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Unfolding Students' Lived Experiences in Technical Writing in Filipino amid the Advent of Artificial Intelligence Tools: A Phenomenological Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Students' writing practices are rapidly evolving as artificial intelligence (AI) tools become more accessible, influencing how learners generate, organize, and refine written outputs. This study explored the lived experiences of students in technical writing in Filipino amid the advent of AI tools using a qualitative phenomenological approach. Participants were selected from secondary schools in Tacurong City, and data were gathered through interviews and focus group discussions, then analyzed using thematic analysis. Findings revealed that AI significantly enhanced students' writing efficiency, organization, grammar, and overall confidence. Students were able to produce structured outputs more quickly and develop their vocabulary and writing skills. However, these advantages were accompanied by notable challenges, particularly inaccuracies in Filipino translations, overly formal or unnatural expressions, and limitations in contextual understanding. Despite these issues, students demonstrated awareness and adopted a balanced approach, using AI as a guide while maintaining their originality and personal input. Moreover, students perceived AI as both a beneficial and cautionary tool. While it improved clarity and productivity, concerns emerged regarding overdependence, reduced originality, and the weakening of critical thinking and personal writing voice. Emotional and ethical issues, such as diminished sense of effort and questions of authenticity, were also highlighted. Additionally, factors such as internet access, paid platforms, and prompt construction affected AI utilization. Overall, the study concludes that AI serves as a powerful support tool in technical writing when used responsibly. Students emphasized the importance of critical evaluation, independence, and authenticity, recognizing that meaningful learning results from the conscious integration of technology with personal effort and reflective practice.

Keywords: autonomy, digital literacy, authenticity, cognitive engagement



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INTRODUCTION

Background of Study

Students' writing practices are rapidly changing worldwide as readily available artificial intelligence (AI) writing tools alter how learners generate, organize, and revise text; research indicates that AI can enhance idea generation, structure, editing, and productivity while also raising concerns about over-reliance, integrity, and the potential erosion of independent composing skills.

In other Asian countries, scholarship on writing instruction stresses that technical writing requires discipline-specific rhetorical knowledge and genre awareness that may not automatically transfer when students outsource parts of the composing process to AI — a tension that international studies document but which leaves unanswered questions about how students actually experience this shift in their daily learning (Marzuki et al., 2023; studies on technical writing pedagogy).

In the Philippine context, early work on AI in education and transformative digital pedagogy highlights both opportunities for scaffolding student writing and persistent gaps in teacher preparedness, policy guidance, and equitable access to technology that shape how AI tools are used in classrooms (Capinding, 2024). Regionally, SOCCSKSARGEN's development and education agendas emphasize the need to strengthen innovation, research, and teaching quality, yet regional plans stop short of investigating classroom-level lived experiences of language learners facing rapid digital change — a gap that limits locally relevant policy and practice (SOCCSKSARGEN RDP/Regional education documents).

At the province/district level in Sultan Kudarat, empirical studies specifically examining students' lived experiences in technical writing in Filipino amid the rise of AI tools are scarce, leaving a critical knowledge vacuum about how AI affects language-specific composing practices, identity, and learning outcomes in local classrooms.

This study therefore addresses these layered gaps by using a phenomenological approach to unfold students' lived experiences in technical writing in Filipino amid AI tools, aligning with Sustainable Development Goal 4's call for inclusive, quality, and relevant education and aiming to generate contextually grounded insights that can inform teacher training, curriculum design, and local policy in selected secondary schools in Tacurong City, City schools division of Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat.



Research Questions

This research aimed to explore the lived experiences of students in technical writing in Filipino amid the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools from selected secondary schools in Tacurong City, City schools division of Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat for school year 2025-2026.

Specifically, research problem revolved around understanding the following key questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of students in engaging with technical writing in Filipino amid the presence of artificial intelligence tools?
2. How do students perceive and interpret the influence of artificial intelligence tools on their technical writing practices in Filipino?
3. What challenges and opportunities do students encounter while using artificial intelligence tools in accomplishing technical writing tasks in Filipino?
4. What meanings do students attribute to their experiences in technical writing in Filipino as shaped by the integration of artificial intelligence tools?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design, specifically a phenomenological approach, to explore and describe the lived experiences of students in technical writing in Filipino amid the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools. Phenomenology is considered appropriate for this research because it allows the researcher to capture and interpret the meanings that participants attribute to their personal experiences (Moustakas, 1994; Creswell & Poth, 2018). By focusing on the voices of students, this design provides rich insights into how learners navigate technical writing in the context of AI integration. Furthermore, qualitative phenomenology emphasizes understanding experiences holistically, which is vital in exploring how technology influences writing practices and students' perceptions of authorship and creativity (Neubauer, Witkop, & Varpio, 2019).

Participants of the Study

Table 1 displays the qualifications of the participants based on the criteria set by the researcher prior to the selection of qualified informants of the study.

Table 1



Participants’ Inclusion Criteria

Qualifications
Participants: 15 Senior High School Students
<p>1. Enrollment Status – Participants must be officially enrolled as Senior High School students in selected secondary schools in Tacurong City, City Schools Division of Tacurong, for the school year 2025–2026.</p> <p>2. Engagement in Technical Writing in Filipino – Participants must have prior or current exposure to technical writing tasks in Filipino, such as academic reports, research papers, or formal compositions, as part of their curriculum requirements.</p> <p>3. Experience with Artificial Intelligence Tools – Participants must have utilized AI tools (e.g., grammar checkers, paraphrasing tools, text generators) in their writing tasks, either independently or under the guidance of teachers, to ensure relevance to the study’s focus.</p> <p>4. Willingness to Share Lived Experiences – Participants must voluntarily agree to take part in the study and be willing to articulate their personal experiences, reflections, and insights related to technical writing in Filipino and the use of AI tools.</p>

The participants of this study consisted of 15 carefully selected Senior High School students from selected secondary schools in Tacurong City, City Schools Division of Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat, for the school year 2025–2026, who qualified based on the criteria set by the researcher.

Sampling Technique

During the conduct of this study, a Purposive Sampling Technique was intentionally utilized to carefully select fifteen 15 Senior High School students from selected secondary schools in Tacurong City, City schools division of Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat for school year 2025-2026, who will qualify the criteria set by the researcher, who meet the specific inclusion criteria established by the researcher.

Purposive sampling, alternately referred to as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, constitutes a variant of non-probability sampling. Within this approach, researchers exercise their own judgment and discretionary acumen in the selection of individuals from the population to partake in their survey endeavors (Alchemer, 2021). This method of sampling mandates that researchers possess prior knowledge of the objectives underpinning their study so



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as to effectively pinpoint and make contact with eligible participants through online survey platforms like Alchemer. Researchers resort to purposive sampling in order to secure access to a distinct subgroup of individuals, whereby all survey respondents are meticulously chosen based on their alignment with a specific demographic or criterion.

Research Instruments

In this study, a semi-structured interview functioned as an exploratory instrument during both in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to explore and describe the lived experiences of students in technical writing in Filipino amid the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools from selected secondary schools in Tacurong City, City schools division of Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat for school year 2025-2026.

The validity and appropriateness of this tool was substantiated through a rigorous evaluation process conducted by a panel of experts who possess expertise in the development of relevant research instruments.

Data Gathering Procedure

To ensure the research's reliability, the researcher maintained strict adherence to a predefined set of procedures. The primary objective of the study was to explore and describe the lived experiences of students in technical writing in Filipino amid the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools from selected secondary schools in Tacurong City, City Schools Division of Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat for School Year 2025–2026.

In the initial phase, the researcher diligently sought formal authorization from both the Superintendent of DepEd–Sultan Kudarat and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies (CGS). This authorization was essential to obtain the necessary permissions to conduct the study, emphasizing the importance of ethical considerations.

Following this, a secondary authorization letter was sent to the District Supervisor, explicitly requesting access to the specific data required for the research. A meticulously crafted survey questionnaire was developed, subjected to rigorous evaluation, and then administered to the targeted participants.

The researcher employed a purposive sampling technique to carefully select secondary school teachers as participants in the study. Assuming strict adherence to the established EWMCI Research Ethics Committee guidelines, the researcher proceeded with conducting interviews and facilitating Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), all of which were conducted through face-to-face interactions.

Ultimately, the data collected from interviews and FGDs were systematically organized, subjected to comprehensive analysis, and interpreted using the thematic analysis approach. This approach provided a deeper understanding of the issues under investigation.



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Data Analysis

In this study centered on uncovering the lived experiences of students in technical writing in Filipino amid the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools from selected secondary schools in Tacurong City, City Schools Division of Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat for School Year 2025–2026, a content or thematic analysis approach was employed to examine the collected data. This methodology, as described by Flick (2014), Ngag (2023), and Braun (2009), involved the systematic categorization of textual components, including statements, phrases, and words, into organized groupings or categories. These categories were either derived from established frameworks or custom-developed to align with the specific objectives of the study.

To execute this analytical process, a series of essential steps were diligently followed. Initially, all data sources, such as interview transcripts, notes from Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and relevant documents, were meticulously organized and prepared for analysis. This phase ensured the systematic arrangement and accessibility of the data.

Subsequently, the researcher deeply engaged with the data by conducting a thorough review of interview transcripts and FGD notes. This immersive process aided in gaining a comprehensive understanding of the content and context embedded within the collected information.

The third step involved initiating a systematic coding process. Initial codes were generated by identifying meaningful segments or patterns within the data. These codes captured essential concepts, ideas, or themes related to the narratives of the participants with regard to their experiences in technical writing and the influence of AI tools.

Following coding, the identified codes were grouped into preliminary themes based on shared meaning or relevance. This step established an initial structure for organizing the data.

Next, the emerging themes and their corresponding codes underwent a process of review and refinement. The researcher ensured the consistency and clarity of these themes, making necessary adjustments. Each refined theme was assigned a descriptive name that succinctly represented the content it encapsulated, facilitating easy identification and interpretation.

Relevant data excerpts, such as quotes or segments extracted from interviews and FGDs, were selected and associated with the respective themes. These excerpts served as supporting evidence for the identified themes.

Finally, the thematic analysis extended beyond surface-level identification. The researcher interpreted the meaning and implications of each theme within the context of the study's objectives. Patterns, connections, and variations within the themes were examined to provide a comprehensive understanding of the participants' narratives.



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This meticulous and structured process of thematic analysis enabled the researcher to systematically explore and comprehend the students' perspectives on AI integration in technical writing, thereby informing insights relevant to teaching and learning practices in the digital age

Scope and Limitations

This study focused on unfolding the lived experiences of senior high school students in selected secondary schools in Tacurong City, under the City Schools Division of Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat, during the school year 2025–2026, as they engage in technical writing in Filipino amid the growing use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools. It specifically sought to capture what challenges, insights, and strategies students encounter while navigating AI-assisted writing, who the participants are (students taking Filipino technical writing subjects), where the context is situated (multicultural and technology-driven classroom settings in Tacurong City), when the inquiry is conducted (2025–2026 academic year), how the phenomenon is explored (through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and phenomenological analysis), and why the research is significant (to provide deeper understanding of how AI shapes students' writing practices, academic growth, and critical thinking in the Filipino language).

Employing a qualitative phenomenological design, the study was delimited to students enrolled in Filipino technical writing courses, excluding other grade levels, subject areas, or stakeholders such as teachers and administrators, to ensure focused and meaningful insights into students' authentic experiences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Students' writing practices are rapidly changing worldwide as readily available artificial intelligence (AI) writing tools alter how learners generate, organize, and revise text; research indicates that AI can enhance idea generation, structure, editing, and productivity while also raising concerns about over-reliance, integrity, and the potential erosion of independent composing skills. This study employed a qualitative research design, specifically a phenomenological approach, to explore and describe the lived experiences of students in technical writing in Filipino amid the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools.

Result shows that artificial intelligence tools significantly influence students' engagement in technical writing in Filipino by enhancing efficiency, organization, grammar, and overall writing confidence. However, these benefits are accompanied by notable challenges, particularly in the accuracy of Filipino translations and the tendency of AI-generated content to appear overly formal or unnatural. Students demonstrate awareness of these limitations and adopt a balanced approach, using AI as a supportive tool while maintaining their originality and personal input. At the same time, the integration of AI introduces emotional and ethical concerns, including dependency, reduced sense of effort, and questions of authenticity.

Further, the findings reveal that students perceive artificial intelligence as a transformative support tool in technical writing in Filipino, primarily enhancing grammar,



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organization, clarity, and overall writing efficiency. However, this positive influence is accompanied by concerns regarding overdependence, reduced originality, and the potential weakening of critical thinking and personal writing voice. Students recognize that while AI can shape writing style and improve output quality, it still requires careful validation and responsible use.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that students view artificial intelligence as both a beneficial and challenging tool in technical writing in Filipino. AI significantly enhances efficiency, organization, and skill development, allowing students to complete tasks more quickly and with improved structure. However, its use is also associated with notable challenges, including inaccuracies in language translation, limitations in contextual understanding, and the risk of overdependence that may weaken originality and critical thinking. Students recognize the necessity of actively revising and validating AI-generated outputs to ensure accuracy and personal relevance. Additionally, technical constraints such as internet access, paid platforms, and the need for effective prompt construction influence the extent and quality of AI utilization.

Finally, result indicates that students perceive the integration of AI tools in technical writing in Filipino as both supportive and cautionary. AI enhances their writing skills, vocabulary, efficiency, and confidence while fostering critical thinking, creativity, and responsibility. However, students recognize the risks of overreliance, which can weaken originality, personal voice, and independent thinking. They balance AI use as a guide or aide, maintaining autonomy, ethical awareness, and reflective learning throughout their writing process.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were made in light of this study's findings:

It has been concluded that while AI can empower students as writers, its true value depends on how consciously and responsibly it is used. Rather than replacing human thinking, AI challenges students to become more reflective, disciplined, and intentional in their writing, emphasizing that authentic learning still lies in the balance between technological assistance and personal intellectual effort.

Also, the true value of AI in writing does not lie in its ability to generate content, but in how students choose to engage with it—as a tool for learning rather than a substitute for thinking. This realization underscores the importance of cultivating responsible digital practices, where students remain active creators of knowledge, preserving their authenticity while leveraging technological advancements.

Moreover, the integration of AI in technical writing highlights that learning is no longer solely about producing outputs but about making informed choices in using available tools. Students come to realize that while technology can enhance performance, genuine competence



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still depends on their ability to think critically, remain independent, and preserve their authentic voice in writing.

Finally, it has been inferred that AI, when used responsibly, can be a powerful tool for learning and skill development, yet meaningful growth depends on students' ability to maintain independence, authenticity, and critical engagement. True mastery in technical writing emerges not from AI alone but from the conscious integration of technology with personal effort, reflection, and ethical practice.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings, the following were recommended:

1. DepEd may develop policies and guidelines on the ethical and responsible use of AI in classrooms, ensuring that AI is positioned as a supportive tool rather than a replacement for student effort. Include AI literacy in teacher training programs to equip educators with the skills to guide students in maintaining originality and critical thinking.

2. School Administrators may implement school-level programs and workshops that demonstrate effective AI use in technical writing. Encourage teachers to monitor students' AI engagement to prevent overreliance while promoting reflective practices and maintaining students' personal writing voice.

3. Policy Makers may allocate resources and infrastructure, such as reliable internet access and approved AI tools, to ensure equitable opportunities for students. Establish standards for AI-supported learning that emphasize accuracy, ethical use, and balanced integration in the curriculum.

4. Curriculum Planners may integrate structured activities in Filipino technical writing that combine AI use with traditional writing exercises. Include lessons on checking AI-generated outputs, refining translations, and fostering originality, critical thinking, and creativity.

5. Future Researchers may investigate interventions and strategies that optimize AI use in writing, such as guided prompts, AI-assisted peer review, or reflective exercises. Focus on the effects of AI on originality, independence, and critical thinking to inform evidence-based practices.

Compliance with Ethical Standards



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Before commencing this study, it is essential to underline the critical significance of ethical considerations in research focused on examining the lived experiences of students in technical writing in Filipino amid the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools from selected secondary schools in Tacurong City, City Schools Division of Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat for School Year 2025–2026.

To prepare for implementation, the plans and recommendations were presented to East-West Mindanao Colleges Inc. to ensure adherence to prescribed procedures and protocols. Consequently, the following ethical principles were emphasized.

Informed Consent. Before participation, explicit and informed consent was diligently obtained from all school heads involved in the study. It was ensured that they possessed a comprehensive understanding of the study’s objectives, methodologies, potential risks, and benefits. Participation remained entirely voluntary, allowing participants the autonomy to withdraw at any juncture without encountering any adverse consequences.

Anonymity and Confidentiality. To safeguard the identities and responses of the participants, rigorous measures were implemented to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Instead of actual names, pseudonyms or codes were used to uphold privacy. The collected data were securely stored, with access restricted solely to the research team.

Avoiding Harm. Delicate topics, such as challenges inherent in participants’ experiences, were addressed with careful consideration of potential emotional and psychological impacts. Measures were put in place to minimize distress, and support mechanisms were made available when needed.

Researcher-Participant Relationship. The researcher maintained a professional and respectful rapport when engaging with participants. Any actions that could exploit or harm participants were strictly avoided, ensuring dignity and respect throughout the research process.

Data Protection. Adherence to data protection regulations and laws was strictly followed to safeguard participants’ personal information. Secure storage and transmission of data were ensured through appropriate measures.

Voluntary Participation. Participants were assured that their involvement in the study was entirely voluntary, free from coercion or external pressure.

Researcher Bias. The researcher remained vigilant about potential biases that might influence data collection and analysis, maintaining objectivity and transparency throughout the research process.

Institutional Approval. Prior to the conduct of the study, ethical clearance was diligently obtained from the appropriate institutional review boards or ethics committees.



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Honesty and Integrity. The research findings were reported truthfully and accurately, without manipulation or distortion, to align with preconceived notions or biases.

Beneficence The potential benefits of the research to educational practices and policies were carefully considered, ensuring that the study contributed positively to the improvement of the education system.

Cultural Sensitivity. The researcher demonstrated cultural sensitivity by respecting local customs, beliefs, and practices within the research setting, avoiding the imposition of external values on participants.

Inclusion and Diversity. The structure of the study prioritized inclusivity and diversity, encompassing a wide range of lived experiences of students in technical writing in Filipino amid the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools from selected secondary schools in Tacurong City, City Schools Division of Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat for School Year 2025–2026.

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Declaration AI Tools Utilization

I do hereby declare the use AI tools, such as Chat GPT and Grammarly for grammar checking and sentence organization purposes only.

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