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# Negotiating Academic Voice with Artificial Intelligence: A Qualitative Inquiry into Gemini-Assisted Task-Based Writing

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**Abstract**

The increasing use of generative artificial intelligence in academic writing raises important questions about how learners maintain academic voice, authorship, ownership, and ethical responsibility while incorporating AI-generated language and ideas. This qualitative study investigated how EFL learners negotiated academic voice during Gemini-assisted task-based writing and how structured AI-supported activities shaped their perceptions and practices of authorship. Thirty-three EFL learners at Universitas Pendidikan Mandalika participated through purposive sampling. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews and structured classroom observations and analyzed iteratively through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Methodological triangulation was employed to compare participants' reported experiences with their observable writing practices. The findings revealed three interrelated processes through which learners negotiated academic voice: selective acceptance, deliberate rejection, and purposeful transformation of Gemini-generated content. Students primarily accepted AI suggestions for linguistic clarity and academic expression, rejected content that was irrelevant, inaccurate, unverifiable, or inconsistent with their intended stance, and transformed AI output through paraphrasing, contextualization, reorganization, and integration with their own reasoning. The findings further showed that learners increasingly understood authorship as responsibility for meaning, decisions, verification, and final claims rather than exclusive production of every sentence. Initial independent reasoning and reflective justification strengthened perceptions of ownership, while extensive uncritical copying weakened authorial identification. Ethical concerns centered on verification, transparency, disclosure, and uncertainty regarding acceptable levels of AI assistance. The study concludes that Gemini can support academic writing without necessarily diminishing student voice when task design foregrounds critical evaluation, transformation, accountability, and reflective human–AI interaction.

**Keywords**: Academic voice; Authorship; Gemini-assisted writing; Generative artificial intelligence; Task-based writing

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## INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) has begun to reshape academic writing practices in higher education. Large language models can assist students in generating ideas, reformulating sentences, organizing arguments, improving grammatical accuracy, and developing disciplinary vocabulary. Consequently, writing is increasingly becoming a human–AI mediated process rather than an exclusively individual act of composition. This development offers substantial pedagogical potential, particularly for second- and foreign-language writers who may benefit from linguistic scaffolding and

immediate feedback. At the same time, it challenges conventional assumptions about originality, intellectual ownership, and academic voice. The central issue is no longer simply whether students use AI, but how they exercise judgment over AI-generated material and whether they remain responsible for the claims, interpretations, and positions expressed in their final texts. Recent scholarship therefore emphasizes that responsible AI-assisted writing requires human oversight, verification, transparency, and continued authorial accountability (Bell, 2023; Khlaif et al., 2023; Nam & Bai, 2023). Within this changing writing ecology, academic voice must be reconsidered not as the absence of technological assistance, but as the writer's capacity to retain control over meaning, argumentation, and rhetorical positioning.

This issue becomes particularly significant when students use systems such as Gemini during academic writing. Unlike conventional spelling or grammar tools, generative AI can propose complete arguments, provide explanations, restructure paragraphs, generate examples, and supply language that appears academically polished. Such capabilities blur the boundary between assistance and substitution. AI may function as a linguistic scaffold that helps students express ideas they have already developed, but it may also become a collaborative thinking resource that influences the direction and substance of an argument. At the more problematic end of this continuum, students may delegate substantial intellectual work to AI and reproduce machine-generated material with limited evaluation. The literature has accordingly described AI-assisted writing as involving varying levels of engagement rather than a simple distinction between permitted and prohibited use (Bekker, 2024). Structured use of AI can support writing development and digital critical thinking when learners remain responsible for evaluating claims and revising outputs (Alshehri et al., 2026), whereas uncritical reliance can weaken cognitive engagement, blur authorship, and create uncertainty regarding accountability (Akgün, 2025; McClain, 2025). These contrasting possibilities make student decision-making a crucial object of investigation.

Academic voice is especially important in this context because it reflects more than stylistic individuality. It involves the writer's stance, evaluative judgment, rhetorical choices, positioning toward sources, and ownership of claims. Research on AI-mediated writing increasingly suggests that voice does not necessarily disappear when AI is introduced; instead, it may be negotiated through interaction with machine-generated language. Aldamen et al. (2026), for example, conceptualize AI-assisted writing as an interactional process in which identity, agency, and disciplinary positioning are continuously negotiated. Similarly, posthumanist perspectives argue that writing with AI involves distributed forms of cognition and meaning-making, while maintaining the need for identifiable human responsibility (Karthika, 2026). This view is also compatible with relational approaches to research ethics, which emphasize accountability within human–AI collaboration rather than assuming that ethical authorship requires entirely AI-free writing (Le & Thùy, 2026). The key analytical question, therefore, is not whether AI has influenced the text, but whether students can explain, justify, and take responsibility for how AI-generated contributions were incorporated into their argument.

One useful way to investigate this negotiation is to examine how students respond to specific AI-generated suggestions. Students may accept an output when it improves clarity or expresses an intended idea effectively; reject it when it is inaccurate, generic, irrelevant, or inconsistent with their position; or transform it through revision, combination, contextualization, and reinterpretation. These patterns of acceptance, rejection, and transformation provide observable evidence of authorial decision-making. Transformation is particularly important because it reveals whether students actively reconstruct AI-generated material according to their own reasoning rather than merely reproducing polished output. Existing studies indicate that writers can selectively appropriate AI-generated language while maintaining control over disciplinary stance and interpretation (Aldamen et al., 2026; Alshehri

et al., 2026). However, AI-generated discourse may also contribute to linguistic standardization and potentially reduce variation in scholarly expression, raising concerns about the homogenization of academic voice (Forgas et al., 2026). Examining the decisions students make across the writing process can therefore provide a more precise understanding of how academic voice is preserved, altered, or weakened through AI mediation.

Task-based writing offers a particularly relevant pedagogical context for examining these processes because it can make students' reasoning and revision decisions visible. Rather than asking learners simply to produce a polished final text, task-based activities can require them to formulate an initial position, interact with Gemini, compare alternatives, evaluate generated content, verify information, revise selectively, and justify important decisions. Such structured workflows may prevent AI from functioning merely as a shortcut and instead position it as material for critical evaluation. Emerging AI-aware process pedagogies similarly argue that instruction should foreground planning, revision, verification, attribution, and reflection rather than focusing exclusively on final-product quality (Elturki, 2026). Process-oriented assessment can also capture prompt histories, revision trajectories, rationales for accepting or rejecting AI suggestions, and students' reflections on authorship, thereby making intellectual agency more assessable (Choi & Kim, 2026; Heng & Nawas, 2026; Sejdiu et al., 2026). In this sense, task design is not only a method for integrating AI into writing instruction but also a means of protecting and observing student ownership.

Despite growing research on GenAI in academic writing, several gaps remain. Much of the literature has concentrated on writing quality, efficiency, ethical concerns, institutional policy, or general perceptions of AI use (Almufarreh et al., 2025; Lund et al., 2025; Mijatović et al., 2026). Other studies have examined AI literacy or broad questions of identity and agency (Aldamen et al., 2026; Aldighrir, 2026). Less attention has been given to the micro-level decisions through which students negotiate authorship while working with a specific generative AI system during structured academic writing tasks. In particular, there remains limited empirical understanding of which AI-generated ideas and linguistic formulations students accept, reject, or transform; why they make those decisions; and how task design shapes their sense of ownership and responsibility. This gap matters because evaluating only the final written product cannot reveal whether apparently sophisticated prose resulted from meaningful student reasoning and strategic human–AI collaboration on AI-generated text.

The novelty of the present study lies in conceptualizing academic voice as an observable process of human–AI negotiation rather than as a fixed textual property. Specifically, the study uses an accept–reject–transform framework to examine how students exercise epistemic and rhetorical control over Gemini-generated language and ideas within task-based academic writing. It further connects these observable writing decisions with students' reflections on ownership, ethical responsibility, and authorship. Rather than treating Gemini merely as a tool that either improves or threatens writing, the study investigates how pedagogical task design can mediate the relationship between AI assistance and student agency. This approach shifts attention from the amount of AI use to the quality of student judgment exercised during AI-assisted composition.

Accordingly, the study aims to investigate how students negotiate academic voice and authorship while using Gemini in task-based academic writing and to examine how structured writing tasks support students in maintaining ownership of their arguments while engaging critically and ethically with AI-generated content. To achieve these objectives, the study addresses the following research questions: *How do students negotiate their academic voice by accepting, rejecting, and transforming Gemini-generated language and ideas during task-based academic writing?* And *How do Gemini-assisted task-based writing activities influence students' perceptions and practices of authorship, ownership, and ethical responsibility for their final academic texts?*

## RESEARCH METHOD

### Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design to investigate how EFL learners negotiated academic voice, authorship, and intellectual ownership when using Gemini during task-based academic writing. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study focused on understanding participants' experiences, decision-making processes, perceptions, and behaviors rather than measuring predetermined variables or testing causal relationships. Specifically, the study sought to examine how students accepted, rejected, or transformed Gemini-generated language and ideas and how they interpreted issues of authorship, ownership, and ethical responsibility throughout the writing process. These phenomena involve individual judgments and context-dependent meanings that are more effectively explored through rich descriptive data than through numerical measurement.

The qualitative design was particularly suitable for addressing the two research questions because it enabled the researchers to examine both observable writing practices and participants' explanations of those practices. Observation provided evidence of how learners interacted with Gemini during task completion, whereas interviews allowed them to explain why particular AI-generated suggestions were retained, modified, or discarded. Combining these two sources enabled the study to investigate academic voice as a process of negotiation rather than merely as a characteristic of the final written product. The design therefore supported an examination of the relationship among AI-generated suggestions, students' authorial decisions, and their perceptions of responsibility for the final text.

The study was conducted within Gemini-assisted task-based academic writing activities. Students were given academic writing tasks that required them to formulate their own initial ideas, interact with Gemini, evaluate generated suggestions, revise their texts, and produce final written compositions. Particular attention was directed toward three observable forms of engagement with AI-generated content: acceptance, in which students incorporated Gemini-generated content with little or no modification; rejection, in which generated content was deliberately excluded; and transformation, in which students modified, reorganized, contextualized, combined, or reinterpreted AI-generated language or ideas. These categories provided an analytical framework for examining how learners maintained or renegotiated academic voice.

### Participants

The participants consisted of 33 EFL learners enrolled at Mandalika University of Education. They were selected because they had experience participating in online learning environments and had previously undertaken academic writing activities as part of their university coursework. This experience was important because the study required participants to perform academic writing tasks in a technology-mediated environment and to interact meaningfully with Gemini during different stages of the writing process. A purposive sampling technique was employed because the study required participants who possessed characteristics directly relevant to the research objectives. Participants were eligible for inclusion when they met the following criteria: (1) they were active students at Mandalika University of Education; (2) they were EFL learners who had completed or were currently undertaking academic writing instruction; (3) they had experience with online or digitally mediated learning; (4) they were able to use digital devices and online writing platforms independently; and (5) they agreed to participate in Gemini-assisted task-based academic writing activities and subsequent interviews and observations.

The sample of 33 participants was considered adequate for generating varied qualitative evidence concerning patterns of AI interaction while remaining sufficiently manageable for detailed analysis of participants' writing behaviors and interview accounts. The participants represented university-level EFL learners with varying levels of English writing proficiency

and experience with digital learning. Demographic information collected included age, gender, semester or year of study, previous academic writing experience, experience with online learning, and prior familiarity with generative AI applications. These characteristics were documented to provide contextual information rather than to establish statistically representative subgroups.

Participation was voluntary. Before data collection, students were informed about the purpose of the study, research procedures, confidentiality, and their right to withdraw without academic consequences. Participant identities were anonymized using codes such as P01, P02, and P03 in observation records, interview transcripts, and research reports. Because the study concerned AI-mediated academic practices, particular attention was paid to ensuring that participants understood that the research was designed to examine their reasoning and decision-making rather than detect or punish AI use.

**Instruments and Data Collection Technique**

Two primary research instruments were employed: semi-structured interviews and structured classroom observations. The instruments were designed to complement each other by capturing both participants' reported experiences and their observable interaction with Gemini during academic writing. A semi-structured interview protocol was developed based on the objectives and research questions of the study. The interview focused on five areas: (1) how students used Gemini during academic writing; (2) reasons for accepting particular Gemini-generated suggestions; (3) reasons for rejecting AI-generated ideas or language; (4) ways in which students transformed AI-generated material to reflect their intended arguments or academic voice; and (5) perceptions of authorship, ownership, transparency, originality, and ethical responsibility.

Examples of guiding questions included: *How do you decide whether to use a suggestion generated by Gemini?*; *Can you describe a situation in which you rejected Gemini's suggestion and explain why?*; *What changes do you usually make before incorporating Gemini-generated language into your writing?*; and *When both your ideas and Gemini-generated content appear in a text, who do you consider responsible for the final argument, and why?* Follow-up questions were used to obtain clarification and concrete examples of participants' writing decisions. The interview protocol underwent expert review by lecturers with experience in EFL academic writing, qualitative research, and educational technology. Their feedback was used to improve clarity, relevance, and alignment between the questions and the research objectives. A small-scale pilot interview was also conducted with students who had characteristics comparable to the target participants but were not included in the main study. Ambiguous, repetitive, or leading questions were revised before formal data collection. Although reliability in qualitative interviewing does not imply obtaining identical responses, consistency was supported by using the same core interview protocol across participants while permitting appropriate probing.

An observation guide was developed to document students' interactions with Gemini during task-based writing activities. The observation instrument focused on behaviors connected to academic voice and authorial control. These included students' initial formulation of ideas, construction of prompts, responses to Gemini-generated outputs, verification activities, revision behavior, and indications of acceptance, rejection, or transformation. The observation guide contained indicators such as: (1) requesting Gemini to generate or clarify an idea; (2) directly incorporating AI-generated text; (3) rejecting an output because it was inappropriate or inconsistent with the student's intention; (4) revising vocabulary, structure, stance, or argumentation suggested by Gemini; (5) verifying AI-generated claims or sources; (6) comparing multiple AI-generated alternatives; and (7) demonstrating ownership through independent justification of the final writing decision. Descriptive field notes were used

alongside these indicators to capture contextual behaviors that could not be reduced to predetermined categories.

Content validity of the observation guide was strengthened through alignment with the research questions and review by experts in academic writing and qualitative research. The guide was piloted before the main observations to determine whether the indicators could be identified consistently during authentic writing activities. Definitions of acceptance, rejection, and transformation were operationalized before data collection to reduce ambiguity in categorizing observed behaviors. Selected observation records were also independently reviewed by another researcher to examine consistency of interpretation. Any disagreements were discussed until a shared interpretation was established. The use of interviews and observations allowed methodological triangulation. For example, an observation might indicate that a student substantially modified Gemini-generated content, while the subsequent interview could explain whether the modification resulted from concerns about accuracy, voice, disciplinary appropriateness, or authorship. Such triangulation improved the credibility of the findings by preventing conclusions from relying solely on self-reported perceptions or observable behavior.

**Data Analysis**

The qualitative data were analyzed using the interactive analytical procedures of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Analysis was conducted iteratively rather than as a single stage following data collection. Interview transcripts and observation records were repeatedly examined to identify meaningful patterns related to academic voice, AI-assisted decision-making, authorship, and ethical responsibility. Data condensation began with transcription and organization of interview and observation data. The researcher read the complete dataset several times to become familiar with participants' experiences and identify segments directly related to the research questions. Irrelevant conversational material was excluded, while meaningful statements concerning Gemini use, writing decisions, academic voice, ownership, and ethical concerns were retained.

Initial coding was then conducted. Some codes were informed by the conceptual focus of the study, particularly acceptance, rejection, and transformation, while additional codes were generated inductively from the data. For example, possible codes included *grammar improvement*, *idea clarification*, *AI output perceived as generic*, *argument misalignment*, *verification of information*, *voice preservation*, *language modification*, *dependence on AI*, *ownership uncertainty*, *ethical concern*, and *responsibility for final claims*. Similar codes were subsequently grouped into broader categories and themes. Importantly, acceptance was not automatically interpreted as loss of authorship, nor was transformation automatically treated as evidence of strong academic voice. Each instance was interpreted together with the participant's explanation and the surrounding writing context. This distinction reduced the risk of forcing participants' practices into predetermined positive or negative categories.

Following coding and categorization, the condensed data were organized into matrices and thematic displays. One analytical matrix compared participants according to the type of interaction with Gemini, reasons underlying their decisions, observable revision behavior, and perceived ownership of the final text. For example, data were organized under categories such as Gemini output, student response, accept/reject/transform, reason for decision, evidence of academic voice, and authorship or ethical consideration. Displays were also created to compare interview accounts with observation evidence. This procedure made it possible to identify convergence and divergence between what participants reported and what they actually did during writing activities. For example, a participant might describe Gemini as being used "only for language improvement," while observation could reveal that the student also adopted AI-generated argumentative content. Such discrepancies were treated as analytically meaningful rather than automatically regarded as inaccurate responses.

The final analytical stage involved developing and verifying interpretations across participants and data sources. Emerging themes were continuously compared with the original interview transcripts and observation records to determine whether they adequately represented the evidence. Particular attention was given to recurring patterns concerning how students maintained academic voice, circumstances under which AI influenced their reasoning, differences among acceptance, rejection, and transformation behaviors, and students' interpretations of authorship and responsibility. Conclusions were verified through triangulation, peer checking, repeated comparison with raw data, and attention to negative or contradictory cases. Rather than removing examples that did not correspond to dominant patterns, such cases were examined to refine the interpretation. Representative quotations and observational evidence were retained to establish a transparent connection between the findings and the original data.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Research Findings

***How do students negotiate their academic voice by accepting, rejecting, and transforming Gemini-generated language and ideas during task-based academic writing?***

The qualitative analysis indicated that students negotiated their academic voice through three interrelated practices: selective acceptance, deliberate rejection, and purposeful transformation of Gemini-generated language and ideas. These practices did not occur as separate or fixed stages. Instead, learners moved back and forth among them depending on the relevance, linguistic quality, accuracy, and compatibility of Gemini's suggestions with their intended arguments. Interview data showed that students generally accepted AI-generated material when it clarified language that they had already conceptualized or when the wording was perceived as more academically appropriate. However, acceptance was rarely described as unconditional. Learners commonly reported rereading Gemini's suggestions, comparing them with their own ideas, and deciding whether the generated content still reflected what they wanted to communicate.

For example, one learner explained, *"Sometimes Gemini gives me a sentence that is clearer than mine, so I use it, but I first check whether the meaning is still the same as my idea" (P04)*. Another participant stated, *"I usually accept vocabulary or sentence structure, especially when my English sounds too simple, but I do not want Gemini to change my main argument" (P11)*. A third learner commented, *"If Gemini only helps me make the paragraph more academic, I feel comfortable using it because the idea was already mine" (P18)*. Similar reasoning appeared in the observation notes, where students frequently retained their original claims while replacing or reorganizing particular expressions suggested by Gemini. Another learner explained, *"I copy some expressions, but not the whole answer. I choose the part that matches the point I already planned" (P23)*, while P29 noted, *"For grammar and transitions, I accept many suggestions because they improve my writing without changing what I think*." These responses suggest that acceptance functioned primarily as linguistic scaffolding when students perceived themselves as remaining in control of the argument.

Rejection represented another important form of academic voice negotiation. Students rejected Gemini-generated ideas when they perceived them as irrelevant, overly general, factually uncertain, inconsistent with task requirements, or disconnected from their personal position. In these cases, rejection was not merely the absence of AI use but an active judgment about what should not become part of the final text. Several participants described Gemini as producing responses that appeared fluent but did not always fit the specific argument they intended to develop. P02 remarked, *"Gemini sometimes gives a good paragraph, but it is too general. I reject it because my task asks me to discuss a specific problem*." P08 similarly stated, *"There was one suggestion that sounded academic, but it was not what I meant, so I deleted it and returned to my own sentence*." Concerns about factual reliability also influenced rejection.

P15 reported, "*If Gemini gives information that I cannot confirm, I do not put it in my paper because later I have to be responsible for it*."

Another student emphasized personal positioning: *"I rejected one idea because it made my argument more neutral, but I wanted to criticize the issue. It did not represent my position" (P20).* P32 added, *"Sometimes the AI answer is longer and more sophisticated, but it can move away from the question. I prefer my shorter version when it is more focused*." Observation data supported these accounts, particularly when students deleted generated passages, returned to their initial outlines, or issued follow-up prompts asking Gemini to produce a more context-specific response.

The most significant evidence of academic voice emerged through transformation, in which students substantially modified Gemini-generated language or ideas before incorporating them into their final writing. Transformation included paraphrasing, shortening, combining AI suggestions with prior knowledge, changing stance markers, adding examples, reorganizing arguments, and contextualizing generalized responses. Unlike direct acceptance, transformation required students to intervene in the AI output and reconstruct it according to their own intentions. P05 explained, *"Gemini gave me three reasons, but I did not use them directly. I combined two reasons and added my own example because that was more connected to my topic*." P09 stated, *"I usually rewrite the sentence because Gemini's style can sound too formal for me. I want the final paragraph to still sound like something I can explain*." Another learner described transformation as a process of preserving personal reasoning: *"I asked Gemini for another way to explain my point, then I changed the answer using my own logic. The AI gave me an option, not the final answer" (P17)*. P24 similarly observed, *"When Gemini gives an idea, I sometimes connect it with the theory from class. That makes the paragraph different from the original AI response*." P30 added, *"I changed the introduction because Gemini made it too broad. I kept one sentence, added my own context, and moved the main idea to the beginning*." Observation records showed comparable behaviors, including multiple revision cycles, comparison of alternative AI outputs, and integration of independently written sentences with transformed AI-generated expressions.

The findings further suggested that students' academic voice was not located solely in the surface language of the final text but in the decision-making process behind the text. Learners who critically compared Gemini outputs with their initial intentions were more likely to describe themselves as the authors of the final argument. Conversely, moments of direct copying generated greater uncertainty about whether the final writing still represented their own voice. P06 stated, *"If I only copy Gemini, I do not really feel the paragraph is mine. I need to change or check it before I feel responsible for it*." P14 explained, *"My voice is not only my grammar. It is the opinion and the reason I choose. Gemini can help me express it, but I should decide the position*." P19 similarly observed, *"I feel it is still my writing when I know why every idea is there and I can explain it without opening Gemini*." Another learner noted, *"When I revise the AI answer, I understand the paragraph better. If I just paste it, sometimes I cannot explain it later*" (P26). P33 summarized this distinction by saying, *"Gemini can suggest, but I should be the one who decides the final meaning*."

Table 1. EFL Learners' Academic Voice by Accepting, Rejecting, and Transforming Gemini-Generated Language and Ideas during Task-Based Academic Writing

| Theme | Main Finding | Indicators from Interview and Observation | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Selective acceptance | Students accepted Gemini output mainly when it improved grammar, vocabulary, clarity, | Use of AI-generated wording; retention of original claims; checking semantic | Acceptance functioned mainly as linguistic scaffolding when |

| Theme | Main Finding | Indicators from Interview and Observation | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| | organization, or academic expression without changing their intended meaning. | equivalence before inclusion. | students retained control over ideas. |
| Deliberate rejection | Students rejected outputs that were too general, inaccurate, irrelevant, unverifiable, or inconsistent with their intended stance. | Deleting AI text; reverting to original ideas; rejecting unverified information; revising prompts. | Rejection represented authorial boundary setting and critical judgment. |
| Purposeful transformation | Students revised, combined, contextualized, shortened, expanded, or reorganized Gemini-generated material. | Paraphrasing; integrating personal examples; altering stance; combining AI and independently generated ideas. | Transformation provided the strongest evidence of active academic voice negotiation. |
| Meaning ownership | Students associated ownership with understanding and being able to defend the final argument rather than with producing every sentence independently. | Ability to explain claims; consistency between oral explanations and final writing; reflective justification. | Academic voice was experienced as intellectual and rhetorical control rather than purely linguistic originality. |
| Risk of direct copying | Students expressed lower ownership when Gemini output was inserted with little evaluation or modification. | Verbatim incorporation; difficulty explaining AI-generated claims; uncertainty about authorship. | Uncritical use weakened students' perceived ownership and authorial presence. |

The first research question demonstrates that academic voice in Gemini-assisted writing was negotiated through evaluative decision-making rather than simple acceptance or avoidance of AI. Students maintained greater control when they treated Gemini-generated material as provisional rather than authoritative. Selective acceptance allowed learners to benefit from linguistic support, while rejection enabled them to protect the relevance and direction of their arguments. Transformation was particularly important because it required students to reinterpret AI output in relation to their existing knowledge, task requirements, and rhetorical intentions. This suggests that the presence of AI did not automatically eliminate academic voice. Instead, the quality of students' engagement with AI determined whether their authorial presence remained visible.

The findings also indicate that academic voice should not be reduced to whether the final wording originated entirely from the learner. Students themselves tended to define ownership in terms of understanding, intentionality, and responsibility. When they could explain why a claim appeared in the text, justify why particular AI suggestions had been accepted or modified, and defend the final argument independently, they perceived the text as their own. Conversely, direct and unexamined copying created uncertainty about ownership. The data therefore support an interpretation of academic voice as discursive and epistemic agency, expressed through students' capacity to evaluate, reshape, and take responsibility for AI-mediated content.

***How do Gemini-assisted task-based writing activities influence students' perceptions and practices of authorship, ownership, and ethical responsibility for their final academic texts?***

The findings suggested that Gemini-assisted task-based writing reshaped students' understanding of authorship from an individual production model toward a model centered on decision-making and responsibility. Many participants initially associated authorship with personally producing every sentence, but their experiences during the tasks led them to distinguish between receiving assistance and surrendering control over the argument. Students generally believed that the final text could still be considered theirs when Gemini supported language, organization, or idea exploration, provided that they selected, verified, and revised the output. P03 stated, "*At first I thought using AI meant the writing was not completely mine, but after the task I realized that I am still the author if I decide the argument and check the final version*." P10 similarly explained, *"Gemini helps me, but it does not know exactly what I want to argue. I still have to choose what becomes part of the paper*." P16 noted, *"I think authorship is about who is responsible for the final text. Even if Gemini gives suggestions, I am the one submitting the assignment*." Another participant remarked, *"The AI is like a helper, but I should understand everything that is written. Otherwise, I cannot say that the paper is really mine*" (P22). P31 added, *"I feel ownership when I make the final decisions and can explain why I used or changed the Gemini response*." These responses indicate that task-based interaction encouraged students to conceptualize authorship as an active process of control, understanding, and accountability.

Students' perceptions of ownership were especially influenced by the requirement to begin with their own ideas before consulting Gemini. The task structure encouraged learners to formulate an initial position, which they subsequently compared with AI-generated alternatives. This sequence appeared to strengthen awareness of which parts of the text originated from their own reasoning and which emerged from interaction with Gemini. P01 explained, *"Because I wrote my main point first, I could see when Gemini was helping and when it was changing the direction*." P07 commented, *"Starting with my own outline made me more confident to reject AI suggestions because I already knew what I wanted to say*." Similarly, P13 stated, *"If I ask Gemini before thinking, I usually follow the answer. In this task, I had to think first, so Gemini became more like feedback*." P21 reported, "The task made me compare my first draft and the AI version. I noticed that some AI sentences were good but did not belong to my argument." P28 added, *"When I saw my first idea and the final paragraph together, I could identify what was still mine and what I had changed after using Gemini*." Observations also showed that students who produced initial outlines were more likely to challenge or modify AI-generated content than students who entered broad prompts before developing their own positions.

The task-based activities also heightened students' awareness of ethical responsibility, particularly regarding accuracy, attribution, and transparency. Participants repeatedly emphasized that fluent AI-generated language should not automatically be regarded as trustworthy. Verification became an important ethical practice because students recognized that they would be accountable for inaccuracies included in submitted work. P05 remarked, *"Gemini sometimes sounds very convincing, so I learned that I have to check information even when the answer looks correct*." P12 explained, *"If I use an idea from Gemini and it is wrong, I cannot blame Gemini because my name is on the assignment*." Another student stated, *"I think the ethical problem starts when someone uses AI without checking or without understanding what is written*" (P18). P25 raised the issue of transparency: *"I think lecturers should know if AI helped a lot, especially if we used it for ideas, not only grammar*." P30 similarly commented, *"For me, responsible use means I should say how I used Gemini and not pretend that everything was produced without help*." These accounts indicate that ethical responsibility was understood less as complete avoidance of AI and more as responsible oversight of its contribution.

The findings also revealed persistent uncertainty about the boundary between legitimate assistance and excessive dependence. Students did not always agree on how much Gemini-generated material could be used before authorship became questionable. Some considered extensive rewriting acceptable if they understood the content, while others believed that generating ideas through AI could already reduce ownership. P04 observed, *"Using Gemini for grammar is clearly okay for me, but when it gives the whole argument, I am not sure whether it is still my work*." P09 stated, *"If the idea comes from AI but I rewrite it, I still feel there is a question about who created the idea*." In contrast, P17 argued, *"Even if Gemini suggests the idea, I can still make it mine if I evaluate it, connect it to sources, and develop it differently*." P27 expressed a stricter view: *"If more than half of the paragraph comes from Gemini, I do not feel comfortable calling it my own*." P32 added, *"There is no clear line. That is why we need rules about what kind of AI help is allowed*." These disagreements demonstrate that ethical judgments were negotiated rather than fixed and that institutional guidance remained important for helping learners establish consistent boundaries.

Reflection activities appeared to strengthen students' awareness of the relationship between AI assistance and their own learning. When students were asked to explain why they accepted, rejected, or modified Gemini-generated content, they became more conscious of their responsibility for the final text. P06 stated, *"Writing the reason for my revision made me realize that sometimes I accepted Gemini just because the English sounded better, not because the idea was better*." P14 explained, *"The reflection helped me see that checking AI is part of academic writing, not something separate*." P19 noted, *"I became more careful because I knew I had to explain why I used the AI suggestion*." Similarly, P24 reported, *"When I had to justify my changes, I paid more attention to whether the paragraph still represented my argument*." P33 concluded, *"The task made me understand that using AI is not only about getting a better text. It is also about being responsible for every part of the final text*." Observational evidence supported these accounts, showing that students engaged in more checking, revision, and comparison when they were expected to explain their decisions afterward.

Table 2. Results of Gemini-Assisted Task-Based Writing Activities and Practices of Authorship, Ownership, and Ethical Responsibility

| Theme | Main Finding | Indicators from Interview and Observation | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Authorship as responsibility | Students increasingly viewed authorship as control over decisions, meaning, and final claims rather than exclusive production of every sentence. | Statements about final responsibility; ability to explain arguments; deliberate selection of AI contributions. | Gemini shifted authorship toward a process-based understanding centered on accountability. |
| Ownership strengthened by initial reasoning | Developing an initial position before using Gemini helped students distinguish their own ideas from AI suggestions. | Initial outlines; comparison between pre-AI and post-AI drafts; greater rejection of misaligned suggestions. | Task sequencing supported clearer ownership and stronger authorial agency. |
| Ethical responsibility through verification | Students recognized that they remained responsible for factual accuracy even when information originated from Gemini. | Fact-checking; source verification; refusal to use unverifiable claims. | Ethical AI use was associated with human oversight rather than trust in fluent AI output. |
| Transparency and disclosure | Students considered disclosure important when | Reflection on acknowledging AI use; | Transparency was viewed as part of |

| Theme | Main Finding | Indicators from Interview and Observation | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| | AI contributed substantially to ideas or language. | discussion of appropriate disclosure. | responsible authorship. |
| Uncertain boundaries of legitimate AI use | Students differed in their judgments about how much AI assistance was acceptable. | Concerns about idea generation, extensive AI-produced paragraphs, and dependence. | Ethical boundaries remained context-dependent and required institutional guidance. |
| Reflection strengthened responsibility | Justifying AI-related decisions increased awareness of ownership, learning, and ethical use. | Revision rationales; reflective comments; increased checking and editing. | Reflection transformed AI use from passive assistance into a more accountable learning process. |

The findings for the second research question show that Gemini-assisted task-based writing influenced students not only at the level of text production but also at the level of how they conceptualized authorship and ethical responsibility. Authorship became increasingly associated with control over the writing process, including the selection, verification, modification, and justification of AI-generated contributions. The requirement to begin with an independently formulated position was particularly important because it created an authorial reference point against which Gemini's suggestions could be judged. This task structure appeared to reduce passive dependence and made students more aware of how AI was influencing their arguments.

At the same time, the findings indicate that responsible AI-assisted writing cannot rely solely on students' individual intuitions. Participants differed in how they interpreted acceptable levels of AI contribution, especially when Gemini generated substantive ideas rather than merely supporting language. This variation reveals a need for explicit pedagogical and institutional guidance regarding disclosure, attribution, verification, and acceptable AI involvement. The most productive task-based practices were those that required students to document their decisions, verify claims, and reflect on ownership. These processes encouraged learners to regard ethical responsibility as an integral component of AI-assisted academic writing rather than as a separate concern imposed after the writing had been completed.

## Discussion

The findings demonstrate that academic voice in Gemini-assisted task-based writing was not simply preserved or lost; rather, it was continuously negotiated through students' decisions to accept, reject, and transform AI-generated language and ideas. This finding supports emerging perspectives that view AI-assisted writing as an interactional process in which learner agency is exercised through selection, evaluation, and revision rather than through complete independence from technological assistance. Aldamen et al. (2026) similarly argue that identity and agency in L2 academic writing emerge through ongoing human–AI mediation, particularly when writers actively evaluate generated suggestions against their intended disciplinary positioning. The present study extends this argument by showing more specifically how such negotiation becomes observable through three interrelated practices. Selective acceptance allowed learners to use Gemini primarily as linguistic support; deliberate rejection enabled them to protect the direction and relevance of their arguments; and purposeful transformation allowed them to reconstruct AI-generated material according to their own reasoning. Thus, the findings suggest that academic voice should be conceptualized less as linguistic purity and more as the writer's sustained control over meaning, stance, and argumentative decisions.

Selective acceptance was particularly evident when students used Gemini to improve grammar, vocabulary, transitions, clarity, and academic expression without relinquishing control over their central arguments. This pattern confirms Bekker's (2024) argument that engagement with large language models exists on a continuum and that some forms of AI assistance can support writing without necessarily displacing human authorship. It is also consistent with Alshehri et al. (2026), who found that structured human–AI collaboration can support academic writing and digital critical thinking when learners maintain oversight over generated content. In the present study, acceptance did not automatically signify dependency because students frequently assessed whether Gemini's formulation still represented their intended meaning before incorporating it into the text. This distinction is important because debates about AI-assisted writing sometimes equate any use of generated language with diminished ownership. The current findings indicate instead that linguistic assistance may remain compatible with authorial agency when students understand, endorse, and can defend the meaning conveyed in the final text.

Deliberate rejection provided equally important evidence of academic voice. Students rejected Gemini-generated material when it appeared generic, irrelevant, unverifiable, insufficiently focused, or inconsistent with their intended stance. This behavior confirms concerns raised by Bell (2023) and Khlaif et al. (2023) regarding the need for human oversight because fluent AI-generated language should not be assumed to be accurate or appropriate. The ability to reject apparently sophisticated output suggests that students were not treating Gemini as an epistemic authority. Rather, they were exercising evaluative judgment over the relevance and reliability of machine-generated contributions. This finding also strengthens the argument of Nam and Bai (2023) that AI literacy must include critical evaluation rather than merely technical competence. In the context of this study, rejection functioned as a form of authorial boundary setting: students preserved academic voice not only through what they retained but also through what they consciously excluded.

Purposeful transformation emerged as the clearest manifestation of active human–AI negotiation. Students paraphrased, reorganized, contextualized, combined, shortened, expanded, and supplemented Gemini-generated ideas with their own examples or theoretical knowledge. This finding aligns with Aldamen et al. (2026), who describe AI-mediated writing as a process in which writers negotiate their position by adapting machine output to disciplinary and personal intentions. It also resonates with Karthika's (2026) posthumanist account of AI-assisted writing as distributed meaning-making rather than a simple opposition between human originality and machine intervention. However, the present study adds an important pedagogical refinement: distributed authorship did not mean equal responsibility between student and AI. Students continued to perceive themselves as accountable for the final claims, particularly when they had transformed AI-generated material and could explain the reasoning behind those revisions. This suggests that transformation is not merely textual modification but an epistemic act through which learners reassert ownership.

Another major finding concerns students' understanding of authorship. Participants increasingly associated authorship with responsibility, understanding, and final decision-making rather than with producing every sentence independently. This interpretation parallels Akgün's (2025) discussion of the changing meaning of authorship in the era of generative AI and Askari's (2025) argument that AI does not necessarily erase authorship but requires it to be reconsidered in relation to human judgment and responsibility. The present findings therefore challenge a purely origin-based conception of authorship in which ownership is determined solely by who initially produced particular words. Instead, students tended to regard themselves as authors when they could explain the text, justify its claims, and accept responsibility for its content. This does not imply that any amount of AI contribution is ethically acceptable. Rather, it highlights a distinction between linguistic origin and epistemic

ownership: a writer may receive assistance at the level of expression while still remaining responsible for the intellectual position represented in the completed text.

The task-based structure also appeared to strengthen ownership because students were required to formulate initial ideas before consulting Gemini. This sequencing created an authorial reference point from which AI-generated alternatives could be evaluated. Students who began with their own outlines were better positioned to determine whether Gemini reinforced, altered, or diverted their argument. This finding supports Elturki's (2026) call for an AI-aware process writing pedagogy in which AI is integrated into identifiable stages of planning, drafting, evaluation, and revision rather than being treated as an unrestricted text generator. It also corresponds with process-aware approaches proposed by Sejdiu et al. (2026), which emphasize the importance of making students' decision-making visible in AI-supported educational environments. The present study extends these ideas by suggesting that task sequencing itself can function as an authorship safeguard. Requiring initial reasoning before AI interaction may reduce the tendency to allow the model to establish the conceptual direction of the assignment.

Ethical responsibility constituted another important dimension of the findings. Students recognized that they remained responsible for checking factual claims and could not transfer accountability to Gemini when inaccurate information appeared in their final texts. This confirms the ethical concerns identified by Almufarreh et al. (2025), Bell (2023), and Mijatović et al. (2026), all of whom emphasize verification, disclosure, and human accountability in AI-supported academic work. Importantly, students in the present study did not generally frame responsible AI use as complete avoidance of AI. Instead, responsibility was associated with verification, understanding, transparent use, and appropriate control over generated material. This finding is consistent with Le and Thùy's (2026) relational conception of "writing-with integrity," in which ethical practice depends on responsible relationships with technological assistance rather than technological exclusion.

Nevertheless, the findings also reveal unresolved tensions concerning the acceptable boundary of AI involvement. Participants differed in whether idea generation, extensive rewriting, or substantial AI-produced passages remained compatible with ownership. This uncertainty mirrors wider debates in the literature concerning authorship, attribution, and academic integrity (Akgün, 2025; Lund et al., 2025; Suchikova & Tsybuliak, 2025). While some students considered transformed AI-generated ideas legitimately integrated into their work, others remained uncomfortable when Gemini contributed substantially to conceptual content. This variation indicates that personal judgment alone is insufficient for establishing consistent ethical practices. Institutional and instructional guidelines are therefore necessary to clarify distinctions among language support, idea development, substantive generation, attribution, and inappropriate substitution of intellectual work.

Finally, reflective justification strengthened students' awareness of authorship and ethical responsibility. When learners were required to explain why they accepted, rejected, or transformed particular AI suggestions, their engagement shifted from passive consumption toward metacognitive evaluation. This finding supports Choi and Kim (2026), Heng and Nawas (2026), and Sejdiu et al. (2026), who emphasize AI literacy and process-oriented assessment rather than relying exclusively on final-product evaluation. The theoretical contribution of the present study therefore lies in framing academic voice as discursive and epistemic agency enacted through accept–reject–transform decisions. Practically, the findings indicate that Gemini-assisted writing should be organized around initial student reasoning, critical comparison, verification, transformation, disclosure, and reflection.

## CONCLUSION

This study investigated how EFL learners negotiated academic voice and authorship during Gemini-assisted task-based academic writing. The findings demonstrate that students' academic voice was constructed through a dynamic process of selective acceptance, deliberate rejection, and purposeful transformation of AI-generated language and ideas. Acceptance generally occurred when Gemini improved linguistic clarity or academic expression without altering the learner's intended argument, whereas rejection occurred when generated content was irrelevant, inaccurate, overly general, unverifiable, or inconsistent with the writer's stance. Transformation represented the strongest evidence of active authorial engagement because learners revised, contextualized, reorganized, and combined AI-generated material with their own reasoning. These findings indicate that academic voice in AI-supported writing should not be understood solely in terms of who originally produced the wording. Rather, academic voice involves the learner's ability to evaluate alternatives, maintain a recognizable argumentative position, understand the ideas included in the text, and justify the decisions that shape the final composition.

The study further concludes that Gemini-assisted task-based writing can strengthen rather than necessarily weaken authorship when pedagogy deliberately preserves student agency. Beginning with independently formulated ideas, evaluating AI output, verifying information, documenting revisions, and reflecting on AI use helped learners develop a stronger sense of ownership and responsibility. At the same time, uncertainty regarding how much AI-generated content could legitimately be incorporated demonstrates the continuing need for explicit institutional guidance on attribution, disclosure, verification, and acceptable levels of AI assistance. The study therefore proposes that responsible AI-assisted academic writing should focus not merely on controlling access to generative AI but on developing students' capacity for critical and ethical human–AI negotiation. The accept–reject–transform framework offers a useful pedagogical and analytical lens for making this negotiation visible. Future studies may extend these findings through longitudinal research, larger and more diverse institutional settings, comparisons across proficiency levels, and closer analysis of writing drafts, prompt histories, and revision trajectories.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no known financial, professional, personal, or other competing interests that could have influenced, or appeared to influence, the research, analysis, interpretation, or reporting of the findings presented in this article.

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## INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

Participation in this study was entirely voluntary. Before participating, all participants were informed about the purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits of the study. Participants were assured that their identities and personal information would remain confidential and that all information provided would be used solely for research purposes. They were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which they were otherwise entitled.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data used in this study are not publicly available due to privacy, confidentiality, and ethical obligations intended to protect the participants. This restriction ensures compliance with applicable ethical research standards and data protection requirements. Researchers or other interested parties may request access to the dataset for purposes such as verification or further scholarly analysis.

## DECLARATION OF USING AI TOOLS

Generative artificial intelligence tools were used during the preparation of this manuscript to assist with language refinement, academic expression, organization, and editorial revision. All AI-assisted outputs were critically reviewed, verified, and revised by the authors. The authors take full responsibility for the accuracy, interpretation, arguments, citations, and final content of the manuscript, and AI tools were not credited as authors.

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