic writing among EFL students is significantly influenced by their learning environment and previous educational experiences, which shape how they plan, organize, and express ideas in their writing (Manchón et al., 2011).

2. The Role of Perplexity AI in Academic Writing

The advancement of technology, particularly Artificial Intelligence (AI), has brought significant impact to education, including language learning. AI is utilized in various forms such as chatbots, virtual assistants, and automated assessment systems. In language learning contexts, AI facilitates instant feedback, grammar correction, vocabulary

enhancement, and sentence structure suggestions (Kristiawan et al , 2024).

Perplexity AI is an AI-based search platform that synthesizes information from various sources into coherent, cited responses. Its operation reflects AI's broader capabilities, as Dwivedi et al (2023) state that "AI can mimic human cognitive functions such as learning, problem solving, and decision-making". In academic settings, Perplexity AI helps enhance research efficiency and information validity.

Mutiara (2024) examined EFL students' perspectives on using Perplexity AI for brainstorming ideas in academic writing. Conducted at a university in Central Java, Indonesia, the qualitative research utilized interviews to gather data. Findings indicated that while students found Perplexity AI helpful in generating ideas and accessing relevant sources, challenges included over-reliance on the tool and difficulties in

integrating AI-generated content into their own writing.

In a broader context, Bahari (2024) evaluated the effectiveness of various AI-based writing tools, including Perplexity AI, in enhancing EFL postgraduate students' academic writing skills. The study highlighted that these tools could foster analysis, synthesis, and evaluation skills, essential components of academic writing.

AI also supports independent learning and helps tailor instruction to learners' individual needs while monitoring their progress continuously (Huang et al., 2021). Additionally, AI technologies encourage dynamic and collaborative learning interactions, particularly through mobile-based language learning that is increasingly popular in the digital age (Kukulska-Hulme, 2020).

3. EFL Students Perspective of Perplexity AI

Wardani et al (2024) investigates EFL students' perspectives on how AI tools, including Perplexity AI, assist them in their academic performance.

Eighty-two EFL students enrolled in the English Education Department at a university participated in the research. The findings revealed that 8.5% of the students used Perplexity AI, highlighting its role in supporting academic writing tasks. The study also identified both opportunities and barriers associated with AI-driven tools in the EFL context.

This research explores EFL students' perceptions in Indonesia and Taiwan regarding the role of AI in improving their writing abilities. Using qualitative research methods, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 20 second-year students specializing in English at an Islamic State University in Indonesia and a National University in Taiwan, who actively use AI tools in their writing processes. The study provides insights into how AI tools, including Perplexity AI, are perceived by EFL students in enhancing their writing skills (Rafida et al., 2024)

In academic writing, Perplexity AI supports various stages from pre-writing, paragraph

development, to final revision (Kasneci et al., 2023). As a writing assistant, Perplexity AI simplifies data collection and initial idea generation, which is particularly helpful for EFL students in structuring academic arguments (Fitria, 2024).

This study explores AI literacy among Turkish EFL students regarding their familiarity, knowledge, and ethical perceptions of AI technologies in academic writing. Using a descriptive exploratory approach, the study surveyed 427 students from two Turkish universities. Findings reveal a moderate level of AI familiarity and usage among participants, with a significant reliance on AI tools for translation and grammar proofreading. While not focused solely on Perplexity AI, the study provides valuable context for understanding EFL students' engagement with AI tools in academic writing (Hossain et al., 2025)

However, its use also raises concerns regarding overreliance on technology and the accuracy of generated information. Therefore, critical

engagement and guided usage are necessary to ensure that it enhances rather than undermines students' critical thinking skills (Dwivedi et al., 2023)

B. Literature Review

1. EFL (English as a Foreign Language) Learners

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) refers to the learning and use of English by individuals in countries where English is not the primary language of communication. Jack C. Richards & Richard Schmidt (2024) mentioned that EFL learners typically study English as part of their formal education, and their opportunities for exposure to the language outside the classroom are often limited. As such, EFL learning contexts are distinct from ESL (English as a Second Language) environments, where learners may be immersed in English in daily life.

EFL students often face unique challenges in language acquisition, particularly due to limited

access to authentic language use in their everyday environment. These challenges include restricted vocabulary knowledge, difficulties in mastering grammatical structures, and limited opportunities for communicative practice (Saeed Al-Sobhi & Preece, 2018). Moreover, since English is not used as a medium of instruction or social interaction outside the classroom, EFL learners frequently struggle with language fluency and accuracy.

Furthermore, the development of writing skills is deeply influenced by students' exposure to academic conventions, feedback mechanisms, and their individual attitudes and motivations toward writing. Many EFL learners experience anxiety and lack confidence when composing texts in English, which can negatively impact their writing performance and academic outcomes (Muhammad et al., 2008).

To address these challenges, the integration of digital tools and technological innovations—such as

AI-powered writing assistants—has emerged as a potential support system for EFL students. Tools like Perplexity AI may help bridge the gap in language proficiency by providing immediate language feedback, content ideas, and access to academic references. However, the effectiveness of such tools largely depends on learners' digital literacy, their willingness to use technology responsibly, and the guidance they receive from educators.

2. Academic Writing in EFL Context

Academic writing is a formal and structured form of communication commonly used in educational settings, particularly in universities and other academic institutions. It requires not only language proficiency but also a clear understanding of discipline-specific conventions, such as coherence, cohesion, argumentation, critical analysis, and proper referencing (Hyland, 2014). For EFL students, mastering academic writing is often

perceived as one of the most challenging aspects of language learning.

Unlike conversational or informal writing, academic writing demands a high level of accuracy, formality, and organization. EFL learners must be able to construct logical arguments, support their claims with evidence, and adhere to grammatical rules and stylistic conventions. These requirements present a significant challenge for many students whose exposure to English is limited to classroom instruction (Nunan, 2003).

In many cases, EFL students also face psychological barriers in academic writing, such as writing anxiety, low confidence, and fear of making errors (Chen & Gong, 2025). These affective factors can hinder their ability to express ideas clearly and fluently, even when they have sufficient content knowledge.

To support EFL learners, educators often integrate writing strategies such as process-based writing, peer feedback, and the use of digital tools. With the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI), new technologies like Perplexity AI have been introduced to provide real-time assistance in generating ideas, paraphrasing, summarizing, and refining grammar and vocabulary. These tools have the potential to assist EFL students in producing higher-quality academic texts, though their effectiveness still depends on the users' digital literacy and critical thinking skills.

3. Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the ability of machines and computer systems to simulate human intelligence processes, including learning, reasoning, and self-correction by Stuart Russel & Peter Norvig, (2010). In the context of education, AI has emerged as a transformative tool that enhances both teaching and learning by providing personalized, adaptive, and interactive experiences.

AI in education is utilized in various forms, such as intelligent tutoring systems, automated assessment tools, personalized learning platforms, and language learning applications. These technologies aim to support both students and educators by offering real-time feedback, analyzing learning patterns, and adapting content to fit individual needs stated by Holmes, (2016). This development aligns with the global shift towards digital and blended learning environments, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, the use of AI also presents several challenges, such as ethical concerns, over-reliance, and the need for digital literacy. Issues related to data privacy, academic integrity, and the potential for AI to replace human interaction have become critical areas of discussion. Therefore, the successful integration of AI in education must consider not

only technological capability but also pedagogical value and ethical implications.

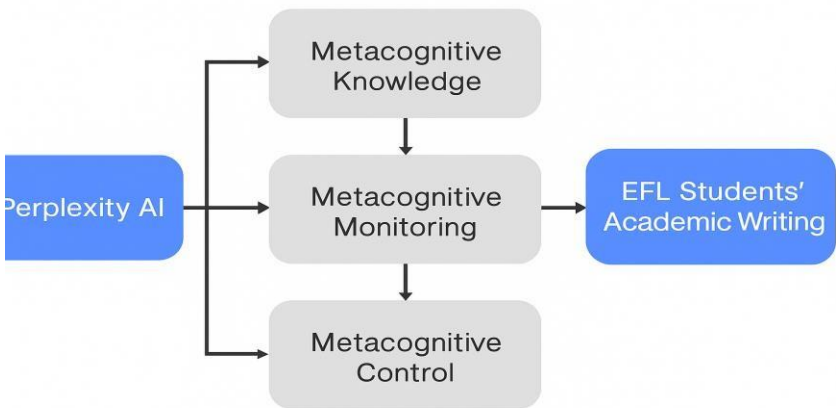
4. The Role of Perplexity AI in Academic Writing

Perplexity AI is an advanced conversational search engine and AI-powered assistant that integrates natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning to provide real-time, research-backed answers. It is designed to assist users in accessing accurate, sourced information quickly and interactively, making it a potentially valuable tool in academic writing—particularly for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students who often struggle with content generation, coherence, and research skills.

For EFL learners, academic writing often involves challenges such as limited vocabulary, difficulty organizing ideas logically, and unfamiliarity with academic conventions. Perplexity AI can help bridge these gaps by providing

contextual support and reducing the cognitive load associated with generating academic text. For instance, students can use the tool to generate outlines, brainstorm topics, access scholarly information, and verify their understanding of complex academic language (Huang et al., 2021)

C. Conceptual Framework



This study focuses on EFL students' perspectives regarding the role of Perplexity AI in shaping their academic writing. To explore this focus in depth, the

study is guided by the theory of *metacognition*, which serves as the conceptual foundation.

Metacognition refers to an individual's awareness, understanding, and regulation of their own cognitive processes. In the context of academic writing, metacognition plays a vital role, as writing is not merely a mechanical task but a complex cognitive process. Flavell (1979) metacognition consists of three main components: metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive monitoring, and metacognitive control. These elements allow learners to reflect on what they know, observe their own thinking process, and regulate their learning behaviors accordingly (Flavell, 1979; Schraw, 1994)

In this framework, Perplexity AI is positioned as a writing support tool that stimulates students' metacognitive engagement. As an AI-powered platform that provides answers, references, and writing suggestions, Perplexity AI is used by students to assist them throughout the writing process. Its use prompts various forms of metacognitive involvement.

First, metacognitive knowledge involves students' awareness of their strengths and weaknesses in writing, as well as their understanding of how and when to use Perplexity AI effectively. Second, metacognitive monitoring occurs when students observe and evaluate their own writing process how AI helps them generate ideas, clarify sentence structure, or expand their arguments. Third, metacognitive control refers to students' ability to regulate their writing strategies based on input from Perplexity AI, such as deciding which parts to revise or which ideas to develop further (Negretti, 2012; Teng, 2020).

Through these interactions, students form personal perspectives on academic writing, including how effective, helpful, or challenging they find the use of AI in supporting their writing development. These perspectives reflect how students perceive the role of Perplexity AI in enhancing their writing skills, and to what extent the technology supports reflective and strategic thinking in completing academic writing tasks.

Therefore, this conceptual framework illustrates that the use of Perplexity AI may facilitate students' metacognitive engagement in writing, which in turn influences their perspectives on the academic writing process.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains information about the research design, participants, data source, data collection techniques, instruments, and data analysis used in the study. Each of them is presented in the following discussion.

A. Research Design

This study employs a qualitative case study design to explore the perspectives of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students on the use of Perplexity AI in academic writing. A Case studies are a type of research that facilitates contextual investigation by illustrating and understanding multiple facets of a phenomenon using a variety of data (Baxter & Jack, 2015).

The qualitative approach enables the researcher to capture the complexity, subjectivity, and lived experiences of participants through open-ended

responses. This design is grounded in the belief that reality is constructed socially and contextually by individuals, which is central to exploring how students interpret and respond to their experiences with Perplexity AI in academic tasks.

The study employs semi-structured interviews to obtain detailed and reflective insights from EFL students who have used Perplexity AI in their academic writing processes. This design is chosen to allow flexibility in the interview process, providing room for follow-up questions and deeper exploration based on participant responses (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

B. Research Setting

This research was conducted at the English Education Department, One of the university in Semarang. This university was intentionally selected as the research setting for two main reasons. First, the researcher is currently a student at this university, which allows easier access to data, familiarity with the academic environment, and an understanding of the

writing practices implemented in the department. Second, the students in this department are actively engaged in academic writing activities, making them ideal participants for a study that investigates the role of AI tools such as Perplexity AI in supporting EFL learners' writing development.

The research was conducted in March until April 2025, during the academic semester when students were working on a variety of academic writing assignments. This timing allowed the researcher to gather rich and meaningful data related to students' experiences using Perplexity AI.

C. Data Source

In this study, the data source consists of primary and secondary data that help the researcher explore EFL students' perspectives on the use of Perplexity AI in academic writing.

1. Primary Data Source

The primary data in this research come from semi-structured interviews with 6 EFL students at the

English Education Department, one of the University in Semarang. These students have experience using Perplexity AI to assist them in academic writing tasks such as essays, papers, and theses. Their perspectives, and reflections provide rich qualitative data that directly address the research questions:

The interviews aim to explore:

- a. Students' initial experiences using Perplexity AI
- b. The benefits and limitations of the tool
- c. The influence of Perplexity AI on students' academic writing skills
- d. Students' suggestions for further development of the tool

These insights are crucial in understanding how an AI-based tool like Perplexity contributes to EFL students' writing development.

2. Secondary Data Source

The secondary data include documents and literature related to the topic of AI in language learning and academic writing in EFL contexts. These sources provide theoretical background and support for

interpreting the primary data. The secondary sources include:

- a. Journals and articles from reputable databases (e.g., Scopus, ScienceDirect, ResearchGate)
- b. Previous studies on students' perceptions of AI tools in language learning
- c. Documentation or reports from UIN Walisongo regarding writing practices in the English Education Department

Together, these data sources form the foundation for analyzing and discussing the role of Perplexity AI in shaping students' academic writing practices.

D. Participants

The participants in this research are 6 undergraduate EFL students from the English Education Department, one of the University in Semarang. These participants have been participated based on their perspective using Perplexity AI to support their academic writing, particularly in composing essays, reports, papers, or thesis drafts.

The selection of participants is conducted using a purposive sampling technique. Etikan, (2016) purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method in which participants are selected based on specific characteristics that align with the research objectives. This technique is suitable for qualitative case studies where the goal is to gain deep insights from individuals with relevant perspective.

The criteria for participant selection are as follows:

- a. Active students in the English Education Department at UIN Walisongo Semarang
- b. Have used Perplexity AI in academic writing activities
- c. Willing to participate in the research voluntarily
- d. Able to express their thoughts and experiences in English or Bahasa Indonesia during interviews

The number of participants 6 students depending on the point of data saturation Guest et al. (2006). This range ensures rich and meaningful data

without overwhelming the scope of qualitative analysis.

The researcher chose this institution and participant group because the researcher is part of the same academic environment and is familiar with the writing practices and technological tools commonly used in the program. This familiarity facilitates better access to participants and helps build trust during interviews, which enhances the credibility and authenticity of the data collected.

The participants were selected through purposive sampling, as they are EFL students who have directly engaged with Perplexity AI in academic writing. This sampling strategy was employed to ensure that the participants possessed relevant experience and knowledge, thus enabling the collection of rich, focused data aligned with the study's objectives.

E. Data Collection Methods

the primary data collection technique used is semi-structured interviews. This technique was chosen to explore in-depth the EFL students' perspectives regarding the use of Perplexity AI in academic writing. Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to maintain a set of guiding questions while also providing the flexibility to probe further based on participant responses (Merriam, 2016). This method supports the qualitative nature of the research and is well-suited for capturing individual experiences and attitudes.

The interview protocol consists of open-ended questions that revolve around five main themes:

1. Initial experience using Perplexity AI
2. Perceived benefits and limitations
3. Impact on writing skills
4. Experience with specific features
5. Suggestions for improvement

These themes are aligned with the research questions and conceptual framework, and they are developed to ensure rich and descriptive data. The

interview questions will be conducted in English, and in some cases Bahasa Indonesia, to ensure participants can express themselves freely and clearly.

All interviews are conducted by interfacing face-to-face or via online video conferencing tools such as Zoom or Google Meet, depending on the availability and convenience of the participants. With prior consent, all sessions will be recorded and transcribed for analysis. The average duration of each interview is expected to be 30–45 minutes.

E. Data Analysis

Data collected from interviews will be analyzed using thematic analysis, a flexible and widely used method for analyzing qualitative data from Braun & Clarke (2006). Thematic analysis will allow researchers to identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) in interview data, providing a rich and nuanced understanding of EFL students' perceptions of Perplexity AI. As a flexible method, thematic analysis can be adapted to various theoretical frameworks and

research questions Fereday et al., (2006).The analysis will follow a systematic and iterative process, involving the following steps:

1. Familiarization with the Data

Researchers will begin by thoroughly understanding the interview data. This will involve reading and listening to audio recordings and transcripts repeatedly to gain a comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences and perspectives. This process is essential to build familiarity with the data and identify potential initial patterns (Liamputtong Rice & Ezzy, n.d.)

2. Coding

After understanding the data, researchers will begin the coding process. This involves systematically labeling segments of interview transcripts with descriptive codes that represent key ideas, concepts, and themes emerging from the data. Codes will be developed inductively, meaning they will be derived from the data itself, not pre-

determined This coding process is iterative and may involve revising and adding codes as researchers gain a deeper understanding of the data.

3. Searching for Themes

Researchers will then examine the codes and look for patterns and relationships between them. This involves grouping similar codes and identifying broader themes that encompass the various codes. This stage involves an iterative process of reviewing and refining themes as researchers gain a deeper understanding of the data (Aronson, 1995). These themes will reflect recurring patterns of meaning in the data.

4. Reviewing Themes

After a set of potential themes has been identified, researchers will review them to ensure they accurately represent the data. This involves going back to the interview transcripts and checking whether the themes are supported by data excerpts. Some themes may be refined, discarded, or combined at this stage

(Holloway & Todres, 2003) . This process is essential to ensure the validity and reliability of the interpretations.

5. Defining and Naming Themes

Researchers will then define and name the final set of themes. This involves developing clear and concise descriptions of each theme, explaining what it represents and how it relates to the research questions. Compelling and descriptive names will be given to each theme (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Theme definitions should be clear and adequate to distinguish one theme from another.

6. Producing the Report

The final step involves producing a written report of the thematic analysis. This report will present the identified themes, along with supporting data excerpts from interview transcripts. Data excerpts will be used to illustrate and reinforce the themes, providing evidence of researchers' interpretations. The report will also discuss the significance of the themes in relation to

the research questions and the broader literature on AI in education and EFL writing. The report aims to provide a rich and in-depth account of EFL students' perceptions of Perplexity AI.

F. Triangulation

In qualitative research, ensuring the data validation of the study is essential to demonstrate that the findings are credible, dependable, confirmable, and transferable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These four criteria are used to evaluate the rigor of qualitative inquiry and serve as a counterpart to validity and reliability in quantitative research.

Transferability is the extent to which the findings can be transferred to other contexts or settings. This study provides a thick description of the research context, participant background, and Perplexity AI usage environment at UIN Walisongo Semarang. By offering detailed contextual information, readers and future researchers can

determine the relevance and applicability of the findings to their own contexts.

Triangulation is a core strategy to increase the rigor of qualitative research. This study used the following types of triangulation:

1. Data triangulation: Multiple participants from different academic backgrounds and levels were interviewed to gather diverse perspectives.
2. Method triangulation: In addition to interviews, observational notes are needed.
3. Through these strategies, the research seeks to maintain methodological transparency and ensure that the findings are trustworthy, robust, and meaningful in the context of EFL academic writing and AI-assisted learning.

G. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are essential in conducting research, especially when involving human participants. This study adheres to the ethical guidelines to ensure the protection of participants'

rights and the integrity of the research process. The following measures were taken:

1. Informed Consent

Before participating in the study, all participants were informed about the purpose of the research, the procedures involved, the expected duration of their involvement, and their rights as participants. They were provided with an informed consent form, which they signed voluntarily. The consent form explained that participation was entirely voluntary, and they could withdraw at any time without any consequences.

2. Confidentiality and Anonymity

To ensure privacy, the identities of participants were kept confidential. Pseudonyms were used in place of actual names in the transcription, analysis, and presentation of data. Any identifiable information was removed or altered to protect participant identity. All collected data was stored securely in password-protected digital files accessible only to the researcher.

3. Participant Welfare

The research posed minimal risk to participants. The topic of the student experiences with Perplexity AI in academic writing was not of a sensitive nature. However, participants were assured that they could skip any question they were uncomfortable answering. The researcher maintained a respectful and supportive attitude during interviews.

4. Institutional Approval

This research obtained ethical clearance from the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, UIN Walisongo Semarang. All procedures followed the institution's ethical guidelines for research involving human participants.

5. Data Integrity and Researcher Reflexivity

The researcher maintained transparency and research integrity by documenting the research process and practicing reflexivity to minimize bias. The data analysis was conducted honestly and

objectively, and the findings were presented accurately without manipulation.

By upholding these ethical principles, the research aimed to respect participants' rights and ensure that the study was conducted responsibly and ethically.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the finding and discussion of the study and provides an in-depth discussion based on the responses gathered from six EFL students at UIN Walisongo Semarang regarding their experience using Perplexity AI in academic writing. Thematic analysis was used to identify patterns and recurring ideas in the participants' responses. The results are structured according to the research questions and supported by direct quotations from the interviews. The discussion also connects these findings to existing theories and previous studies.

A. Findings

This chapter presents the findings based on thematic analysis aligned with metacognition theory, addressing the two research questions formulated in this study. The analysis is based on participants' responses which were coded into major themes and sub-themes.

1. EFL Students' Perspectives on the Use of Perplexity AI

This study found that EFL students' perspectives on the use of Perplexity AI in academic writing were generally positive, yet nuanced, and deeply connected with their metacognitive awareness. Students did not perceive Perplexity AI as a tool that would replace their thinking or writing efforts, but rather as a supportive aid that complements their writing process. Their responses revealed a high level of self-awareness, critical judgment, and autonomy, which are core components of metacognitive engagement as outlined by Flavell (1979) and later extended by Schraw and Dennison (1994). Three major themes were derived from the data: awareness of needs and writing challenges, critical evaluation of AI outputs, and strategic control in using AI support. Each theme is explained below in depth.

a. Awareness of Needs and Writing Challenges (Metacognitive Knowledge)

Most participants expressed a strong awareness of their own writing difficulties. Some were unsure how to begin writing, others struggled to develop coherent arguments, and several admitted to having a limited academic vocabulary or difficulty expressing ideas in a formal tone. This level of metacognitive knowledge understanding one's own cognitive strengths and limitations was evident in the way they chose to use Perplexity AI.

“I know that introductions are my weakness. I get stuck thinking how to start. That’s why I usually go to Perplexity and ask it to give me some starting ideas or outlines.” – AA

This comment illustrates that students are not passively relying on AI tools. Instead, they are using the tool purposefully, based on their awareness of what they need help with. This aligns with what Flavell (1979) described as declarative metacognitive knowledge knowing about oneself as a learner and recognizing the tools that can assist learning.

Moreover, several participants viewed Perplexity AI as an “inspiration generator” or “thinking guide,” not a solution provider. They sought ideas to help them initiate their writing process but retained full control over development. This attitude reflects a constructive learning mindset, in which students treat AI not as a writing machine, but as a partner in thinking.

b. Critical Evaluation of AI Output (Metacognitive Monitoring)

Another recurring pattern in student responses was their cautious attitude toward the accuracy and relevance of Perplexity AI's answers. Unlike the common perception that students might over-rely on AI, participants in this study displayed a strong monitoring process, constantly assessing the quality, credibility, and usefulness of the AI-generated content.

“Sometimes Perplexity gives ideas that are too general, or not really relevant to my assignment. So I always compare it with my own understanding or double-check it with Google Scholar.”- MW

This statement reflects the metacognitive monitoring process, which involves checking one's progress, evaluating the outcome of a strategy, and making real-time decisions during task performance (Schraw & Moshman, 1995). Students in this study were not blindly accepting everything from AI. Instead, they engaged in a process of cross-checking, validating, and sometimes rejecting the outputs if they did not meet academic expectations.

Interestingly, several students mentioned that using Perplexity AI increased their alertness to the need for accuracy in academic writing. They became more conscious of verifying the sources, adjusting the tone, and checking for bias. This heightened awareness shows that AI tools, when used with a reflective mindset, can actually stimulate rather than replace critical thinking.

c. Strategic Control and Adaptation (Metacognitive Control)

Perhaps the most significant insight into students' metacognitive engagement came from their strategic

behavior in regulating their writing. Students reported adapting, modifying, or even rejecting Perplexity AI's suggestions based on their judgment of what would best suit their writing goal or the assignment instructions. This reflects metacognitive control, which refers to selecting, managing, and adjusting strategies for better learning performance (Schraw, 1998)..

“I don’t use the sentences exactly as they are. I usually change the wording or combine the ideas with my own. That way, I feel more confident that it’s really my writing, not AI’s.”-NA

This practice of editing, restructuring, and combining AI-generated ideas demonstrates that students are not dependent on the tool but are actively integrating it into their own cognitive process. In fact, many participants said they used Perplexity only during the initial or middle stages of writing, while relying on their own revision and editing for the final draft. Comparative Attitudes toward Other AI Tools.

Moreover, students also discussed how using Perplexity AI had helped them build academic self-confidence, especially when writing in English, which is not their native language. Knowing they had access to a tool that could help them brainstorm or explain difficult terms made them feel more in control of their writing journey.

“I used to feel very anxious about academic writing. But now I feel like I have a partner. I still do the writing, but Perplexity helps me think clearly.”- AA

This emotional shift toward confidence and autonomy is part of the affective dimension of metacognitive control. It indicates that tools like Perplexity AI, when used reflectively, can empower students to become more independent and self-regulated learners.

2. How Perplexity AI Assists EFL Students in Developing Academic Writing

The data revealed that Perplexity AI plays a significant role in supporting EFL students' development of academic writing through a series of cognitive and metacognitive engagements. Rather than functioning as a passive writing assistant, Perplexity AI served as a catalyst that helped students to think, reflect, and regulate their academic writing tasks. Thematic analysis of interview transcripts identified four key areas in which Perplexity AI contributes to academic writing development: planning and idea generation, structuring and organizing content, language enrichment and tone adjustment, and self-evaluation and strategic revision. These areas align closely with the components of metacognitive knowledge, monitoring, and control, reinforcing the argument that Perplexity AI assists not just in writing production, but also in the metacognitive development essential to effective academic writing.

a. Planning and Idea Generation (Metacognitive Knowledge & Control)

Several participants reported using Perplexity AI at the early stages of writing, particularly for overcoming writer's block and clarifying the direction of their paper. They asked the tool to generate ideas related to the topic, provide possible thesis statements, or offer structured outlines that could guide their thinking.

“When I didn’t know how to start, I typed the topic into Perplexity and it gave me some ideas that I could expand.” - AN

This reflects both metacognitive knowledge (knowing when and why help is needed) and metacognitive control (deciding how to use it). By using Perplexity AI as a thinking scaffold, students were able to enter the writing process with greater clarity and confidence. Rather than copying the structure or content provided, they treated the output as a brainstorming partner, adjusting and modifying it to fit their own voice.

Students' ability to shift from confusion to strategic planning with the help of Perplexity AI underscores the importance of planning as the foundation of academic writing, and shows how digital tools can support this process when students are metacognitively aware.

b. Structuring and Organizing Content (Metacognitive Monitoring)

Many students used Perplexity AI to help organize their ideas into coherent and logical flow. Some asked for paragraph samples or explanation of transitions (e.g., how to go from definition to example), while others requested guidance on outlining arguments.

“Perplexity helped me see the flow — like, what comes first, and what should be explained after that.” –
MW

This reflects the monitoring component of metacognition, where learners observe their own writing progress and evaluate the logic and coherence of their work. Perplexity AI supported this process by offering

structures that students could evaluate and adapt. Importantly, they did not merely follow the suggested outline blindly. Instead, they judged whether it made sense in the context of their assignment, and revised it accordingly.

This ability to assess and modify AI-generated organization strategies shows that students were engaging in active monitoring, an essential part of higher-level writing processes.

c. Language Enrichment and Academic Tone (Metacognitive Knowledge)

Another way Perplexity AI supported academic writing was by enhancing students' lexical awareness and improving the formality of their writing. Several students shared that they often asked Perplexity for alternative words, academic phrases, or sentence models that would help them avoid redundancy or informal expressions.

“It helps me find more formal words. Instead of saying 'really good', I learned to say 'highly effective'.” - NA

This process reflects metacognitive knowledge—specifically, students’ awareness of their own linguistic limitations and their ability to identify resources to overcome them. Rather than merely mimicking language, students reported learning from the AI’s output. They noticed how academic tone was constructed and began to apply similar language patterns in their own writing

This function of Perplexity AI goes beyond grammar checking; it acts as a linguistic role model that expands students’ expressive capacity, which is essential in producing quality academic texts.

d. Self-Evaluation and Strategic Revision (Metacognitive Monitoring & Control)

Students frequently mentioned how Perplexity AI helped them to review, revise, and rethink their drafts. Some used it to paraphrase complex sentences, while

others asked for sample revisions and then compared them with their own versions. In each case, the tool functioned as a mirror, reflecting the potential strengths and weaknesses of their writing.

“I use it to test my writing. I type a sentence and then ask Perplexity to reword it. If the result is better, I learn from it.” - INFA

This practice demonstrates both monitoring (assessing one’s output) and control (deciding to revise based on reflection). Instead of outsourcing the revision task entirely to AI, students selectively used suggestions, blending their own ideas with AI outputs to create a more polished result.

This kind of strategic engagement with AI supports metacognitive growth, helping students build a repertoire of revision strategies they can apply independently in future writing.

B. Discussion

This study explored how Perplexity AI contributes to EFL students' academic writing, focusing specifically on how the tool interacts with learners' metacognitive processes. Drawing upon the metacognitive theory proposed by Flavell (1979), which categorizes metacognition into metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive monitoring, and metacognitive control, the findings of this study demonstrate that Perplexity AI plays a nuanced and meaningful role in facilitating student reflection, decision-making, and learning regulation in academic writing tasks.

The participants in this study showed a high level of metacognitive knowledge, particularly in recognizing their personal writing needs and identifying areas where they lacked confidence or competence. For instance, students reported that they often faced difficulties at the beginning of the writing process, such as generating ideas, planning their argument, or structuring the flow of content. In response to these challenges, students used Perplexity AI to gain topic suggestions, draft outlines,

and view examples of academic sentence constructions. These choices were not made randomly; rather, they reflected an intentional use of technology based on students' self-awareness of their own learning difficulties. According to Flavell (1979), such awareness is categorized as declarative metacognitive knowledge—knowledge about oneself as a learner, one's goals, and the strategies that can be used to achieve those goals. This study supports that conceptualization and provides evidence that AI tools like Perplexity can serve as strategic partners for students who possess or are developing such awareness.

Moreover, the participants displayed significant evidence of metacognitive monitoring, the process by which learners observe, evaluate, and reflect on the progress and quality of their task performance. In this study, students critically assessed the output provided by Perplexity AI. They reported frequently checking the relevance, accuracy, credibility, and appropriateness of the AI-generated suggestions. This process involved comparing AI responses with their own ideas, cross-

checking suggested references with academic databases, and reflecting on whether the tone and structure aligned with academic writing conventions. This is consistent with the view of Schraw and Moshman (1995), who argued that metacognitive monitoring involves the capacity to supervise and evaluate one's cognitive activity in real-time, particularly during complex tasks like writing. The fact that students were cautious and evaluative—rather than blindly accepting the AI output—indicates a high level of intellectual engagement and responsible tool use.

Perhaps most critically, the study revealed that students demonstrated metacognitive control in how they responded to and acted upon their observations. Metacognitive control refers to the regulation and adjustment of strategies based on ongoing evaluation. In this study, participants routinely revised the content suggested by Perplexity AI. Rather than copying directly, they paraphrased, restructured, or selectively used parts of the AI responses. Some students even expressed that they used the AI only as a starting point

and preferred to rely on their own ideas during the drafting and revising stages. This level of control reflects procedural knowledge—knowing how to apply and adapt strategies effectively—and supports the idea that EFL students, when properly scaffolded, can become independent and strategic academic writers. This also resonates with Zimmerman’s (2002) model of self-regulated learning, which emphasizes planning, self-monitoring, and strategic action as key stages of learner autonomy.

Importantly, the findings of this study expand upon existing research that examines the role of AI in academic writing. Previous studies, such as those by Kristiawan et al. (2024) and Bahari (2024), have noted the usefulness of tools like Grammarly and ChatGPT in helping students produce grammatically accurate and stylistically appropriate texts. However, many of these studies emphasize technical correction over cognitive development. What distinguishes this study is its focus on how Perplexity AI contributes to thinking processes, not just writing products. Because Perplexity AI

generates answers with references and explanation-based outputs, it invites more analytical engagement from the user. Students in this study engaged with the AI not just to fix their writing, but to better understand the logic of academic structure, the development of ideas, and the principles of source-based writing. Thus, Perplexity AI served as a cognitive trigger, stimulating not just surface-level edits but deeper comprehension and planning.

The findings also support the insights of Negretti (2012), who emphasized the importance of metacognitive engagement in L2 academic writing. According to her, students who are able to plan, reflect, and evaluate their writing process are more likely to develop transferable academic literacy skills. In this context, the use of Perplexity AI appeared to enhance students' capacity to reflect on the choices they make in writing—such as selecting appropriate vocabulary, structuring arguments, or positioning claims. Students learned not only how to improve specific writing tasks,

but also how to think about their writing more critically, a skill that is essential for success in higher education.

Another important insight emerging from this study is the affective benefit of using AI tools like Perplexity. Several students reported feeling more confident and less anxious when writing academic assignments. They viewed the tool as a safety net or brainstorming partner that could reduce their cognitive burden at the beginning of the writing task. This is significant, particularly for EFL students, who often experience writing-related anxiety due to limited vocabulary or uncertainty about academic expectations. As one student noted, having access to Perplexity AI made them feel “not alone” when writing. While this affective dimension is not directly addressed in traditional models of metacognition, it reflects an important contextual factor that shapes how learners regulate and engage with academic tasks.

Taken together, the findings suggest that Perplexity AI has the potential to shift the role of AI in

education from passive automation to active learning support. When used reflectively, Perplexity AI does not replace the student's effort, but reinforces it, prompting planning, evaluation, and revision—all essential elements of academic literacy. However, this potential depends largely on students' metacognitive awareness. The tool itself does not teach students how to think; rather, it offers opportunities for critical engagement, which must be developed and guided through instruction and practice.

From a theoretical standpoint, this study affirms the continued relevance of Flavell's metacognitive theory in technology-mediated environments. The core components of metacognition—knowledge, monitoring, and control—are all observable in students' interactions with Perplexity AI. Furthermore, this study suggests that digital tools can act as mediators of metacognitive development when used under conditions of reflective and autonomous learning. The study also contributes to the growing body of literature that frames academic writing not only as a product-based skill but as a

process-based cognitive activity. In EFL contexts especially, where language barriers and lack of exposure to academic discourse can hinder progress, AI tools like Perplexity offer strategic entry points to build both competence and confidence.

In terms of pedagogical implications, this study highlights the need for writing instructors and curriculum designers to integrate AI tools meaningfully into academic writing instruction. This should not involve simply recommending tools to students, but explicitly teaching them how to use these tools metacognitively—that is, with awareness, reflection, and purpose. Rather than viewing AI as a shortcut or a threat to originality, it can be reframed as a scaffold for student thinking when positioned within a thoughtful instructional framework.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusion

This study explored how Perplexity AI supports EFL students in their academic writing development, particularly through the lens of metacognitive theory. Drawing from interview data analyzed thematically, the findings provide several key conclusions.

First, EFL students perceive Perplexity AI not merely as a technical tool for generating content but as a reflective partner in their writing process. Students were metacognitively aware of their own writing difficulties and used the tool strategically, demonstrating metacognitive knowledge. They showed awareness of when they needed help and what kind of support they were seeking be it in organizing ideas, developing vocabulary, or crafting introductions.

Second, students engaged in metacognitive monitoring by evaluating the relevance, tone, and accuracy of the content generated by Perplexity AI. They consistently reported cross-checking the information, verifying sources, and reflecting on whether the content aligned with academic expectations. Rather than relying passively, they actively monitored the AI's performance and assessed its fit within their task goals.

Third, students exercised metacognitive control by regulating how they incorporated Perplexity AI into their writing process. They selectively accepted or revised AI-generated content, paraphrased suggestions, and adapted structures to better suit the writing context. This behavior reflects their ability to manage and direct their own learning strategies essential trait of academic independence.

B. Suggestion

1. For Students

EFL students are encouraged to use Perplexity AI not only for generating content but also as a learning tool that helps them think more deeply about their writing process. They should engage with the tool critically ; evaluating, adapting, and reflecting on the output rather than copying it directly. Developing habits of planning, monitoring, and controlling their writing with the support of AI can foster greater academic autonomy and confidence.

2. For Educators

Teachers and writing instructors should not view AI tools as threats to originality but rather as opportunities for metacognitive development. Educators should explicitly teach students how to use AI tools like Perplexity in a reflective, strategic, and ethical manner. Integrating AI-based writing activities into the curriculum can scaffold students' thinking and build essential academic skills.

3. For Institutions and Curriculum Developers

Schools and universities should consider including AI literacy as part of academic writing instruction. As students increasingly turn to AI tools, institutions have a responsibility to guide their use through policies, workshops, and instructional support that promote responsible and reflective engagement with technology. For Future Researchers

4. For Future Researchers

Further research is needed to explore how other types of AI tools contribute to or interfere with students' cognitive and metacognitive processes across different disciplines. A longitudinal study could also investigate how prolonged use of Perplexity AI influences writing performance over time, and whether it leads to sustained improvement in academic writing competence.

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APPENDICES

1. Interview Guidelines

Title of Research *EFL Students' Perspective on Exploring the Role of Perplexity AI in Shaping Student Academic Writing*

Main Interview Themes & Questions:

1. Initial Experience with Perplexity AI
 - a. Can you describe your first experience using Perplexity AI for academic writing?
 - b. What motivated you to try Perplexity AI?
2. Benefits and Limitations
 - a. What are the primary benefits you have experienced from using Perplexity AI in academic writing?
 - b. Have you encountered any limitations or difficulties while using it?
3. Impact on Writing Skills

- a. How has Perplexity AI influenced your writing process or output?
 - b. Do you feel more confident or independent after using it?
- 4. Suggestions for Improvement
 - a. What would you like to improve in Perplexity AI?
 - b. Are there features that you think would help students more?
- 5. Use of Features
 - a. How do you use specific features in Perplexity AI (e.g., topic suggestions, citation support)?
 - b. How useful are these features in your academic writing?

This interview guideline was adopted and adapted from (Lubis et al., 2024)

2. Interview Transcript

1. Participant AA

Question	Answer
1. Can you describe your first experience using Perplexity AI for academic writing?	<i>Awalnya aku skeptis pakai Perplexity buat nulis akademik. Tapi setelah nyobain, ternyata ngebantu banget buat nyusun ide dan bikin tulisan lebih terstruktur.</i> (The first time I used Perplexity AI for academic writing, I was actually a bit skeptical. But after trying it, I felt really helped in organizing ideas and writing in a more structured way. It can be very helpful when I'm stuck.)
2. What motivated you to try Perplexity AI?	<i>Aku coba pakai Perplexity karena butuh alat yang bisa bantu mempercepat proses nulis, terutama pas nyusun kerangka atau outline tulisan</i> (The reason I tried it was because I felt I needed a tool that could help make the writing process faster and more efficient, especially in creating a framework or outline for writing.)
3. What are the	<i>Perplexity ngebantu banget bikin nulis jadi</i>

primary benefits you have experienced from using Perplexity AI in academic writing?	<i>lebih cepat. Aku bisa dapat ide-ide baru dan variasi kalimat yang bikin tulisan makin berkembang.</i> (The biggest advantage for me is that Perplexity AI can make me do writing faster. It really helps, especially for initial ideas or varied sentences. I can also find different points of view to develop a topic.)
4. Have you encountered any limitations or difficulties while using Perplexity AI?	<i>Kadang kalimat yang dihasilkan terasa kaku, dan ada juga topik yang terlalu umum, jadi tetap perlu disesuaikan sama tulisan aku</i> (However, sometimes some of the sentences produced feel a bit stiff, or the results don't quite fit the context of the writing I'm doing. Some topics can also be too general, so they need further refinement.)
5. How has Perplexity AI influenced your	<i>Aku merasa lebih cepat nulis, lebih terorganisir. Walaupun nggak langsung meningkatkan skill nulis, setidaknya arah tulisan jadi lebih jelas.</i> (The impact is that I can write faster. Maybe it

academic writing skills?	doesn't directly improve writing skills, but more towards efficiency. I feel my writing is more organized because there are suggestions from the AI that make the direction of the writing clearer.)
6. Do you feel more confident in your writing after using Perplexity AI?	<i>(Aku jadi lebih pede nulis, apalagi kalau lagi kejar deadline. Karena dengan Perplexity, ide dan strukturnya lebih cepat terbentuk).</i> (I become more confident, especially when there are many deadlines. I feel I can get ideas faster and know that my writing is more structured and easier to understand.)
7. What suggestions do you have for improving Perplexity AI to better support academic writing?	<i>Aku berharap ada fitur buat bantu nulis bagian kesimpulan, dan juga fitur buat nemuin referensi yang lebih relevan buat tulisan akademik.</i> (If possible, I would like a feature to help write stronger conclusions or closing sections, so it's not just focused on the middle part of the writing.)
8. Are there	<i>Nggak ada kesulitan teknis yang berarti, sih.</i>

any additional features you would like to see in Perplexity AI?	<i>Lebih ke perlu ngedit ulang hasilnya supaya sesuai dengan gaya tulisan sendiri.</i> (In addition, a feature to help find relevant references or articles would also greatly add to the value of Perplexity, especially for academic writing that needs strong sources.)
9. How do you use the available features in Perplexity AI (e.g., topic analysis, sentence suggestions)?	<i>Aku sering pakai fitur analisis topik buat bikin outline, sama saran kalimat buat ngembangin paragraf.</i> (I usually use the topic analysis feature to create a framework or outline for writing, then sentence suggestions for variation and developing paragraphs. When I'm stuck, that feature really helps to connect ideas.)
10. Have these features been helpful in your academic writing	<i>Fitur-fitur di Perplexity bener-bener mempercepat proses nulis aku. Bikin ide-ide nyambung dan tulisan lebih rapi.</i> <i>(All these features are quite helpful, especially when writing the first draft or needing suggestions for smoother sentences. So,</i>

process?	<i>Perplexity really speeds up my writing process and makes it more organized.)</i>
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2. Participant NA

Question	Answer
1. Can you describe your first experience using Perplexity AI for academic writing?	Pertama kali pakai Perplexity buat brainstorming waktu dapat tugas bikin artikel ilmiah. Katanya, Perplexity gampang banget dipakai dan jawabannya masuk akal. <i>(I first used Perplexity for brainstorming when I got an assignment to make a scientific article. Perplexity is very easy to use, the answers given are logical, and I can find available information sources.)</i>
2. What motivated you to try Perplexity AI?	Alasanku tertarik pakai Perplexity karena fiturnya mudah digunakan, jawabannya real time dan cukup akurat, plus ada sumber informasinya. <i>(What motivates me to use Perplexity are its easy-to-use features, real-time and fairly accurate answers, and the availability of information sources.)</i>

3. What are the primary benefits you have experienced from using Perplexity AI in academic writing?	Manfaat paling kerasa buatku adalah gampang cari info yang sesuai kebutuhan dan bisa hemat waktu banget. <i>(The main benefit I get is the ease of finding information that suits what I want and making time efficient.)</i>
4. Have you encountered any limitations or difficulties while using Perplexity AI?	Sejauh ini nggak nemuin kesulitan berarti saat pakai Perplexity. <i>(So far, there are no difficulties in using Perplexity)</i>
5. How has Perplexity AI influenced	Kadang kalau lagi buntu ide, Perplexity bisa bantu cari ide dan bikin kerangka berpikir buat nulis. <i>(Sometimes when writing, we have difficulty</i>

your academic writing skills?	<i>finding ideas. With Perplexity, I can look for ideas and frameworks for what I should write).</i>
6. Do you feel more confident in your writing after using Perplexity AI?	Jadi lumayan percaya diri sama tulisannya, tapi kadang masih takut nggak orisinil karena suka malas parafrase hasil dari Perplexity. <i>(I'm fairly confident, but sometimes still afraid if my writing is not original because I'm sometimes too lazy to paraphrase the results given.)</i>
7. What suggestions do you have for improving Perplexity AI to better support academic writing?	Walaupun Perplexity bisa kasih jawaban sesuai keinginan, tetap merasa harus parafrase supaya skill nulisnya berkembang. <i>(Even though Perplexity is able to provide answers according to what we want, we must still paraphrase the writing results, so our writing skills can develop.)</i>
8. Are there any	kurang tahu. <i>(None yet).</i>

additional features you would like to see in Perplexity AI?	
9. How do you use the available features in Perplexity AI(e.g., topic analysis, sentence suggestions?	Kurang tahu fitur terbaru dari Perplexity karena memang nggak terlalu sering pakai. <i>(So far, I don't know the latest features of Perplexity, because I don't really use it much.)</i>
10. Have these features been helpful in your academic writing process?	Meski begitu, menurutku fitur-fitur terbaru Perplexity pasti bakal memudahkan penulisan akademik. <i>It seems that the latest features will make it easier for users to get help with academic writing.</i>

3. Participant MTW

Question	Answer
1. Can you describe your first experience using Perplexity AI for academic writing?	<i>Pertama kali saya menggunakan Perplexity itu cukup memuaskan, karena hasil yang diberikan tidak memakan waktu lama dan cukup akurat.</i> (The first time I used Perplexity was quite satisfying, because the results given did not take long and were quite accurate).
2. What motivated you to try Perplexity AI?	<i>Yang memotivasi saya adalah pengalaman yang dibagikan oleh teman-teman tentang penggunaan Perplexity dan kemudahan yang diberikannya.</i> (What motivated me was the experience shared by friends regarding using Perplexity and the ease it provided).
3. What are the primary benefits you	<i>Perplexity membantu saya dalam memberikan ide untuk penulisan akademik, dan juga memudahkan saya mencari referensi untuk</i>

have experienced from using Perplexity AI in academic writing?	<i>tulisan saya.</i> (Perplexity helps provide ideas for my academic writing and also makes it easier to find references for my writing).
4. Have you encountered any limitations or difficulties while using Perplexity AI?	<i>Kesulitannya, terkadang tidak semua referensi yang diberikan itu valid, dan kata kunci yang saya masukkan harus benar-benar tepat supaya hasilnya sesuai dengan yang saya harapkan.</i> (The difficulty is that sometimes not all the references provided are valid, and the keywords given must be precise for the results to align with what we expect).
5. How has Perplexity AI influenced your academic writing	<i>Perplexity membantu membuat tulisan saya jadi lebih terstruktur.</i> Perplexity helps make my writing more structured.

skills?	
6. Do you feel more confident in your writing after using Perplexity AI?	<i>Iya, saya merasa lebih percaya diri .</i> (Yes, I feel more confident).
7. What suggestions do you have for improving Perplexity AI to better support academic writing?	<i>Saran saya, Perplexity sebaiknya memperluas lagi referensi yang tersedia bagi pengguna.</i> (My suggestion is for Perplexity to further expand the references available to users).
8. Are there any additional features you would like to	<i>Saya rasa tidak ada.</i> (I don't think so).

see in Perplexity AI?	
9. How do you use the available features in Perplexity AI (e.g., topic analysis, sentence suggestions?)	<i>Biasanya saya menggunakan fitur saran kalimat, terutama kalau saya bingung mau menulis apa lagi.</i> (I usually use the sentence suggestion feature when I'm confused about what else to write).
10. Have these features been helpful in your academic writing process?	<i>Menurut saya, fitur-fitur tersebut cukup membantu dalam proses penulisan akademik saya.</i> (I think this is quite helpful in my academic writing process.)

4. Participant ANB

Question	Answer
1. Can you describe your first experience using Perplexity AI for academic writing?	<i>Umm, jadi pertama kali saya menggunakan Perplexity AI, saya sangat terkejut, karena sebelumnya saat saya menggunakan AI, saya memakai ChatGPT, dan di situ tidak ada sumber referensi. Tapi kalau saya pakai Perplexity, ada sumbernya, jadi lebih terbuka.</i> (Um, so the first time I used Perplexity AI, I was very surprised, because before, when I used AI, I used Chat GPT, and there were no reference sources, but if I use Perplexity, there are, so it's more open).
2. What motivated you to try Perplexity AI?	<i>Motivasi saya untuk menggunakan Perplexity AI, salah satunya adalah karena sumber referensinya langsung disertakan, dan itu sangat memudahkan, terutama dalam penulisan akademik.</i> (My motivation for using Perplexity AI is, well, one of them is because the source is directly included, and that makes it very easy, especially in academic writing).
3. What are the primary	<i>Manfaatnya tentu saja menambah kosa kata kita, pengetahuan yang sebelumnya belum kita</i>

benefits you have experienced from using Perplexity AI in academic writing?	<i>ketahui jadi kita ketahui, dan sumbernya sudah ada. Kita juga bisa meminta sumber dari mana saja.</i> (The benefits are, of course, adding to our vocabulary, the knowledge that we didn't know before, now we know, and there are already sources. And we can request the source from anywhere.)
4. Have you encountered any limitations or difficulties while using Perplexity AI?	<i>Umm, tapi kesulitannya adalah kadang-kadang sumber yang diberikan bukan dari jurnal yang baik, sering kali sumbernya dari jurnal abal-abal atau hanya dari website atau artikel biasa.</i> (Um, but the difficulty is that sometimes the source is not from a good journal source, often the source is an abal-abal journal and often it's from a website or article).
5. How has Perplexity AI influenced your academic	<i>Perplexity membantu saya dalam merangkai kata-kata menjadi lebih formal.</i> (Perplexity helps me in arranging words to be more formal).

writing skills?	
6. Do you feel more confident in your writing after using Perplexity AI?	<i>Iya, saya merasa lebih percaya diri, tapi beberapa kali saya tetap harus mengecek tata bahasa dan memperbaiki lagi kata-katanya. Saya tidak bisa sepenuhnya percaya begitu saja terhadap hasil dari Perplexity.</i> (Yes, I am more confident, but several times I still have to check the grammar and then the words are corrected again, I cannot fully trust directly from the climate in Perplexity).
7. What suggestions do you have for improving Perplexity AI to better support academic writing?	<i>Menurut saya, Perplexity AI punya potensi yang besar. Ia bisa membantu saya dalam menulis, memperbaiki kata-kata, dan tentu saja meningkatkan kepercayaan diri.</i> (Perplexity AI has great potential, it can help me in writing, improve words, and of course increase confidence).
8. Are there any	<i>Perplexity punya fitur di mana kita bisa mengunggah file, jadi kita bisa meninjau</i>

additional features you would like to see in Perplexity AI?	<i>dokumen di Perplexity. Ini menarik, karena kita membutuhkan waktu singkat untuk memahami isi sebuah file, dan Perplexity bisa melakukan itu.</i> (Perplexity has a feature where it can upload files so we can review documents in Perplexity, which is interesting, because we need a short time to understand the contents of a file and Perplexity can do that).
9. How do you use the available features in Perplexity AI (e.g., topic analysis, sentence suggestions) ?	Iya, saya juga punya pengalaman menggunakan fitur-fitur seperti saran kalimat, analisis topik, dan lainnya . <i>(Yes, I also have experience in features such as suggestions, then topic analysis, etc).</i>
10. Have these features been helpful	Salah satu manfaat dari fitur-fitur di Perplexity menurut saya adalah menghemat waktu. <i>(One of the benefits of the features in</i>

in your academic writing process?	<i>Perplexity I is saving time).</i>
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5. Participant MW

Question	Answer
1. Can you describe your first experience using Perplexity AI for academic writing?	<i>Awalnya saya menggunakan Perplexity karena ada tugas yang berhubungan dengan menulis, dan saya waktu itu bingung mengembangkan ide. Lalu teman saya menyarankan untuk mencoba Perplexity. Di Perplexity, saya bisa menemukan ide untuk tugas saya, atau ketika saya sudah punya ide tapi bingung mau mengarah ke mana, saya menggunakan Perplexity. Menurut saya, itu cukup efektif membantu saya menemukan sumber data dan mengembangkannya, karena Perplexity sendiri juga menyediakan sumbernya.</i> (At first, I used Perplexity because there was an assignment that was like writing, it had something to do with writing, and I was

	confused about developing ideas. Then my friend suggested trying Perplexity. In Perplexity, I could find ideas for my assignment, or I had an idea but I was confused about what I wanted. I used Perplexity, and I think it's quite effective in helping me find data sources and develop it because Perplexity itself also provides the sources).
2. What motivated you to try Perplexity AI?	<i>Saya termotivasi menggunakan Perplexity karena awalnya saya bingung dengan tugas saya, mencari dan mengembangkan ide yang sudah ada. Setelah saya pakai Perplexity, ternyata bisa membantu tidak hanya menemukan dan mengembangkan ide, tapi juga menyediakan sumber yang relevan, jadi memudahkan saya.</i> (Using Perplexity is like, at first, I was confused about my assignment, looking for it and developing what I had, then I used Perplexity, and because it was improved, it could not only help me to find and develop ideas, but it also helped me to provide relevant sources or the results it gave were given the

	sources, so it made it easier for me).
3. What are the primary benefits you have experienced from using Perplexity AI in academic writing?	<i>Manfaat utama dari Perplexity yang saya rasakan adalah membantu saya menyediakan informasi, kemudian membantu mengembangkan ide yang saya punya dengan bahasa yang mudah dipahami, terstruktur, dan tentunya cepat. Selain itu, jawaban yang diberikan Perplexity juga disertai dengan data dan sumber.</i> (The main benefit given by Perplexity that is in accordance with my experience is that it helps me to provide information, then helps me to develop the ideas I have with language that is easy to understand, structured, and of course, it's fast. Also, the data given, the answers given by Perplexity, also have data, there are sources).
4. Have you encountered any limitations or difficulties while using	<i>Hambatan yang saya alami mungkin lebih ke sinyal, dan kadang referensi yang diberikan oleh Perplexity tidak semuanya berasal dari jurnal, artikel, atau buku. Kadang hanya dari web saja. Kalau dari web, sering kali sumbernya itu potongan-potongan saja, atau artikel yang tidak lengkap. Selain itu, jawaban</i>

Perplexity AI?	<i>dari Perplexity kadang terlalu umum, jadi kita perlu memberikan instruksi beberapa kali supaya jawabannya lebih spesifik dan sesuai dengan yang saya inginkan.</i> (The obstacles that I experienced were maybe sometimes the signal, and then the references given by Perplexity, not all of them are sourced from journals, articles, or books, or also from the web. If it's from the web, sometimes there are sources but like sources, I don't know what, just pieces, or sometimes there are articles but only pieces, not full. Also, sometimes the answers given by Perplexity are too general, so we need to give instructions several times again so that it can give more specific answers and in accordance with what I want).
5. How has Perplexity AI influenced your academic writing	<i>Perplexity berpengaruh pada keterampilan penulisan akademik saya, karena saya merasa terbantu dalam hal seperti menyusun argumen, atau mencari dan mengembangkan ide supaya tulisan saya lebih terstruktur, logis, dan bagus.</i> (Perplexity is able to influence my academic writing skills because I feel it helps me in

skills?	academic writing, like arranging arguments or like I want to find ideas or develop the ideas you have so that they are more structured, logical, and good).
6. Do you feel more confident in your writing after using Perplexity AI?	<i>Perplexity berpengaruh pada keterampilan penulisan akademik saya, karena saya merasa terbantu dalam hal seperti menyusun argumen, atau mencari dan mengembangkan ide supaya tulisan saya lebih terstruktur, logis, dan bagus. (I feel more confident in writing when I use Perplexity because, as I said before, Perplexity helps me in developing the ideas I have, so if I have an idea about something, I can check whether the idea I have is good enough or needs to be developed further. Therefore, in my opinion, by using Perplexity, my writing will be better.)</i>
7. What suggestions do you have for improving Perplexity	<i>Saran saya mungkin Perplexity bisa menyediakan sumber yang lebih terpercaya. Karena kadang kita hanya mendapatkan potongan artikel atau sumber dari web, jadi mungkin bisa memperbanyak sumber dari artikel, jurnal, atau buku yang benar-benar</i>

AI to better support academic writing?	<i>kredibel.</i> (The suggestion that I can give is that Perplexity should perhaps provide sources that are more reliable. If the source of the article or book is more reliable, sometimes we find only pieces or from the web, so maybe it can be from all of that, which is really good).
8. Are there any additional features you would like to see in Perplexity AI?	<i>Mungkin bisa ditambahkan fitur seperti deteksi plagiarisme, jadi kita bisa tahu apakah tulisan kita mengandung plagiarisme atau tidak.</i> (Certain features maybe can add like plagiarism, so that we can also tell whether it's plagiarism or the location of the writing).
9. How do you use the available features in Perplexity AI (e.g., topic analysis,	<i>Saya biasanya menggunakan Perplexity untuk analisis. Misalnya saya punya topik, saya ingin pemahaman yang lebih dalam atau lebih luas tentang topik tersebut, jadi saya minta Perplexity untuk mengembangkan ide yang ada supaya saya bisa memahami lebih baik.</i> (What I use Perplexity for is like analysis. I have a topic, I want to have a deeper or more

sentence suggestions)?	expensive understanding of the topic I have, so I ask Perplexity to develop the existing idea so that I can better understand and can).
10. Have these features been helpful in your academic writing process?	<i>Tentu saja, fitur-fitur di Perplexity sangat membantu proses penulisan akademik saya, karena Perplexity bisa membantu mengembangkan ide yang saya punya dengan baik dan cepat. Saya juga bisa memastikan bahwa tulisan saya itu baik dan penjelasannya mudah dipahami.</i> (Of course, the features in Perplexity are very helpful for my academic writing process because Perplexity can help me to develop the ideas I have well and of course it's fast. I can also make sure that my writing is good and what the explanation is also easy to understand).

6. Participant INFA

Question	Answer
1. Can you describe	<i>Saya pertama kali tahu tentang Perplexity itu dari dosen, lalu saya coba menggunakannya.</i>

your first experience using Perplexity AI for academic writing?	<i>Tapi menurut saya, fitur-fitur di Perplexity tetap perlu dibaca ulang, dibaca dan ditulis lagi dengan tangan. Itu pengalaman saya, karena menurut saya, kelebihan dan kekurangannya adalah kita tetap harus membaca dan menulis ulang dengan kata-kata kita sendiri. Soalnya kalau hanya mengandalkan AI, pasti ada saja kesalahan atau hal yang kurang sesuai, jadi memang perlu direvisi lagi.</i> (Using Perplexity, I was told about it by a lecturer, then I tried Perplexity. But in my opinion, the features of Perplexity still need to be read again, read and written by hand, that's my experience because I'm really, well, the plus and minus are, if, what is it, in my opinion, it needs to be read again and written according to our own words, so that what is it called, if you use AI, there are also errors, if there is something that doesn't fit, so we have to read and rewrite what is there.
2. What motivated	<i>Karena kemampuannya membantu dalam membuat kerangka tulisan. Tapi kalau untuk</i>

you to try Perplexity AI?	<i>artikel, saya jarang pakai Perplexity, hanya kadang-kadang saja kalau memang butuh. Menurut saya, kebanyakan yang ditampilkan di Perplexity itu repository.</i> (Because of its ability to help with the framework, not to mention the articles, if I rarely use Perplexity, it's just sometimes when I need it, I use Perplexity, but most of what is displayed in Perplexity is in my opinion the repository.)
3. What are the primary benefits you have experienced from using Perplexity AI in academic writing?	<i>(Manfaat utama yang saya rasakan adalah saya terbantu dalam hal referensi. Tapi referensi yang diberikan Perplexity itu dari repository, dan itu juga jadi PR buat saya, karena saya harus membaca lagi poin-poin yang ditampilkan, lalu mencari referensi tambahan di Google Scholar. Tapi saya merasa lebih up-to-date dengan Perplexity, karena fitur-fiturnya mampu memberikan contoh-contoh yang relevan dengan penelitian-penelitian sebelumnya.</i> (The main benefit that I have experienced when using Perplexity is that I was helped with

	references, but the references they displayed from the repository, that also became my homework when writing it, so I read again the points that we displayed, then I looked for references again on Google Scholar. But I feel up-to-date with Perplexity because the features of Perplexity are able to provide examples that are relevant to previous research).
4. Have you encountered any limitations or difficulties while using Perplexity AI?	<i>Ada hambatannya, yaitu penggunaannya itu terbatas. Jadi tidak bisa terus-menerus digunakan, harus memilih status dulu sebelum bisa membaca lagi.</i> (There are obstacles, but if the usage is already limited, it cannot be used continuously, you have to choose the status first before we can read it again.)
5. How has Perplexity AI influenced your academic	<i>Perplexity berpengaruh pada kemampuan menulis akademik saya. Setiap kali Perplexity menampilkan tulisan, saya baca lagi dan tulis ulang, jadi itu membantu saya dalam proses menulis. Saya juga jadi tidak hanya copy-paste, tapi menulis ulang dengan hasil pemahaman</i>

writing skills?	<i>saya sendiri.</i> (Perplexity affects my academic writing ability, when displaying writing, I read it again and write it, it also helps me in writing, increasing my academic writing ability, so I don't just copy and paste, but I rewrite with the results that I have).
6. Do you feel more confident in your writing after using Perplexity AI?	<i>Lima puluh-lima puluh, karena kalau saya hanya copy-paste dari Perplexity, saya merasa kurang percaya diri. Tapi kalau saya ubah dengan kata-kata saya sendiri dan membuatnya lebih mudah dipahami pembaca, di situlah saya merasa lebih percaya diri. Jadi bukan sekadar copy-paste, lalu langsung dijadikan tulisan akademik.</i> (Fifty, because if I just copy and paste from Perplexity, I always feel less confident, but when I change it with my own words and make it easier for readers to understand, that's where I feel confident. So it's not like I copy and paste and then I use it as my academic writing without changing it).
7. What	<i>Seperti yang saya bilang tadi, fitur pemberian</i>

suggestions do you have for improving Perplexity AI to better support academic writing?	<i>referensinya kebanyakan dari repository. Kalau referensinya bisa lebih bervariasi dan cakupannya lebih luas, mungkin Perplexity bisa jadi aplikasi favorit untuk penulisan akademik. (That's what I was talking about earlier, the feature of giving references is mostly from the repository. If there are more references and the scope is wider, then it might become a favorite application in academic writing, its feature).</i>
8. Are there any additional features you would like to see in Perplexity AI?	<i>Seperti yang saya bilang tadi, fitur pemberian referensinya kebanyakan dari repository. Kalau referensinya bisa lebih bervariasi dan cakupannya lebih luas, mungkin Perplexity bisa jadi aplikasi favorit untuk penulisan akademik. (Of course, because I can add what I see from the analysis and writing, and that's the improvement of the expansion or the provision of more references, that will make Perplexity later become the main choice application, even for academic writing, if its features are improved).</i>
9. How do you use the	<i>Saya menggunakan analisis topik untuk memetakan bidang penelitian, selain itu juga</i>

available features in Perplexity AI (e.g., topic analysis, sentence suggestion?	<i>menggunakan fitur saran kalimat untuk memperbaiki alur logika dalam tulisan saya.</i> (I use topic analysis to map the research field, besides that, also the sentence suggestion feature to improve the logical flow in my writing, like that.)
10. Have these features been helpful in your academic writing process?	<i>Tentu saja, sangat membantu saya, terutama dalam tahap perencanaan penulisan akademik. Misalnya dalam merancang bab 1, bab 2, bab 3, dan seterusnya. Itu membuat saya lebih memahami bagaimana menggambarkan tulisan saya agar lebih terarah dan lebih baik.</i> Of course, mostly it helps me when in the process of academic writing planning, especially in the planning of how I will describe chapter 1, chapter 2, chapter 3 like that, and it makes me more understand to give a better view of my writing so that I have a view of what will happen later.

3. Coding

Emergent Themes (Code)	Coded Excerpt Examples	Common Identified Themes from Participants
1. Awareness of Needs and Writing Challenges (MK)	“I know that introductions are my weakness. I get stuck thinking how to start.” – AA “I realized my weakness is structuring.”	Students are aware of their personal writing difficulties and use Perplexity AI purposefully to support planning and idea generation.
2. Critical Evaluation of AI Output (MM)	“Sometimes Perplexity gives ideas that are too general, so I always compare it with my own understanding.” – MW “I double-check with Google Scholar.”	Students monitor and evaluate the relevance, reliability, and academic suitability of Perplexity AI’s responses.
3. Strategic Control and Adaptation (MC)	“I don’t use the sentences exactly as they are. I usually	Students regulate and adapt AI suggestions based on

	change the wording or combine the ideas with my own.” – NA	their writing goals, showing active control over their composition.
4. Planning and Idea Generation (MK & MC)	“When I didn’t know how to start, I typed the topic into Perplexity and it gave me some ideas that I could expand.” – AN	Perplexity AI helps students overcome writer’s block by supporting early planning and content direction in writing tasks.
5. Structuring and Organizing Content (MM)	“Perplexity helped me see the flow — like, what comes first, and what should be explained after that.” – MW	Students use Perplexity AI to organize their ideas logically and evaluate the coherence of their writing.
6. Language Enrichment and Academic Tone (MK)	“Instead of saying 'really good', I learned to say 'highly effective'.” – NA	Students become more aware of academic language and expand vocabulary through AI suggestions, enhancing formal writing expression.

7. Self-Evaluation and Strategic Revision (MM & MC)	“I use it to test my writing. I type a sentence and then ask Perplexity to reword it. If the result is better, I learn from it.” – INFA	Students evaluate their draft by comparing it with AI output, then revise strategically, promoting deeper writing reflection.
8. Confidence and Writing Autonomy (MC/Affective)	“Now I feel less nervous about writing... I still do the writing, but Perplexity helps me think clearly.” – AA	Students feel more confident and autonomous, using Perplexity as a support system that reinforces their role as decision-makers.

4. Documentation



Figure 1. Interview with participant NA



Figure 2 interview with participant ANB



Figure 3 Interview with participant MW



Figure 4 interview with participant MTW



Figure 5 Interview with participant AA



Figure 6 Interview with participant INFA

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