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1. Key Insights About Writing (for Learners of English)

1. Writing is permanent – and that's why it feels scary

Unlike speaking, writing doesn't disappear. Once it's written, it's there.

That can make learners nervous, but it's also what makes writing powerful: you have time to **shape, revise, and improve** your message.

2. Good writing is about impact, not perfection

A good piece of writing:

- makes sense
- does the job it's meant to do

- connects with the reader

Grammar and vocabulary matter, but **effect on the reader** matters more than sounding impressive or “advanced”.

3. Simpler language is often more effective than flashy language

Using complex vocabulary, idioms, or “advanced” expressions just to sound native can:

- feel unnatural
- distract the reader
- reduce clarity

Clear, simple language often has **more impact** than complicated language.

4. Writing is about connection and self-expression

Beyond exams and emails, writing is a powerful tool for:

- expressing ideas
- sharing experiences
- motivating or moving the reader

Even imperfect English can work well if the message connects emotionally.

5. Structure and organisation help the reader

Good writing:

- has a clear beginning, middle, and end
- is easy to follow
- makes its purpose obvious

Organisation, coherence, and clarity all serve the reader — and improve impact.

6. Writing helps you clarify your thinking

Writing isn't just about communicating ideas — it **creates** ideas. If something feels hard to write, it often means the idea isn't clear yet.

The struggle is part of the thinking process.

7. Cutting “fluff” is a key writing skill

Strong writing often comes from **removing**, not adding:

- repeated ideas
- vague sentences
- unnecessary words

“Less is more” — especially in emails and practical writing.

8. Reading is essential if you want to write better

As **Stephen King** famously said:

“If you want to be a good writer, you must read a lot and write a lot.”

Reading helps you:

- absorb natural structures
- notice effective style
- understand what works and why

If you want to write emails, read emails.

If you want to write stories, read stories.

9. Writing a diary counts as real writing

You don't need to publish or be famous to be a writer.

Writing for yourself:

- builds fluency
- develops clarity
- strengthens your connection with the reader (even if that reader is you)

A writer is simply **someone who writes**.

10. Exams focus on communication, not just accuracy

In exams like **Cambridge English**, accuracy is only one criterion.

Higher priorities include:

- communicative achievement
- task completion
- effect on the reader

Everything in your writing should serve the purpose of the task.

11. AI can help – if you use it wisely

AI tools are useful for:

- checking grammar doubts
- exploring word choices
- finding synonyms
- clarifying meaning

But they shouldn't replace your thinking or your voice. Beware of letting AI do your writing for you - your own skills will not develop, and you will come across as unoriginal, indistinct and probably even lazy. Often, your reader wants to get the sense there is a

person on the other side. Don't be seduced by the dark side of the force. Sorry. I mean, don't be seduced by the fact that ChatGPT will write flawlessly - with no errors. People can usually tell when something has been written by AI, and it doesn't give a good impression of you.

Also, you need to **question and evaluate** what AI produces.

12. Dictionaries still matter

AI can make mistakes.

A reliable dictionary — like the **Oxford Learner's Dictionaries** — remains the final authority for:

- Meaning of words
- Examples of real usage
- collocations
- register

13. Writing improves confidence through small wins

Writing doesn't have to mean a 300-page book.

Small, achievable projects (emails, blog posts, short texts, “tiny books”) build:

- confidence
- momentum
- motivation

Success encourages more writing. If you want to write well, write regularly.

14. Writing is hard — even for experienced writers

Struggling with a paragraph doesn't mean you're bad at writing.
It usually means:

- the idea needs refining
- the purpose isn't clear yet

Difficulty is normal and productive.

15. Ultimately, writing is about purpose

Before writing, ask:

- Who is this for?
- What do I want the reader to feel, know, or do?
- What is the core idea?

When purpose is clear, language choices become much easier.

2. Full EPISODE TRANSCRIPT

This transcript was created with the help of AI. It should be correct but if you notice any errors, please email me so I can correct them luketeacher@hotmail.com

Introduction

Hello listeners, welcome back to Luke's English Podcast. How are you doing today? I hope you're doing fine. So let me tell you what I have lined up for you in this episode.

So this time I've decided to turn our attention to writing in English. The plan is just to talk about the whole subject, a discussion on writing and writing skills, including considerations of what skills are involved in being a good writer, what makes a good piece of writing, what are the challenges faced by learners of English who want to write well, what are some solutions to those challenges, the experiences of using AI to help develop writing skills, and even what it takes to write your own book in

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English. To do this today, I've enlisted the help of Fabio Cipolloni, who you might remember from his previous appearance on this podcast.

He was in episode number 850, which was called Any Language You Want with Fabio Cipolloni. Let me just give you some background info about Fabio. So Fabio Cipolloni is an Italian writer, writing teacher, ghost writer, that means he writes work for other people who then put their name on it, blogger, author, English language tutor, YouTuber and podcaster.

In terms of Fabio's credentials, he's a fully qualified teacher of English. He's got the CELTA, that's the certificate in English language teaching to adults, the Delta, that's the higher diploma in English language teaching to adults. He also has a master's degree in professional development for language education, and he's got the Cambridge C2 certificate of proficiency in English.

And as you will hear, all of that, all of those things involved doing a lot of writing. Fabio has been an English teacher for years, working at the British Council and also at other institutions. He is a writer for the EL Gazette, and also for storylearning.com, which is one of the biggest language learning websites that you can find.

He also writes some things for Medium, and he's got his own blog and sub-stack newsletter. So why is Fabio a good person to talk to about writing? Well, he's got a special interest in writing. He focused on it in his master's degree.

He helps learners of English with it in lessons and in writing workshops. And he's written plenty of blog post articles about writing. And also he's written two books, one about his personal journey learning English, and how there is no single correct way to learn a language, which is what we talked about in episode number 850.

And his other book is called *Tiny Book Author*. There's a tiny book in you waiting to be written, a tiny book to help you write your own. So Fabio knows a lot of things about writing.

He does writing himself. And in fact, he's written a book about writing a book. So let's talk to Fabio about writing.

We're going to start in just a second. First, I have two things to say, two more things to say. The first thing is that you will find a transcript of this episode.

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If you want to check it, you will find it. There's a link for it in the description. You can just get it, check it, read it, and whatever.

The second thing is that at the end of this conversation, I will summarise the key points that we make throughout this interview. So if you feel that you've missed something, or if anything isn't clear, just keep listening, because I will summarise it all at the end. And this will ensure that all the main insights about writing in this conversation are summarised nice and simply and clearly for you at the end, which should make it all a bit easier to understand and remember.

So I do encourage you to listen all the way through to the end to have this packaged up for you nicely, summarised for you nicely, so that you've got all of those bits of wisdom and advice packaged neatly for you to take away. Okay, right. So without any further ado, then let's get started.

Let's meet Fabio. Let's talk about writing. Here we go.

Conversation

I've never been one of those kids who wrote stories when I was five. I never had this big passion for writing since I was a kid. But I basically started writing because I had to.

I had to write for my teaching training courses. So I had to write academic, not academic papers, but academic assignments. And I started liking it from the very first page, like I like seeing meaning.

I like seeing a sentence building and then creating meaning for another person that they can read. And that was what I like about writing. But all the writing that I did until 2021 was all because I had to.

Like for English exams, because I took several English exams, like the first certificate, the IELTS, CPE, C2 proficiency, now it's called. And it was all writing for an examiner or for a tutor. And then in 2021, I started my blog.

I was one of those teachers who moved online, teaching online. And I saw that other teachers had a blog. And I thought, OK, I must I need to have a blog as well.

And I started blogging. I started blogging about language learning at the beginning. I still have that blog, but I don't I don't really talk about language learning anymore.

And yeah, this is I guess this is what what attracted me to to the written written word. Did I answer your question? Absolutely, you did. So what is different about writing compared to other ways in which we use English? So if we're talking about productive skills, we talk about speaking and writing.

I think a lot of the time our learners focus on speaking skills, I mean, unless they are preparing for an exam, in which case they definitely need to work on writing different types of text. But a lot of the time people focus on speaking, speaking. So what do you think is the difference between spoken English and written English? I would say that, OK, the main difference is that speaking is not permanent.

Like you can speak and speak and speak, but your words, like they kind of disappear in the air, whereas writing is more it's permanent. It's there. It's there maybe forever.

And so this this is kind of scary. It's what at the beginning it scared me a little bit because, you know, if you if you submit something and it's full of nonsense or or even mistakes, like your reputation is on the line, as always. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

But I think this is this is what makes it a little bit maybe less approachable writing, I mean, compared to speaking and also writing. We don't really need to to write apart from emails and other type of text that we that we write, like text messages, emails, like most people, most people that I know, they might write emails and text messages. And that's it.

Yeah. Yeah. For work.

Email for work. Yeah. Yes.

If we talk about the different types of things people write, yeah, exactly. Most people just write emails for work, probably some personal emails and text messages and stuff. But if you do like you did the C2 proficiency exam and the writing part of that requires you to write various things.

And that's that's one of the key skills of a writer. You've got to know how to write different types of text. And there are different sort of conventions and structures and stuff for each one.

What are some of the things that you had to write for your C2 proficiency writing exam? Do you remember? Yeah, I think there were two tasks, as always, in the Cambridge exams, I think, if it's still like this. One was a summary, like I had to summarise two texts into like into one had to write a summary of two texts. Okay.

And another one was an article for a magazine, probably. I don't know why, but I remember that I wrote about polar bears, polar bears. Yeah.

Sounds like a very typical Cambridge exam subject. Really, I don't know. I think it was about the environment.

And I, I threw some polar bears in it. Because, you know, when we talk about the environment, we always talk about polar bears, right? Yeah. I mean, everyone loves a polar bear, don't they, in a piece of writing? The examiner must have loved that.

Oh, fantastic polar bears. Brilliant. Yeah, on topic.

Yeah, yeah. So those two and for IELTS, what did I do for IELTS? I was going to say, you must have done an essay. Did you do the essay? Was it the academic IELTS? Yeah, academic essay and all that boring report with graphs and I didn't, I didn't get a good score.

I remember. Oh, that's, that's awful, isn't it? And nobody likes that. You got it, you got like, what is it? 150, 180 words, something like that.

And you've got to describe a graph or some other visual chart or something like that. And yeah, that's not pleasant. The essay is a little bit easier, actually.

Okay, so the reason I brought that up is because when we write, yeah, there are various different types of text that we have to write. But yeah, most people probably write emails and text messages. Yeah.

Okay. What, what makes a good piece of writing, in your opinion? All right, if we're talking about writing, when I talk about writing, I talk about writing for self-expression. So I don't, I'm not really focussing on writing for exams or writing emails.

When I talk about writing, this is what I like doing. And this is what I teach. This is what I help people with.

And a good piece of writing, in any genre, in any writing style is, well, it's writing that makes sense. Yeah. That you can understand.

It's writing that does the job. So if you're writing an email to complain, like that email, it should be clear that you're complaining. Yeah, seems obvious, but it's worth making that point.

Yeah. Or it's something in terms of writing for self-expression. To me, it's writing that connects, writing that connects with the intended audience.

And if you find, if that piece of writing connects with that person, with your reader, then it's a good piece of writing to me. It doesn't matter if it's, okay, we can talk about grammar vocabulary, but the number one requirement, in my opinion, is that that piece of writing should create an emotional connection. The reader should, when they read your stuff, then they think, oh, okay, yeah, I've never thought about this.

Or I see myself in this text, or this now motivates me to do, you know, to go and reach my goals, or whatever. So there is an emotional connection. I don't know how else I can describe this.

I guess, like, effect on the reader or impact on the reader, something like that, which is one of the things that going back to Cambridge exams, and I often refer to Cambridge assessments because, you know, if it's good enough for them, it's good enough for me, basically, you know, and the way that they assess your writing is that they have different criteria that you're judged on. And one of those criteria, well, one of the terms that's used in assessment in those Cambridge exams is effect on the reader. And I think that's more or less what you're talking about, you know, like the impact on the reader, how the reader feels when they are reading a piece of writing.

And if the reader is, well, obviously completely confused by what they've written, like they don't know what the purpose of the piece of writing is, because it's not clearly structured, it's not coherent. Or if the writing isn't well organised, that makes it difficult for the reader, you know, these are basic things. Also, if just the level of grammatical accuracy is so low, that it affects the person's ability to understand what's being written, obviously, that's another barrier.

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So in order to get that effect on the reader, you need to have a certain level of control over the language, using the right grammar and vocabulary, you need to be able to organise and structure your piece of writing so that it's nice and easy to follow. And it needs, as you said, it needs to do the job that you want it to do. So in an exam, it might be write an email to complain about blah, blah, blah, and your email has to exactly hit that task, you know, it has to achieve that task.

So ultimately, effect on the reader is a really big thing. So yeah, the you describe it as an emotional connection with the reader, which is interesting. And I suppose that that goes back to what you say about the kinds of things you like to write these days, which are sort of for self expression, as you say, and it's what you do as well, I guess with your with this show with your blog, like you write to to help your audience, you write, you write to self for self expression, because you tell stories, you share a lot about your life and yourself.

So this is exactly the type of writing allows you to it's a medium that allows you to do this more effectively, in my opinion, then speaking, maybe something to do with context as well, because it's it's rare that you get the kind of platform that you get through writing. When you speak, I mean, writing allows you to essentially grab the person's attention and keep it, you know, because you've sent them an email, and they just then read that email is just in front of them. I suppose in speaking, we get these opportunities, when we do some sort of presentation, or when we do stand up comedy, you stand up and everyone is basically, you've got their attention for five or 10 minutes or something.

Whereas in other situations, when we speak, there's a conversation and you have to do the turn taking back and forth. It's rare that you get to just say what you want to say start middle end done. That's kind of unique in writing, you know, that you get to structure the entire thing from start to finish, without any interruptions without having to be spontaneous.

So yeah, that's, that's an interesting, unique thing about writing, which you don't always get in speaking unless you're doing some presentation or something like that. Yeah, I agree. Yeah, totally.

Yes. Okay. What do you think are the challenges for a lot of learners of English when they write? Well, I can tell you about my challenges when I well, there are still challenges today, not in terms of, you know, grammar or vocabulary, but it was more about, when I started writing to me, it was like, I had a million questions in my head.

Like, is this correct? Do I need a preposition here? Am I messing this up? Because it was, it was the first time, it was the first time for me as a non-native English writer to put pen to paper and write in a language that wasn't mine. That was probably to prepare for your exams, right? Is that right? Yeah. In practising how to write those different texts for Cambridge exams or IELTS or something like that, that was kind of your entry point into writing and as you said, and then ultimately when you did your master's degree and stuff like that.

Right. So, okay. So.

Yeah. So, the challenges were about language, about what language should I use? Is this word correct? Spelling, misspelling, all these type of problems that we, I still have those problems, but not in terms of, you know, I'm not there asking myself if the grammar is correct. I'm more like, how can I say this in a different way so that the reader will engage more with the text? It's not, I need a preposition.

If I have that kind of question, which sometimes, you know, as all writers, even Stephen King, I would say, I've never talked with Stephen King, but I guess that he gets those language doubts. So, what I was going to say. So, when I have those type of question, we have a wonderful tool today, which is called Chagipiti or Claude or whatever, AI chatbots, and I find them very effective, not to generate texts, because that's not what I want to do, but to answer my language questions.

So, for example, if I'm not sure if I need this preposition or the other preposition, I can just ask and ask the chatbot to tell me why. So, like, I want a full explanation of why this is the way it should be. If I want to find a synonym, I sometimes write, I need a word, I need, what other words can I use in this sentence? Please give me 10.

And then I can look and I can use a dictionary to see which one fits the best. Right. So, your initial question was, sorry, I'm kind of rambling.

The challenges that learners of English have, yeah, you're free to ramble. This is that's definitely welcome on this podcast. Okay.

So, the challenges, they were about language. This is what I find also in language learners. They try to use advanced vocabulary just because it's advanced when actually you can use a simple word, which might do a better job using idioms just because, you know, you learned idioms.

So, you try to insert an idiom anywhere you can to sound advanced or to sound more native. And so, but the text doesn't require that. Maybe, maybe it doesn't require that expression.

And so, it sounds kind of, it sounds weird, sounds off. I agree. I think that probably most learners of English, when they approach writing, they initially think it's all about accuracy.

So, that's using language without making errors and just using sort of flashy, impressive words. And this is how you're going to score points. You score points by making correct English and using like flashy words and phrases, but there's a lot more to it than that, as we discussed earlier, right? Yeah.

And I want to, yes, I want also to say that part of this problem is on us, on us, I mean, teachers, because many teachers who teach writing never write. And so, all they look at is, is your grammar correct? Is your vocabulary correct? And is the essay or whatever you've written on topic. But what about the emotional connection? Like, what about the self-expression? Like, writing because you can.

Writing to express an interesting idea, to share a story, no matter how bad your grammar is, if we still can understand it. Like, I never had that kind of teachers in high school, or maybe even when I took exams, it was all writing to display to show that you can use good language, language correctly. And you can, it was writing to, for the criteria, for the exam criteria, to tick boxes.

Yeah. Whereas, there's more to it. There's more to writing than ticking boxes.

This is what I, what I feel strong about. Yeah, absolutely. Language, in terms of accuracy, as I've mentioned, correctness and range, that's just a variety of grammar and vocab, is like down the list.

And further up to the top, you've got communicative achievement, including effect on the reader. So, how appropriate is the writing for the task? Does it fit the normal conventions of that kind of writing? Which, you know, in a sense means, if you're writing a business letter, you should make it sort of formal in style and all the rest of it. But effects on the reader, basically does the piece of writing do the job? And everything else has to be in service of that objective.

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So, if you're just filling up your email with unnecessary but flashy language, and it's all correct, sometimes it might end up being too long, it might be distracting. And you can be efficient with your use of language, because that increases the impact that it has, you know, like the idea of keeping it short and simple sometimes is a better idea than making it complex and flashy. And those decisions, when the reader notices that you've made those decisions, that's going to be, that's going to be impressive.

I mean, from the point of view of an examiner, I keep mentioning examiners. But from their point of view, they might, if I was examining someone's writing, I would recognise those decisions to keep it simple, and to focus on the impact. And that's, you know, organisational structure, hooking someone's interest from the beginning, and delivering at another part of the email, things like that.

Right, you mentioned using AI. So, it's interesting that you use it to help you answer questions that you have about language as you're writing. Do you have to be careful how much you use chatbots? What's your sort of relationship with AI as someone who writes and someone who teaches people to write? Yeah, okay.

So, I don't use, I want every word to have my name on it. So, I don't, on my blog, when I write for self-expression, I don't want a chatbot to say things for me, no matter how great those things can be. So, I use it to ask questions.

I think non-native English writers, but writers in general, they have, like, they're very lucky today, because they can ask a million questions and get answers immediately about the grammar, the vocabulary, the punctuation, they can ask anything they want. I use it in this way to learn more, like, to learn, to clarify what I need to clarify. So, if I have a question about a word that I've never used, for example, but I want, I learned it somewhere and I want to use it, I might say, does this, like, is this, does this fit in this context? Is it appropriate? Can you give me synonyms? What is a very useful question that I often ask is this, I have a word in Italian, I might have a word in Italian, and I say, I need a word that means this in Italian.

Is there one, is there a similar one or something that get close to that meaning in English? Because maybe I don't know. And then the chatbot gives me a couple of words, maybe three, ten, and then I use the dictionary. The dictionary is the ultimate, you know, it's the resource that I always, like, it's the final check.

It's what I use to check if the chatbot is telling me the truth or not. Because sometimes they don't tell you the truth, sometimes they just make up some

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nonsense, don't they? Just because they just really want to help. And so yeah, sure, here are the answers you're looking for.

Actually, no, that's not true. Okay, so that for you, the dictionary still is the ultimate authority on whatever it is you're looking at. Okay, which dictionary can I ask? Oxford.

I've always used the Oxford Oxford, I've got it here, Oxford learners, dictionary, Oxford learners, dictionaries, Oxford learners, dictionary, or dictionaries, I can remember, never remember the URL. I've got it here, Oxford learners dictionaries.com. Yeah. Yeah, I've got an app, I spent 40 pounds on this app.

When was it in 2016? And now they're saying that, you know, it's your subscription is expired. But I thought I thought this was for a lifelong subscription. Well, it was but now we've changed it.

So that sounds a bit of a that's a bit of a rip off, isn't it? That's a pity. Is the app any better than the online dictionary? No, it's essentially, it's the same. So you don't need to buy the app.

Yeah, okay, just use the website. Okay. All right.

What do you think about AI and, and writing? Do you think it's generally going to help improve people's writing? Or is it going to be bad for people's writing? Generally speaking? Generally speaking, I always say that it depends. It depends on what question you ask. If you ask, okay, please write me an email and you need to sound like this, this and that and blah, blah, blah.

Okay, you send that email, great. You saved maybe 20 minutes. And the other person, the receiver, well, if they if they are against AI, maybe if it's a recruiter, or I don't know, they might say, okay, this guy just writes with charge EPT.

Where is the authenticity? We wanted to know we wanted to get to know him a personality. He did everything with charge EPT. It depends.

Now recruiters, they say that in some job ads, they say, please don't submit your application using charge EPT, like your cover letter written by charge EPT, because we want to get to know you we want, we want you to show up imperfectly, because this is what we're all about. So it depends. Generally speaking, I would say many

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people, many people now use it to generate texts, and they and it's clear that it was written by an AI chatbot.

And that's fine. I mean, this is not what I like doing. But I can understand that businesses, they want to make money.

And so they do they delegate their social media, copywriting to a chatbot. And it's, to me, okay, I'm against that. But, you know, it depends on your goals.

In terms of language learning. It's a wonderful tool. As I said, you can ask a million questions.

And I actually wrote a full master dissertation on this on how charge EPT can help non native English writers. And I discovered that some of them didn't know how to use it. So they just assumed that the words or the text that charge EPT gave them was was fine.

So they didn't actually think critically about what they what they got from the chatbot. Others were more cautious. So but they had a high level of English.

So this is also key. Because if you don't know, if you don't have a high enough level of English, how can you decide if what the chatbot is giving you good, appropriate, good for the context. So teachers should train, should train the students in this.

So they should support and there's a lot that you can do in the classroom. There's a lot you can do by yourself also. So generally, I would say, great tool, it depends on how you use it.

This is the general opinion. Nowadays, like it's, it's just a tool. You can use a hammer to, to smash your neighbour's head.

Or you can use a hammer to, to build a hospital. Interesting. Interesting analogy.

Yeah, this is very, very, very, very effective analogy. You can use a hammer to build a hospital. Or alternatively, if you really need to, you can use it to smash your neighbour's head.

Um, yeah, so there's good and bad ways to use, to use the tool. Is a hammer a good tool? It depends. Yeah, it can be incredibly brilliant to help you build a hospital.

Or deadly. Or completely deadly. Yeah.

Yes. And okay, so let's think of it that way. Okay.

Okay, so that's interesting. You did a master's degree about using AI. What was it exactly? Uh, the, uh, what, sorry, the master's thesis dissertation, the master's distance dissertation.

Yeah, it had a title that was like three sentence long. It was an investigation into the effectiveness of how Chajipiti can help non-native English writers, but it was longer than this. More fluffy.

Okay. Okay. All right.

I don't know if you've given us your conclusions. Well, the conclusion was it depends. Yes.

That was the conclusion. So more research needs to be done. Uh, teachers should train the, the writers to recognise patterns to, um, to think critically.

Uh, students should, shouldn't be left alone. What's the word, the expression here, uh, left unsupervised on their own devices to their own devices. That one.

And all left unsupervised also. Yeah. Hello.

Sorry to interrupt. I hope you're enjoying this episode with Fabio here. Um, I just wanted to pause here for a moment, just to summarise this point about AI and writing before we move on to talk about other things.

And also I just wanted to explain a couple of nice expressions that you just heard. So Fabio just mentioned that he did a master's dissertation about evaluating the way that learners of English can use AI to improve their writing. And the conclusion as is usually the case was it depends.

Right now. So we know that there are good and bad ways of using AI to improve your writing. It sort of depends on the way that you use the tool and AI is a tool.

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It can be used in both good and bad ways, just like a hammer. Right. Uh, the bad way is basically to let chat GPT do all of your writing for you, which means that you don't develop your own writing skills.

Uh, most people, uh, reading your, if you use AI to do all your writing for you and you just copy paste what it does, most people reading your writing will know that you've used AI to do it and then they'll think badly of you and your writing will be correct admittedly, but it might lack any sort of unique individual personality. Uh, Fabio also mentioned that another conclusion is that English teachers like us have some responsibility in training learners maybe like you how to use AI effectively to improve your English and your writing and that learners should not be left to their own devices or should not be left unsupervised. So there are two expressions I just wanted to highlight to leave someone to their own devices and to leave someone unsupervised.

So if you leave someone to their own devices, now this has nothing to do with phones, iPads or computers, right? It doesn't mean let someone sit there and use their iPhone. It's not that kind of device to leave someone to their own devices. This expression just means to leave someone alone and let them do whatever they want without any supervision.

Just leave them alone and let them do what they want. Leave them to their own devices. The devices part of that expression means someone's own resources, someone's own personal resources, their skills, their decision-making process, their sense of intuition.

So that's what the devices means in that expression. Leave someone to their own devices. Just means leave someone alone and let them do it themselves, right? And also to leave someone unsupervised is the other one.

This means leaving someone alone without observing them, without supervising them, without observing them, checking what they're doing. For example, it's not a very good idea for me to leave my two-year-old son unsupervised in the middle of our apartment. It's not a very good idea for me to just go out to the shops and leave him alone unsupervised, of course, because of all sorts of things that could happen.

He's likely to throw his sister's toys out of the window, or paint all over the walls, or climb up onto the kitchen table and start trying to cook dinner or something, which is obviously not very safe. I mean, I admire his intentions to help out with the dinner preparations, but he's too. So, you know, I think you understand.

He needs to be supervised and not left unsupervised. So two expressions. Learners, in terms of using AI to improve their English, should not be left to their own devices, meaning they should be guided, they should be helped, they should be shown the right ways to do it, they shouldn't be left unsupervised, which means that we just need to work with them and guide them.

So, yes, as English teachers, we should supervise our learners' use of AI as a writing tool to ensure that you're doing things in constructive ways and not in ways that would hinder your development of English writing skills. This means giving you guidance, helping you develop critical thinking skills to evaluate the responses that you get from AI, and also not letting you climb onto the kitchen table or throw toys out of the window. Oh no, that's my two-year-old son.

I was getting you confused with a tiny child. Anyway, Fabio did write a blog post about this, about how he uses AI to help his writing. Let me read from it a little bit before returning to the conversation.

And again, sorry for the interruption, but I think it's worth sort of spending a bit of time on this subject because it's such a big one, right? So this is Fabio's blog post which he wrote in April 2024, a couple of years ago, but it definitely still applies today of course. So the title is Non-native English writers use AI to improve your writing. Why would you not want to? If you're a non-native English writer whose English isn't fully developed yet, you may struggle with grammar, word choice, punctuation and other technical aspects of the language.

I've been there too, as English is my second language. The difference between me and you though is that I started learning English over 10 years ago and had to hire a teacher to get feedback on my writing, but you don't need to do it. Fabio continues in his blog post, you live in the era of large language models like chat GPT, AI tools that have been trained on trillions of data and can check your sentences in 0.2 milliseconds.

If you know how to use them, these tools can be effective writing assistance. There's plenty of evidence confirming this. I know because I'm reading dozens of research papers as part of my master's dissertation in language education.

So I hope you're using chat GPT, Gemini, Deep L, Grammarly and other free writing software. Not doing it feels like a waste of time to me, just like it would be a waste not to use a good dictionary. I use chat GPT all the time.

Not to replace my own writing style, no. All my writing is AI generated. Trimming sentences is fun, reorganising paragraphs is fun, transforming the invisible content of my mind into words that people can read is fun.

Why would I want a robot to do all that for me? But I do ask chat GPT to compare different versions of a sentence, check for stylistic features I'm not sure about, suggest words based on Italian equivalents and check my text for readability. I shamelessly do this and encourage you to do it too. Does it still make sense in 2024 to hire someone to check your writing? It depends.

How do you like learning? Who do you trust? What feedback are you seeking? And I would also add, who do you want to support financially? But as Fabio writes, he says, I'll leave those questions to you. But if you're a non-native English writer looking to improve, why would you not want a free writing assistant that is available to you 24 seven? That to me would make no sense. And at the end of the article Fabio wrote, I compiled a list of chat GPT prompts you can use to self edit and improve your writing.

You can read it here for free. So that is an article, a blog post on Fabio's website. I'll put a link for this in the description so you can read what I've just read to you and check out the list of chat GPT prompts that Fabio uses to help him develop his writing skills with chat GPT.

So that's enough of that then. Sorry for the long interruption. Did you all have a glass of water? Maybe you did.

It feels like the right time in an episode of Luke's English podcast to have a glass of water. So I'm going to drink an invisible glass of water right now. So refreshing.

Okay, let's get back into the conversation then. And we're returning to the subject of challenges faced by learners of English when attempting to write things. Here we go.

Should we go back to talking about what learners struggle with when they write? We said before that they always focus on the getting the grammar right and getting the right words, using the right words and assume that that's the most important thing. And assume that throwing in lots of apparently impressive words and idioms and things is what's going to score points. But what's the solution to that issue? That they struggle with accuracy and assume that it is the most important thing.

Yeah, what do we what do we need to tell them? Watch fewer social media reels. Yes. Because, as you might know, social media like Instagram and TikTok, it's full of those videos like don't say this because you want to sound advances.

So say this, don't say I'm fine. Say I'm this. Basic English, advanced English.

What does that mean? So a lot of students might think, okay, so if I use this word, I will sound advanced. But advanced, what does it mean to sound advanced? You need to sound effective. Like it depends on what you're writing.

Yeah, yeah, exactly. It's the context. And it depends on what you're trying to achieve because language is not there to impress.

Language is there to communicate an idea and to make an emotional, probably an emotional, ultimately an emotional connection with the person you're talking to or some sort of connection. That's what it's so, like you said before, sometimes using the simple language gets the job done more effectively than using the complex language. And you just know what you need to know when to use one and not use the other.

And yeah, bear in mind those other things about the way you've organised your writing and whether or not the piece of writing is doing the job that it should be doing. Yeah. And you asked about the solutions.

Read a lot. Read a lot. Because it's the best way.

Stephen King said it. It's not me. He said if you want to become a great writer, there are only two ways to do it.

Write a lot and read a lot. There's no way around it. That's why I love reading.

If you're a reader, you're also a writer secretly. You're also a writer. Because there's a lot that you can learn.

You already know a lot about what a good story is because it's a story that maybe touched you somehow or you enjoyed, you particularly enjoyed. So asking yourself questions like why do I like this story? Why do I like this sentence so much? Why do I like these words? And also it's a great tool reading. It's a great tool to improve your writing as well.

It's all about, as always, exposing yourself to the things that you want to... If you want to write, for example, short stories, read a lot of short stories. If you want to learn how to cook pasta, you need to eat a lot of... You need to try different pasta dishes. Do you agree? Oh, of course.

100% agree. I'm just thinking of the different things that people have to write. So people out there, as we said before, most likely will have to write emails a lot.

And they need to get their writing up to scratch for writing emails. Yeah. I think there are books you can get that contain email examples.

For example, email English. Paul Emerson is quite a good book. It's a good guide for writing emails.

But otherwise, again, if you're doing a Cambridge exam, you need to find the teachers resource pack, which contains lots of sample answers, lots of sample emails, including the ones that got good marks and the ones that didn't get good marks and read the feedback as to why they got good marks and why they didn't. And that's a good way of understanding what makes a good email. And also I think whenever you receive emails in English, you can judge them on whether or not they were good emails or not.

And it's not just about whether they were using correct English. There are other factors involved as well. Yeah, I agree completely.

So you're into, as we said before, writing for self-expression. You've written two books. The first book we talked about last time, but more recently, you've written another book.

Tell us about your second book. Yeah, the second book is called Tiny Book Author. The subtitle is, there's a tiny book in your writing to be written.

I strongly believe in the subtitle, more than the title. So there's a tiny book in your writing to be written because I feel like we all want to express ourselves, whether in writing or in speaking. Try not to express yourself for 24 hours to see what happens.

You cannot. But I believe that we all have this tiny book, a short book that we can write to help another person, a small group of people. My first book was Any Language You Want, and I wrote it to help language learners.

This book is basically all I did to publish that first book. My sister-in-law, when she heard about this, she said, so your second book is about how you wrote your first book. And your third book, will that be about how you wrote your second book? Is this Inception? Okay, now it's not Inception, but it was my way to help aspiring authors.

So you can do this. You can write a short book. You don't have to write 300 pages to become an author because that's intimidating.

That's very intimidating. But when I wrote my first book, which was 80 pages, I thought, wow, so I can write books. I can write this one.

I wrote this one, and I can write another one. And it was a nice little creative project that I did, the first one and the second one. And I believe that people who write a lot already, maybe they write in their journal, maybe they have a blog, maybe they are content creators like you, for example, because you've been writing a lot of content, blogs and scripts and stories.

Yeah. And so you can package all that into a tiny book to serve a specific group of people. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

This is what my second book is all about. And yeah, as you said, like writing, one of the things that people always say about writing a book is that it's really, really hard. And it requires so much discipline.

And it's very intimidating. And as you said, one of the things one of the reasons for that is because people assume they have to write this fairly long book, 300 pages or something like that. But we can take these things step by step.

And writing a shorter book is certainly more achievable. And as we know, when we achieve something, we get this big boost of confidence, which makes you realise that you can do it. And that's that really helps you to then continue and do more.

It is hard to write a book. Like it's not just, okay, I'll just write whatever and then just hit publish and the book is done. You need always to think about your audience.

For whatever thing you write, unless you're writing in your journal or in your diary, you're writing for yourself, which counts as writing to me, counts as writing.

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Because to me, a writer is just someone who writes. They write to think they write because they enjoy it.

It doesn't matter if you publish your writing or not. You don't need to be Stephen King to call yourself a writer. Even though it's short, even though the book that you can write is short, it will still be hard because writing is hard.

It's hard in many ways. Sometimes I can't get, you know, I'm writing something and I'm like, this doesn't make sense. Well, how can I, like I spent, I don't, like I spent one day, probably two to write a chapter in this book, there was 200 words, but it was so difficult to make it work.

Is that because you didn't, you weren't completely sure exactly what you were trying to get across. Yeah, exactly. And this is what writing does as well.

It clarifies what you think. It clarifies what you want to say. And if you're not 100% clear on what you want to say, you might end up writing nonsense or things that even yourself, like you don't, you don't agree with.

That's really important. That's like, perhaps one of the most important things you've got to have in your mind is what exactly specifically is the idea that I'm trying to communicate here. And if you can really get that clear, then everything else sort of falls into place, doesn't it? So you've got to remember the purpose of the content that you're writing.

And that will, that will help you with everything. But yeah, often that emerges as you're doing it, you know, the process. Yeah.

Also, we talked about language like using good grammar, good vocabulary, but what about content? Like fluff. Fluff is basically meaningless, unnecessary sentences, unnecessary information that you're including just because. I've never had a teacher, really, um, that helped me understand what to cut.

So no, this is, you don't need this. This is not needed. This is like too vague.

So recognising unnecessary words and sentences, that's also a great skill, skill for a, for a writer. Yes. Okay.

Grammar and vocabulary, okay. All the technical, all the mechanics of writing, but what about content? Yeah. That was the point that I wanted to make.

Sorry. Something that I have to deal with. There's something I have to, I struggle with in my writing is that there's probably a bit too much.

I always add far too much. And so when I write an email, often I'll go back through the email and cut out as much as I can, you know, just delete as much stuff as I can. Because I realised that I've repeated myself here.

I've added like few little words here and there that just don't help the message and ultimately might even make the core message less clear. So less is more often with writing. Yeah.

It's very interesting stuff. How do people get your book or both of your books? I just go on Amazon or you can visit my website. Fabio, I don't know how to pronounce this.

The English way is Fabio Serpelloni.com. The Italian way is Fabio Serpelloni.com. Anyway, it's C-E-R-P-E double L-O-N-I. Yes. I'll put the link.

I'll put the link in the description, everyone. So you can find Fabio's website where you can find both his books and I recommend them both. We talked about the first one before, which I think is brilliant.

The sort of comments about learning languages and the fact that there's no single way of doing it. I just think it's a great idea that each chapter sort of contradicts the previous one. It's like lots of stories and anecdotes of your own experience of learning English and each chapter, each anecdote ends with a conclusion about learning English and then the next chapter directly contradicts the conclusion that you made in the first chapter and the overall message being that there is no single one way.

Each sort of way to learn English, ultimate way to learn English is contradictory to the other. So it's a very interesting approach to the subject. There's no one right way.

There's no one right way to learn a language despite what they say online. Best method to learn English in three months. No.

Ultimately, it's about trying to do lots of different things and approaching language from every different angle. There's a lot of trial and error and just doing as much as

possible and putting yourself into it personally, personal involvement in what you're doing and remembering that language is about making connections. Yes, this is good.

Fabio, thank you very much for talking to us about writing. Thank you, Luke. It's always great to see you and I really admire you for what you do.

Oh, you too. You too. It's a pleasure to talk to you again.

Have a good day. You too.

Ending

So that is that.

Thank you very much again to Fabio for joining me on the podcast once again for the second time to talk about this subject. I just want to give you a reminder of Fabio's website where you can learn more about him and read his blog and also you can find details about his books. So fabiochirpeloni.com. I will leave a link for that in the episode description, along with the download link for the episode PDF transcript.

And also, get yourself a copy of Fabio's books. They're great. Okay.

And as he said, they're tiny books. I mean, tiny, they're not minuscule. They're just smaller than most books, which I think is an advantage for you because it means that they're nice and easy to read, right? It's achievable.

You can read from start to finish and feel good about yourself because there's nothing worse. Well, there are lots of things worse than this, but still, picking up a book, starting it and then not finishing it is very unsatisfying. You feel like you've failed.

You feel like you're a bad reader and you don't get that satisfying sense that you're very brilliant and clever because you've finished a book. But with Fabio's books, they don't go on forever. They're short and sweet, to the point, and filled with interesting insights.

I recommend them. The first one is called Any Language You Want. Let me just read about that because it's interesting.

This is what Fabio has written about his first book on his website, and it goes like this. There are people online who sell the secret, the fastest way, or the best method to learn languages. This bothers me.

How can they sell something that doesn't exist? How can they sell the best method without knowing anything about the people they're selling it to? I decided to rebel against these false promises by writing Any Language You Want, 18 conflicting lessons for a new kind of language learner. Here is how Any Language You Want can help you. In this book, I answer this question.

What is the best way to learn another language? And I answer it 18 times. But I don't do that by discussing teaching or learning methodologies. This isn't an academic book.

No famous linguists are cited. No second language acquisition research is mentioned. Any Language You Want is a collection of my own personal stories on how I learned English, my second language.

In each chapter, I share the problems, beliefs, thoughts and frustrations I had as a learner. And I tell you about the strategies I adopted to improve my language skills. Each story ends with the same sentence.

This is how to learn a language. But each story disagrees with the next. One chapter tells you to hire teachers and take classes, just like I did while learning English in London.

The next one argues you should do everything on your own. Take no courses, hire no teachers, do what I did when I was living in Australia. One story says you should never touch a dictionary.

The next one persuades you to look up every unknown word you encounter. Should you aim at sounding like a native? Yes. Well, wait.

No, you shouldn't. Which story tells the truth? Which chapter is right? The answer is all and none. It's up to you to decide.

It's up to you to try things out, explore and find your own best way to learn. The description goes on. It's very nice.

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You can see he's a very good writer. And there are lots of accolades and reviews of the book by notable people, including, for example, Scott Thornberry. Anyone who out there is an English teacher, you might be aware of him.

Sort of a legendary figure in English language teaching. Scott Thornberry gave the book a glowing review. So that's any language you want.

You'll find a link for that on Fabio's website. And the links for both books are included in the description, by the way. And then Fabio's second book, called *Tiny Book Author*, is described by him like this.

This is how he describes it on his website. Many, many aspiring authors tell themselves they'll write a book one day, but they never do. Some might feel overwhelmed or insecure.

Others think they need to write hundreds of pages, have extraordinary life stories or be naturally talented. *Tiny Book Author* shows another way. If we want to publish a book, what we need is already within us.

A desire to serve a small group of people, a passion for writing, and the courage to share a message we care about. Fabio Cipollone, a tiny author from Italy. I don't actually know how tall Fabio is, but nevertheless, tiny author obviously means an author of tiny books.

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. Fabio Cipollone, a tiny author from Italy, learned this when he published *Any Language You Want*, an 80-page book about how he learned English, his second language. In *Tiny Book Author*, he shares the lessons, stories and insights from that first publishing journey.

He offers words of encouragement and answers questions that many first-time authors have. This is his second tiny book, and it's here to help you write your own. Okay, so there you go.

If you can get yourself a copy, that would be good. I'm sure there's lots of interesting things to read about in both of those books. Fabio is good enough to send me a copy of the second book.

He's sending it to me, which is very nice of him, and I look forward to reading it. Who knows, maybe it will inspire me to finally write my book, which I've been

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thinking about writing for a long, long time. I always thought that I would write a book to accompany my podcast.

Obviously, there's the podcast, right? And I always thought, well, one day I will write Luke's English book. I don't know quite what form it would take. I kind of vaguely thought it would be something like this podcast, really.

It would be anecdotes, stories, and insights into learning English, combined with little grammar or vocabulary lessons, something like that. I've always thought about doing that. I guess the reason why I've never done it is because, well, like most people, the reason that most people don't write books that they think about writing is because it just becomes overwhelming.

It seems like it's too much to do. But I like Fabio's spirit. I like the message, which is that there's no need to bite off more than you can chew, right? You don't need to feel you've got to write a 300-page epic or something like that.

You can just keep it simple and write something short, and it is achievable. So maybe Fabio's book is going to inspire me to finally put pen to paper, or at least start typing. I did actually start.

I've written some pages of my book, but I never got beyond the introduction. And you're thinking, Luke, how long is that introduction? 300 pages. Yeah, something like that.

Anyway, a tiny book author, Fabio Cipolloni, and any language you want, Fabio Cipolloni. You'll find links for them in the description. Now, as promised at the beginning of the episode, I'm now going to give a summary of the interview.

This is just to make sure that the main points in this conversation are crystal clear for you. Okay, just to make sure. Now, you'll find all of these insights.

Where will I put them? I think I'll put the insights at the top of the PDF, and then you'll find the transcripts of the conversation. In fact, you'll find a transcript of the whole episode. But I'll put these insights in a list at the beginning of the PDF.

Okay? So if you want to read what I'm saying, you can just check the PDF, and it's all written there. So here are some key insights about writing for learners of English from the conversation I just had with Fabio. So the first thing is that writing is

different to speaking because writing is permanent, whereas speaking is impermanent.

You say the words, and the other person hears them, and that's it, they're gone. But writing is permanent. And once it's written, it's there.

And that can make learners nervous. But it's also what makes writing powerful. You have time to shape, revise and improve your message.

Secondly, good writing is about impact, not about perfection. Obviously, perfection is important. I don't want to give the impression that there's no, I don't want to give the impression that correct grammar, the right choice of words is not important.

Obviously, that is important. But I will say, from my experience of working with assessment for Cambridge exams, it's only one part of one category of assessment. Accuracy, I mean, correctness in your grammar or vocabulary, that's only one part of one category.

Good writing is about actually about impact, not perfection. A good piece of writing makes sense, does the job it's meant to do, and connects with the reader. Grammar and vocabulary matter, but effect on the reader matters more than sounding or looking impressive, or presenting advanced vocabulary just to impress someone.

Third point, simpler language is often more effective than flashy language. Using complex vocabulary idioms or advanced expressions just to sound like a native can feel unnatural, it can distract the reader, it can reduce clarity. So clear, simple language often has more impact than complicated language.

But again, you know, sometimes complicated language or finding specifically the right word or phrase or right structure is what's necessary in order to do a job. But sometimes keep it clear and simple is the best advice. Number four, writing is about connection and self expression.

Beyond exams and emails, writing is a powerful tool for expressing ideas, sharing experiences, motivating or moving your reader. Even imperfect English can work well if the message connects emotionally. And that's about the way that you are focussing on your idea and the way that you're organising your points.

Number five, structure and organisation. Structure and organisation help the reader. Good writing has a clear beginning, middle and end, it's easy to follow, and it makes its purpose obvious.

Organisation, coherence and clarity all serve the reader and improve impact.

Number six, writing helps you clarify your thinking. Writing isn't just about communicating ideas, it creates ideas through the process of doing it.

If something feels hard to write, it often means that the idea isn't clear yet. The struggle is part of the thinking process and simply attempting to put things into words can actually force you to rethink exactly what it is you're trying to say so that you can say it as effectively as possible. Number seven, cutting fluff is a key writing skill and by fluff we mean unnecessary stuff.

Okay, unnecessary stuff. The literal meaning of fluff is, fluff is kind of like, I don't know, soft material. Let me give you an example of fluff.

When do we find fluff? Okay, so you've got a new pair of socks, you've got a new pair of socks, you've been wearing a nice thick new pair of socks, you've been wearing them all day. This pair, these two socks, two normally. I don't know your life but I mean, most people it's two.

You've been wearing them all day and then you take off the socks at the end of the day and what's that stuff between your toes? Bits of the cotton or wool from the sock are stuck between your toes. This is fluff. Okay, also if you have a drying machine, a tumble dryer at home, you know, it's like a washing machine for your clothes but it dries the clothes.

If you have one of them, you need to clean out, you need to clean out the fluff from inside the machine, right? Because as the fabric dries, bits of the fabric come off and they connect, they gather together in little clumps and you have to clean out the fluff from your tumble dryer. That's the literal meaning of fluff but in terms of writing, when we talk about fluff, we mean unnecessary words basically. So strong writing often comes from removing, not adding more and more.

So removing repeated ideas, removing vague sentences, removing unnecessary words. Less is more, especially in emails and practical writing where time is so important. The time of the reader, you know, you need to respect the time of the reader and the attention of the reader.

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Number eight, reading is essential if you want to write better. As Stephen King famously said, if you want to be a good writer, you must read a lot and write a lot. I don't know if that's a direct quote but that's basically what he said.

So reading helps you to absorb natural structures, notice effective style and understand what works and why. In the same way that listening can inform your speaking, reading a lot informs your writing. So if you want to write emails, read emails.

Where you would find emails is another question. I mentioned email English by Paul Emerson, which is actually a book on how to improve your email writing at a sort of sentence level, mainly a lot of language vocabulary and structures that we use in emails. It's a good book, email English, Paul Emerson.

But also, I mean, what else? You could even use AI to help you generate some emails that you can then read if that's how you like to spend your time. It's hard to find emails to read except obviously all the emails that you do read. But anyway, also, if you want to write stories, read stories.

But generally speaking, writing at reading helps you to become a better writer. And so it's always a good idea to do plenty of reading in English, of course. Number nine, writing a diary counts as real writing.

Now you don't need to publish or be famous to be a writer. Writing for yourself builds fluency, develops clarity, strengthens your connection with the reader, even if that reader is you. I think writing a diary, I do recommend it because I think it's something that's easy to do.

It's a safe space where you can practise putting your ideas down in words. And I think it's good for many reasons. So a writer is simply someone who writes.

Get started by writing something today. Number 10, exams focus on communication, not just accuracy. In exams like Cambridge, all the ones from Cambridge English, in those exams, accuracy is only one criterion and higher priorities include communicative achievement, task completion and effect on the reader.

Everything in your writer, everything in your writing should serve the purpose of the task. Right? So for example, if it's a, if it is to report something to your boss, you

need to make sure that you are reporting all the information that's been required of you by that task. Nothing more, nothing less.

Point 11, AI can help if you use it wisely, of course. AI tools like the usual chatbots are useful for checking grammar doubts, exploring word choices, finding synonyms, clarifying meaning. And they're particularly useful because you can be quite specific in your questions.

And you can ask follow up questions until you feel like your question has been answered. If you've got a doubt while you're writing, you can kind of refer to your chatbot of choice and get some help. But obviously, AI should not replace your thinking or your voice.

Beware of letting AI do your writing for you. Because if you just get chat GPT to write everything for you, your own skills won't develop. And you might come across as unoriginal, indistinct, and probably even lazy to the reader.

Because it is quite common. You know, most people can identify when something is written by a chatbot, it's pretty obvious in a lot of cases. And that won't give a good impression of you.

Often your reader wants to get the sense that there is a person on the other side. So don't be seduced by the dark side of the force. I mean, don't be seduced by the fact that chat GPT will write flawlessly for you with no errors.

Because people can usually tell when something is being written by AI, and it doesn't give a good impression of you. Also, you need to question and evaluate what AI produces. In the case of Fabio, he uses dictionaries as his final sort of authority on what is correct.

And dictionaries are still very useful. AI can make mistakes, as we've seen many times. But a reliable dictionary, like for example, the Oxford learners dictionaries, Oxford learners dictionaries.com, remains the final authority for things like the meanings of words, examples of real usage, collocations, and other information like the register of a certain word or phrase.

13, and this is we're nearly at the end. Point 13, writing improves confidence through small wins. Writing doesn't have to mean a 300 page book, small achievable projects like emails, blog posts, short texts, or indeed Fabio's tiny books.

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Achieving smaller writing objectives builds confidence, momentum and motivation. Success encourages more writing, so if you want to write well, write regularly. Number 14, writing is hard even for experienced writers.

Struggling with a paragraph doesn't mean you're bad at writing. It usually just means that the idea needs refining, the purpose isn't clear yet. So it's quite normal to kind of write arrays, write again, eventually, a poppy will bloom, right? Like in the haiku episode, difficulty is normal.

And in fact, difficulty or, you know, hard work is quite productive, because it's all part of a process of refining, improving learning. That struggle is an important thing to go through. So don't escape, don't run away from it.

And 15, ultimately, writing is about purpose. So before writing anything, you should ask yourself, who is this for? What do I want the reader, what do I want the reader to feel, know or do? And what is the core idea here? When purpose is clear, language choices become much easier. And everything serves that one objective, which is the purpose of the content.

Yes, I just wanted to add something else here at the end, which was about writing haiku. My last episode was about writing haiku. Episode number 974, is it? And I asked listeners to write some of their own haiku.

And I was really pleasantly surprised with the results. A lot of people have been sharing little poems, and I've enjoyed reading them in the comment section, on my website, YouTube, Spotify, lots of people have been sharing their haiku. And it's brilliant.

I'm really impressed by everybody. It just shows that I have a lot of great writers in my audience. And haiku is a great example of how writing is about making an emotional connection with the reader through efficient use of language and communicating a very specific idea.

You know, you get that specific idea and then trying to find the right combination of words in the right order to get that impact. It's a very good discipline, a very good exercise. So I will share some of those haiku written by listeners.

I'll share some of those probably in the next episode. If everything goes according to plan, the next episode will be a rambling episode about various things. And I'll also include a lot of the haiku that I've received as comments from Leppsters.

So that's an idea of what the next episode will be. A rambling episode with various stuff in it and also some responses to recent episodes, including loads of haiku from listeners and also need to finish the whole haiku episode with haiku part two, which will arrive at some point when I feel the time is right. Okay.

Then in terms of upcoming episodes, I've got a couple of family interviews, which will arrive at some point. I recorded several interviews with family members recently, and I'm going to be editing them together. And so you'll get that.

I'm not going to tell you any more, but I think that they'll be nice episodes. Okay. No need for me to give you any other information about what's coming.

I'd rather kind of keep it a surprise, really. But there will be the usual mix of rambling, stories, conversations, and more. Thank you very much for listening.

Thank you for watching. Indeed, if you've been watching the video version of this. And thank you again to Fabio.

Don't forget, everyone, be excellent to each other, please, if that is at all possible. Have a lovely morning, afternoon, evening, or night. I look forward to reading your comments if you have some.

Check out Fabio's books, links in the description. But for now, it's just time for me to say good bye, bye, bye, bye, bye. Thanks for listening to Luke's English podcast.

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