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EFL Secondary Students' Experiences in Using DeepSeek AI in Writing Descriptive Texts

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Abstract

Artificial intelligence has become increasingly visible in English language learning, yet classroom evidence concerning how secondary students actually work with newer generative AI platforms remains limited. This article reports the experiences of nine eighth-grade EFL students who used DeepSeek AI while producing descriptive texts in a public junior high school in Surabaya, Indonesia. A qualitative case-study design drew on classroom observation, field notes, reflective notes, semi-structured interviews, students' writing activities, and coded interview data. The analysis followed the interactive model of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. The findings show that students used DeepSeek AI across planning, drafting, revising, and editing. They sought ideas, vocabulary, translation, sentence support, and language correction, but they did not experience the tool as effortless. Long or difficult responses, uncertainty about information, unfamiliar features, limited vocabulary, problems organizing ideas, difficulty describing people, device and login constraints, and classroom noise shaped their use. Students responded by revising prompts, checking AI information, consulting peers or tutorials, proofreading with AI, filtering vocabulary, modifying AI output, sharing devices, using another account, and managing classroom distraction. DeepSeek AI therefore functioned most productively as a supporting resource when students retained control over selection, revision, and verification and when teacher guidance discouraged direct copying.

Keyword: Writing, DeepSeek AI, Descriptive Text, EFL Secondary Students, Experiences.

INTRODUCTION

Writing remains one of the demanding skills for EFL learners because students must generate ideas, organize information, select vocabulary, control grammar, and shape those elements into a coherent text. Descriptive writing makes these demands visible at an early stage

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of English instruction because learners are expected to identify a specific person, place, object, or phenomenon and develop its characteristics through precise language. Indonesian learners have been reported to experience problems not only with linguistic accuracy but also with the typical features and organization of descriptive texts, which makes the genre a useful site for examining how learners seek support while composing (Kaharuddin et al., 2022). Robillos and Bustos (2023) also emphasize that descriptive writing requires detailed language choices that allow readers to construct a clear mental representation of the subject. These requirements explain why students may turn to digital tools when they cannot immediately find words, arrange descriptions, or revise language independently.

Artificial intelligence writing tools have expanded the kinds of assistance available during English composition. Platforms such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, QuillBot, DeepL, Perplexity AI, and DeepSeek can provide ideas, vocabulary, translation, paraphrasing, feedback, and language correction, while students remain responsible for deciding whether an output is relevant to their writing. Suryani and Fithriani (2024) describe the growing use of AI tools in writing classes as part of students' broader preference for digital support, whereas Pratama and Hastuti (2024) report that AI can contribute to EFL writing development when it is integrated into learning activities rather than treated as a replacement for instruction. The pedagogical value of such tools therefore depends on the way learners interact with the output, not merely on whether the technology can generate grammatically polished text.

DeepSeek AI has emerged as an alternative generative AI platform whose reasoning-oriented architecture and structured responses distinguish it from tools that have dominated earlier educational research. Okaiyeto et al. (2024) identify DeepSeek as a newer large language model with broad potential for global access, while AlAfnan (2025) reports strengths in grammatical precision, factual consistency, and structural organization across several writing tasks. Those characteristics can be useful for secondary EFL students who need help with vocabulary, sentence form, and the organization of descriptive information. DeepSeek can still produce responses that require human interpretation and revision, so apparent linguistic fluency should not be equated with automatic suitability for a student's task. Jin et al. (2025) similarly position the platform as a writing assistant whose outputs need human evaluation rather than as an autonomous author.

Existing AI-assisted writing research has concentrated heavily on ChatGPT, higher education, academic writing, and measurable writing outcomes. Teng (2024) found that EFL learners perceived ChatGPT feedback as supportive of motivation, engagement, confidence, and collaboration, but the participants and writing context differed from junior secondary

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descriptive writing. Pratama and Hastuti (2024) investigated ChatGPT and Gencraft through a mixed-method approach, offering evidence of writing improvement without providing the same depth of attention to how individual secondary learners negotiate AI outputs across successive writing stages. Research centered on newer platforms such as DeepSeek is still comparatively limited, even though comparative work suggests that its language-processing performance is competitive with other large language models (Gao et al., 2025). The gap is therefore not simply a lack of studies about AI; it concerns the limited qualitative evidence about how younger EFL learners actually use DeepSeek, what problems arise during that use, and what they do when the tool does not immediately meet their needs.

Students' experiences with AI-assisted writing are shaped by both writing demands and the practical conditions surrounding tool use. Malik et al. (2023) describe internal concerns involving organization, academic language, critical thinking, and reliance on generated content, while Crompton et al. (2024) identify technological and pedagogical challenges that can interrupt AI-supported language learning. Students may also face uncertainty when AI gives an unfamiliar word, an answer that is too long, or information they do not fully trust. Excessive reliance can further weaken the opportunity to practice independent decision-making if learners replace large portions of their own text rather than using AI selectively (Gasaymeh et al., 2024). These concerns make students' coping strategies as important as the challenges themselves because the quality of AI-assisted writing depends on how learners question, filter, verify, and reshape generated material.

Three questions guide the inquiry reported here: how secondary school students use DeepSeek AI in writing descriptive texts, what challenges EFL secondary students face while using the platform, and what strategies they employ to overcome those challenges. The focus remains on students' experiences during the writing process rather than on a numerical comparison of writing scores. This emphasis follows the need to understand the actions, decisions, and difficulties that become visible when AI is embedded in authentic classroom work. Wang (2025) argues that generative AI-assisted writing processes are best understood by examining how writers perceive and manage the interaction between their own composing decisions and machine-generated support. A qualitative account of classroom use can therefore reveal forms of assistance and resistance that would be difficult to capture through outcome scores alone.

METHOD

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A qualitative case-study design was used to examine students' experiences in a natural classroom setting. The design was selected because the central concern involved how learners interacted with DeepSeek AI, what difficulties they encountered, and how they responded to those difficulties during descriptive writing. Case-oriented qualitative inquiry allows researchers to retain the contextual details of participant behavior and meaning rather than reducing experiences to isolated variables (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Trustworthiness was supported through triangulation across observation, interviews, reflective notes, and students' classroom records, together with member checking of reported experiences. The analysis remained descriptive and interpretive, with attention to the relationship between what students said in interviews and what was observed while they worked.

The setting was one public junior high school in the western part of Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia. One eighth-grade class was chosen purposively because students had prior exposure to AI tools and the school incorporated technology into English learning. Classroom observation involved the full class of 34 students, while nine students became key interview participants. The nine were selected with the English teacher's recommendation to represent high, medium, and low levels of English fluency and to provide varied accounts of AI use. Purposive selection was appropriate because the inquiry required participants who could speak from direct experience with the issue being explored rather than a statistically representative sample (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Participation remained voluntary, identities were anonymized, and students were informed that they could withdraw.

Data came from classroom observation, an observation checklist, field notes, reflective notes, semi-structured interviews, and students' writing activities. Observation addressed the first research question by recording how students used DeepSeek AI during planning, drafting, revising, and editing, while also documenting visible challenges. Semi-structured interviews were the main source for the second and third questions because they allowed students to explain uncertainty, writing difficulties, device problems, and the strategies they used when difficulties appeared. Widodo (2021) notes that semi-structured interviewing is useful for obtaining detailed participant perspectives while retaining enough flexibility for follow-up questions. Interview questions were delivered in Indonesian so that students could explain their experiences without the additional burden of responding in English.

The instruments were derived from the research questions and relevant literature on the writing process and AI-assisted writing, then subjected to content validation by an English Language Teaching expert. Revisions were made to the wording of interview questions, observation indicators, and directions before data collection. Classroom writing activities

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followed four observed stages: planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Students first used DeepSeek AI to generate ideas and vocabulary, developed their own drafts, revisited unclear or weak sections with feedback, and finally used AI to check language errors before submitting a final version. Mali and Salsbury (2021) describe writing as a staged but flexible process in which drafting, revising, and editing can be supported by technology without removing the writer's responsibility for the text.

Data analysis followed the interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Interview transcripts were read repeatedly, relevant statements were highlighted, and segments were coded according to the problems and strategies reported by students. Observation and reflective notes were condensed to capture behavior, classroom conditions, and responses to difficulties. MAXQDA was used to support coding of interview data, after which codes were grouped into broader themes corresponding to AI-related challenges, writing challenges, external challenges, and the strategies used to address each group. Conclusions were checked against multiple data sources so that an interview claim could be interpreted alongside classroom evidence rather than in isolation (Miles et al., 2014).

Table 1. Alignment of Research Questions, Data, and Data Sources

Research focus	Data	Primary/supporting sources
Use of DeepSeek AI in descriptive writing	Student interactions, behavior, writing-stage activities	Observation, field notes; supported by interviews
Challenges encountered while using DeepSeek AI	Student responses about AI-related, writing-related, and external difficulties	Semi-structured interviews; supported by observation notes
Strategies used to overcome challenges	Student explanations of problem-solving actions	Semi-structured interviews; supported by reflective notes

The alignment between questions and data sources kept the analysis close to the type of evidence required by each question. Observable use was not inferred solely from interviews, and students' explanations of difficulty were not reduced to researcher observation. Triangulation was especially important because some problems, such as uncertainty about AI information, were primarily cognitive and had to be expressed by participants, whereas device sharing and classroom noise were directly visible during classroom activity. Creswell and Poth (2018) emphasize that combining multiple qualitative sources strengthens the credibility of interpretations by allowing the same phenomenon to be viewed from different forms of evidence.

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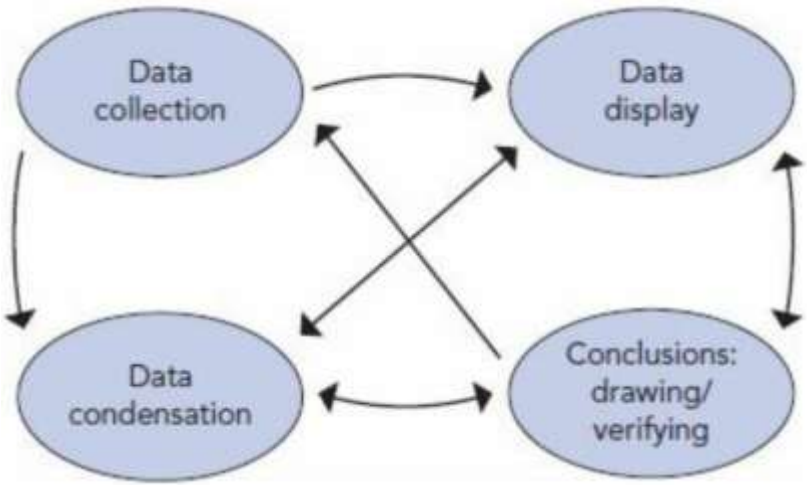


Figure 1. Components of the Interactive Data Analysis Model (adapted in the thesis from Miles & Huberman, 1994)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Use of DeepSeek AI Across the Writing Process

Students used DeepSeek AI at each of the four writing stages observed in class, but the function of the tool changed as the writing developed. Planning centered on topic generation, information gathering, and vocabulary support. Students entered prompts to obtain ideas about the person they wanted to describe, asked for vocabulary related to physical appearance, behavior, or occupation, and then used selected information to construct a simple outline. The first field note recorded that AI was especially visible in idea generation, vocabulary selection, translation, and spelling checks while students moved from brainstorming to an initial outline. This pattern resembles the role of technology described by Pratama and Hastuti (2024), who found that AI can help EFL learners expand possibilities at the early stages of writing when it remains linked to a specific instructional task.

Drafting revealed a more complicated relationship between assistance and authorship. Students were instructed to write the first draft from their outlines using their own writing, while DeepSeek AI could be consulted when additional vocabulary or language support was needed. Some students entered very simple prompts that caused the system to produce complete paragraphs, creating a temptation to replace rather than support their own composing. Reflective notes from the first meeting show that the observer repeatedly reminded students to use AI for brainstorming, vocabulary, translation, and spelling rather than direct copying.

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Marzuki et al. (2023) similarly warn that AI writing tools can influence both content and organization, which makes teacher guidance necessary when learners have not yet developed stable routines for evaluating generated text.

Revising involved a wider network of feedback than AI alone. Students reread their drafts, discussed grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, and organization, exchanged drafts with peers, and consulted the teacher as well as DeepSeek AI. Some learners acted on peer and teacher suggestions, whereas others still attempted to replace large sections with AI-generated text. The second field note describes repeated reminders that revisions should represent students' own understanding and language ability. Teng (2024) reports that AI feedback can support engagement and confidence, but the classroom evidence here shows that feedback becomes educationally useful only when students interpret and incorporate it rather than accept it as a ready-made replacement.

Editing shifted the emphasis toward accuracy and final checking. Students used DeepSeek AI to identify spelling, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence-level problems before submitting their final texts. Several students also asked the observer to confirm whether their writing met the required criteria, suggesting that AI feedback did not eliminate their need for human reassurance. Fitria (2021) found that AI-powered writing assistance can effectively identify grammatical and mechanical errors, which is consistent with the students' use of DeepSeek as a proofreading resource. The classroom record nevertheless indicates that students treated teacher confirmation as an important final layer of judgment, especially when they were uncertain about whether AI corrections were appropriate.

The observed sequence suggests that DeepSeek AI functioned less as a single-purpose writing generator than as a changing support resource across the composing process. Early use was exploratory, middle-stage use was selective and revision-oriented, and final-stage use concentrated on error detection. Students' actions fit the recursive nature of writing described by Mali and Salsbury (2021), even though classroom activities were organized into identifiable stages. The use of AI did not remove movement between thinking, drafting, checking, and rewriting; it added another source of prompts and feedback that students had to manage alongside peer and teacher input.

Challenges Encountered by Students

AI-related challenges emerged first from the form and comprehensibility of DeepSeek responses. Several students said that answers were too long for what they needed, forcing them to spend extra time identifying the most useful information. One student explained that a request about a character's physical description produced such a long answer that it became

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difficult to understand, while another reported that an AI-generated title was longer than expected. Ramadhani et al. (2025) describe DeepSeek as a potentially supportive tool for English learning, but the student accounts show that usefulness depends on response length, vocabulary level, and alignment with a learner's immediate purpose. A technically complete answer can therefore become a practical obstacle when it exceeds the user's language level or information needs.

Uncertainty about accuracy formed a second AI-related problem. Participants did not automatically assume that every response was correct; several described doubt about word choice or the truth of information because different AI systems could produce different answers. Student S5 explicitly noted that every AI has different characteristics, leaving open the possibility that a response could be right or wrong. Such uncertainty indicates an emerging critical stance rather than simple distrust. Deep and Chen (2025) argue that academic use of AI requires critical judgment and integrity because generated output can appear authoritative even when it needs verification. The same principle was visible among younger learners who questioned AI information before deciding whether to use it.

Feature-related difficulty also appeared for students who were unfamiliar with the platform. A participant described DeepSeek's features as difficult to understand, suggesting that access to an AI tool does not automatically produce functional digital literacy. Students needed time to learn what the interface could do and how particular functions related to the writing task. Hidayat et al. (2022) emphasize that digital technology can support English learning when learners have the capacity to use tools purposefully, while the classroom experience here demonstrates that interface familiarity is itself part of that capacity. Tool availability and effective tool use should therefore be treated as separate conditions.

Writing-related challenges remained visible even when AI was available. Students reported difficulty describing a person's appearance or behavior, organizing ideas into a detailed paragraph, preparing an outline, and understanding unfamiliar vocabulary suggested by AI. Some learners found it hard to decide which part of an AI response should be summarized, while others had to translate words before they could judge whether the vocabulary was suitable. Nurfidoh and Kareviati (2021) identify vocabulary and organization as recurring difficulties in descriptive writing, and the present classroom evidence suggests that AI does not erase those weaknesses. Instead, the technology can expose them more clearly because students must still decide which generated words, sentences, or details belong in their own text.

External challenges involved devices, account access, and the classroom environment rather than internet connectivity. Six of the 34 students did not bring mobile phones during the

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first meeting, and two lacked phones during the second, leading to device sharing and use of an additional phone provided by the observer. Some interview participants also described login problems caused by forgotten passwords, which delayed their participation. Classroom noise became another distraction once students began discussing ideas and using phones, and several interviewees said that conversations among classmates interrupted concentration. Crompton et al. (2024) note that technical and contextual conditions can affect AI-supported language learning, and these observations show that relatively ordinary access problems can influence how independently students interact with AI.

Internet connection did not operate as a meaningful barrier for the nine interview participants. Every interviewed student reported that Wi-Fi or mobile data was adequate, and several explicitly said that they relied on their own data packages when necessary. The interview field notes therefore directed attention away from connectivity and toward other external issues such as device access, login credentials, and classroom noise. This distinction matters because lists of common AI barriers should not be imposed on a classroom when the local evidence points elsewhere. Chen and Gong (2025) discuss network-related difficulty as a possible constraint in AI-assisted learning, but the students here show that commonly reported barriers are context-dependent rather than universal.

Table 2. Challenges Identified from the Thesis Coding and Findings

Theme	Subtheme	Evidence reflected in student accounts
AI-related challenges	Understanding AI responses	Long responses and language that was difficult to understand
AI-related challenges	Uncertainty about AI information	Doubt about word choice, truth, and reliability of responses
AI-related challenges	Feature-related difficulty	Unfamiliarity with DeepSeek features or interface
Writing challenges	Vocabulary difficulties	Unfamiliar words and need for translation or clarification
Writing challenges	Organizing ideas	Difficulty selecting, summarizing, and arranging information
Writing challenges	Describing a person	Difficulty selecting accurate

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Theme	Subtheme	Evidence reflected in student accounts
		details about appearance, behavior, or occupation
External challenges	Device/account problems	No phone, shared devices, forgotten password or login delay
External challenges	Classroom environment	Noise and peer interaction that interrupted concentration

Strategies for Overcoming AI, Writing, and External Challenges

Students responded to unclear or unsuitable AI output by changing the interaction rather than abandoning the platform. Revising prompts was one of the most direct strategies: students asked again, requested shorter explanations, added more specific details, or asked DeepSeek to explain a difficult point in simpler language. S2 reported asking the AI to shorten its explanation, while S8 described providing more detailed instructions about what was wanted. These actions show an emerging understanding that response quality depends partly on how a request is framed. Güner and Er (2025) similarly highlight the importance of learner interaction patterns when students use generative AI, because users learn to negotiate with the system through repeated prompts rather than treating the first output as final.

Verification became the main response to uncertainty about AI information. Students compared answers with Google, other websites, other AI platforms, or a follow-up question to the same system. S8 explained that matching results across Google or another AI were taken as a sign that the information was probably correct, while S4 preferred to check another website. This strategy indicates that students were not simply consuming AI output; they were developing a basic cross-checking routine. Deep and Chen (2025) stress that responsible AI-supported writing requires active evaluation of generated information, and the students' behavior provides a classroom-level example of that principle in practice.

Peer support and tutorials helped students deal with unfamiliar DeepSeek features. Some participants asked classmates for help, and one student reported watching a tutorial as well as consulting a friend. These actions allowed students to continue working without requiring the teacher to solve every platform-related problem. Wu (2024) links digital learning to deeper learning when technology use supports active engagement rather than passive reception, and peer-assisted troubleshooting reflects that kind of engagement. Students'

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willingness to look for explanations outside the immediate AI conversation also shows that their problem solving extended beyond the tool itself.

Writing strategies concentrated on proofreading, vocabulary filtering, and modification of generated material. Students asked DeepSeek to check spelling or vocabulary errors, but they did not always accept every suggested word. S8 chose vocabulary that was familiar or personally preferred, S3 selected sentences considered relevant to the descriptive text, and S9 favored words that were easy to understand and frequently encountered. AI output was also summarized, rewritten, or reorganized using the students' own sentence structures. Nguyen et al. (2024) describe human-AI writing as a collaborative process in which the user's selection and revision decisions remain central, and the student accounts here show that even younger learners can exercise this kind of control when they are encouraged to filter rather than copy.

Modification of AI output was particularly important for maintaining student authorship. S2 said that only important sections were taken and summarized, while another response described rewriting information with the student's own language and sentence structure. Field notes support these interview claims by showing repeated teacher reminders that AI should function as a supporting tool. Marzuki et al. (2023) caution that AI can strongly shape writing content and organization, so rewriting and selective uptake are not minor editing choices; they are mechanisms that preserve the learner's cognitive involvement in composing. The effectiveness of the strategy depended on students understanding enough of the generated content to make meaningful choices about what to keep, change, or reject.

External problems were managed through practical adjustments. Students shared mobile phones, took turns typing, used another email account when login problems occurred, or used the observer's phone when necessary. Classroom distraction was handled by ignoring noise, focusing on completing the task, or reminding classmates not to be too loud. These strategies did not remove the external problems, but they prevented the problems from stopping participation. Barrett and Pack (2023) emphasize that classroom AI use is shaped by both student and teacher perspectives, and the evidence here suggests that workable classroom routines can be as important as the capabilities of the AI platform itself.

The combined pattern of strategies shows that successful use depended on student agency at several levels: technical access, prompt formulation, interpretation, verification, vocabulary choice, and revision. Students who could ask for clarification or filter information were better positioned to use DeepSeek as a support resource, whereas students who relied on complete AI-generated paragraphs required stronger teacher intervention. Wang (2025) argues that generative AI-assisted writing should be understood as a process in which writers

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continually negotiate control with the system. The present evidence supports that view by showing that the most productive actions were not those that generated the most text, but those that helped students make more informed decisions about their own text.

Table 3. Strategies Used by Students to Address Identified Challenges

Strategy group	Strategy	Observed/reported action
AI-related	Revising prompts	Ask again, shorten explanations, request simpler or more detailed responses
AI-related	Verifying AI responses	Cross-check Google, other websites, other AI, or follow-up questions
AI-related	Looking for tutorials/peer help	Ask friends or consult tutorials to understand features
Writing	AI proofreading	Ask AI to check spelling, vocabulary, and language errors
Writing	Filtering vocabulary	Select familiar, relevant, understandable words or sentences
Writing	Modifying output	Summarize, rewrite, or reorganize AI-generated material
External	Sharing/alternative access	Share devices, take turns, use another email account, use an available phone
External	Managing distraction	Ignore noise, focus on task completion, remind peers to reduce noise

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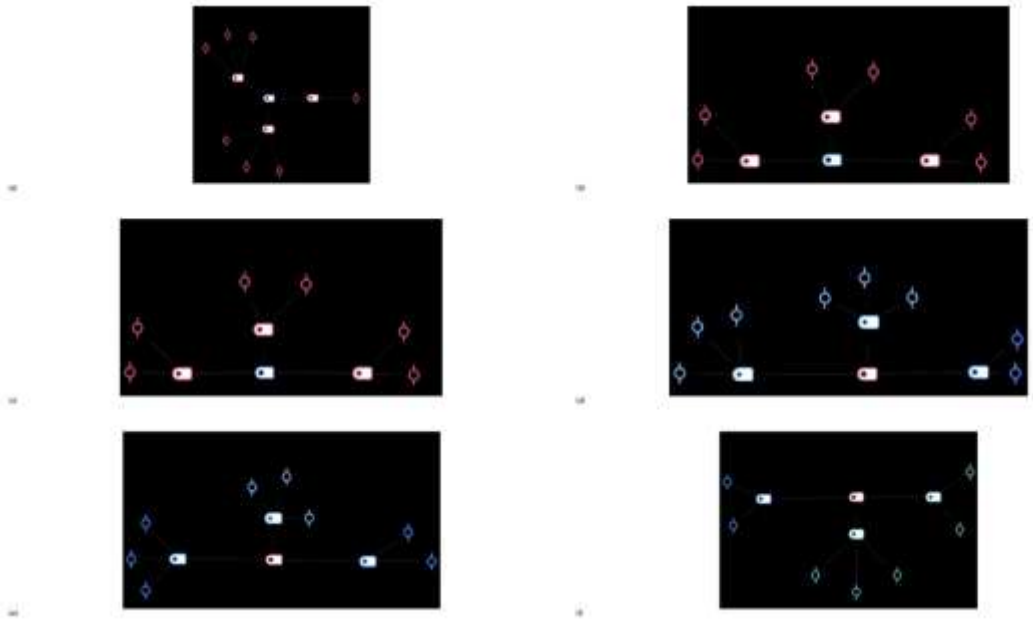


Figure 2. Coding maps reproduced from the thesis: (a–c) AI-related, writing, and external challenges; (d–f) strategies for overcoming AI-related, writing, and external challenges

The coding maps reinforce the relationship between challenge categories and the strategies students used to respond. AI-related difficulties were answered through new prompts, verification, and help-seeking; writing difficulties were answered through proofreading, filtering, translation, organization, and modification; external constraints were answered through device sharing, alternative accounts, and attention management. This pairing is analytically useful because it shows that students did not rely on one generic coping strategy across all problems. Malik et al. (2023) distinguish linguistic, cognitive, and technical concerns in AI-assisted writing, and the classroom evidence here similarly suggests that different problems require different forms of learner action.

Teacher guidance remained present across all three findings even though the analysis centered on student experience. The teacher and observer demonstrated how to use DeepSeek for brainstorming, reminded students not to copy generated paragraphs, provided feedback during revision, and checked final writing. Students also approached the teacher when they were unsure whether AI suggestions met the assignment criteria. Aljabr et al. (2025) argue that AI integration changes rather than eliminates the teacher's role, requiring educators to guide

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responsible and pedagogically meaningful use. The classroom experience supports that position because student independence grew through structured support rather than through unrestricted AI access.

The findings also complicate the assumption that easier access to generated language automatically reduces writing difficulty. Students obtained vocabulary and sentence support quickly, yet they still struggled to decide which information was relevant, how to organize it, and whether unfamiliar words could be used appropriately. AI therefore shifted part of the writing challenge from producing language to evaluating language. Gasaymeh et al. (2024) warn that heavy dependence on generative writing tools can limit independent skill development, and the observed tendency of some students to replace large sections with AI-generated text illustrates why evaluation skills must develop alongside access to language support.

Secondary learners showed early forms of AI literacy through prompt revision, cross-checking, and selective uptake, but those practices were uneven. Some students could articulate why an answer was too long or why information needed verification, whereas others depended more heavily on generated paragraphs and teacher correction. Ramadhani et al. (2025) describe positive student perceptions of DeepSeek as an English learning support tool, yet positive perception alone does not ensure critical use. Classroom instruction needs to make the hidden decision-making process visible by asking students to explain why they selected a word, rejected an AI suggestion, or trusted a source.

The evidence positions DeepSeek AI as most useful when it supports a learner-controlled writing process. Its value was clearest when students used it to generate options, clarify language, locate errors, or obtain feedback that they could subsequently judge. Direct replacement of student writing reduced that educational value because the learner no longer had to make the same lexical and organizational decisions. Jin et al. (2025) characterize DeepSeek as a powerful but human-dependent tool, and the experiences reported here support a similar balance: AI can accelerate access to language resources, but meaningful writing still depends on students' comprehension, selection, and revision.

Practical classroom conditions also deserve attention when AI-assisted writing is planned for younger learners. Device sharing changed the amount of individual interaction students could have with the tool, forgotten passwords delayed participation, and classroom noise sometimes disrupted concentration. These issues are less dramatic than concerns about hallucination or academic integrity, but they directly shape whether students can complete AI-supported tasks. Crompton et al. (2024) argue that effective AI integration requires attention to both affordances and constraints, and the field notes show why classroom logistics should be

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considered part of instructional design rather than treated as incidental technical problems.

The absence of internet problems among the nine interviewed students is equally informative because it narrows the local interpretation of external barriers. Students could rely on school connectivity or personal data, so the dominant external constraints were access to devices, accounts, and a quiet working environment. Research on digital learning often emphasizes infrastructure as a central concern, yet Hidayat et al. (2022) show that the educational effect of technology also depends on how learners and teachers engage with it. The Surabaya classroom illustrates that once basic connectivity is adequate, attention shifts toward usability, classroom management, and the quality of learner decision-making.

CONCLUSION

DeepSeek AI was integrated into students' descriptive writing through planning, drafting, revising, and editing rather than through a single act of text generation. Students used the platform to brainstorm, obtain vocabulary, translate unfamiliar language, improve sentences, and check errors, while classroom observation showed that teacher and peer feedback continued to shape the writing process. The experience therefore reflects a form of assisted composing in which AI expands available language resources but does not remove the need for student judgment. Nguyen et al. (2024) describe human-AI writing as a collaborative pattern built around user control, and the evidence from these secondary learners demonstrates that control through small decisions about prompts, wording, and revision.

Three groups of challenges shaped that process: problems related to AI responses and features, problems inherent in writing, and external classroom or access problems. Students answered those difficulties through prompt revision, verification, tutorials and peer assistance, AI proofreading, vocabulary filtering, output modification, device sharing, alternative account use, and attention management. Internet access was not identified as a barrier by the nine interviewed students, which distinguishes connectivity from the device, login, and classroom issues that were actually experienced. Deep and Chen (2025) emphasize the need for critical judgment in AI-supported writing, and the students' verification and filtering strategies show the beginnings of that judgment at the junior secondary level.

The classroom evidence points to a practical instructional principle: generative AI should be introduced as a resource that students must question, select from, and revise rather than as a shortcut to a finished paragraph. Teacher reminders against copying, peer discussion, structured writing stages, and explicit opportunities to verify output helped keep students involved in the composing process. Aljabr et al. (2025) argue that teachers remain central when AI is integrated into English writing instruction, particularly in guiding ethical and purposeful use. Future classroom work can build on these experiences by strengthening prompt literacy,

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vocabulary judgment, fact-checking habits, and reflective explanation of why particular AI suggestions are accepted or rejected.

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