Students' Perceptions of Using ChatGPT in Higher Education English Learning

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ABSTRACT

The integration of ChatGPT in English classrooms as an EFL has become a subject of increasing interest, with many investigations that highlight its benefits and challenges. In a positive aspect, ChatGPT is seen a a valuable tool in improving language learning. ChatGPT gives real-time feedback that improves students' involvement and customizes the learning experience to individual needs. This study explored the higher education English learning students' perceptions regarding the use of ChatGPT, examining the benefits and challenges. Utilizing a quantitative approach, the researcher gathered the data from an online questionnaire with 22 close-ended, in five-point Likert scale statements. A convenience sample of 55 higher education English learning students participated. The study has shown that the students appreciate the feedback that personalized feedback and the interesting character of ChatGPT, which motivates them to learn. For the teachers, ChatGPT offers opportunities to improve assessment and materials. Although ChatGPT gives some advantages to EFL learning, including the improvement in involvement and personalized feedback, ChatGPT raises concerns about the accuracy, overreliance, and ethical uses. Therefore, the integration into the EFL class needs careful consideration and guidance to maximize its potential and reduce challenges.

Keywords: ChatGPT; English Language Learning; Student Perceptions

INTRODUCTION

The technology integration in education, especially in English language learning, has become a field that has long been of interest. However, the traditional method sometimes faces challenges, such as limited personalized feedback, static learning materials, and the inability to give a real-time interactive response. This limitation caused the diminished students' engagement, unbalanced skill development, and lack of motivation among students.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class, the students often face difficulties to access the change to authentic and interactive language practice. The traditional method may not meet the various needs of the students, which leads to a gap in language proficiency and a lack of self-confidence in using a language effectively. The emergence of AI (Artificial Intelligence) and a big language model such as ChatGPT has introduced a new possibility to overcome this problem.

The previous studies have highlighted the potential of this AI tool in improving language learning. As the study has shown that AI can prepare personalized practice materials which personalized, support writing tasks and problem-solving, and offer feedback in real-time that fostering engagement and collaborations among students. However, these studies showed some technical problems such as the inaccurate of factual results and the risk of overreliance on the AI tool.

Through these considerations, the goal of this study was to explore the students at a higher education English learning toward the use of ChatGPT. This study aimed to investigate the benefits and challenges that relate to the integration of ChatGPT into language learning, to find out whether it impacts the students' engagement, improvement in language skills, and learning experiences. By understanding students' perspectives and experience, this study tried to give insight into the integration of ChatGPT that is effective in EFL education, especially in higher education learning, and to identify some fields to be developed to maximize the potential of its benefits.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Related Study

In 2024, Nguyen et al conducted a study aimed at understanding how English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students perceive the use of ChatGPT to improve their argumentative essays. The focus of this study is on the eight main aspects in writing: vocabulary, grammar, idea creation, organization, translation, writing style, plagiarism management, and the mechanics of writing. There were 100 students involved in the subject Reading-Writing, and they used questionnaires with 92 questions for data collection. The findings showed that generally, the students have a positive perception of the use of ChatGPT to improve their essay writing skills. However, there was a negative correlation between their perception and their engagement in ChatGPT; when their positive perceptions improve, their engagement tends to decrease. This study found that even though the practice of using ChatGPT varied between the groups of students, their perception of the use of ChatGPT is relatively consistent.

A study by Ngo (2023) examined how students' perceptions of the use of ChatGPT for studying, including the benefits, challenges, and potential solutions. This study involved questionnaires for 200 students and 30 students for an interview. As a whole, the students have a positive perception of ChatGPT, offering guidelines and

personalized feedback, and helping with idea writing. However, the students identified some challenges. They are concerned about the quality and accuracy of information provided by ChatGPT, difficulty in citing from the source, and the limitation of the tool in using the correct idiom. To address these issues, the study suggested several solutions: verifying ChatGPT's responses with reliable sources, using ChatGPT as a reference or consultant tool, providing guidelines for its use, and promoting academic integrity to ensure ethical use in academic settings.

Ali (2023) explored a study on how faculty members at the University of Bisha in Saudi Arabia perceived the benefits and challenges of using ChatGPT in English language teaching as EFL. 58 students participated in the questionnaire to collect quantitative and qualitative data. The result showed that some EFL teachers have a positive perception of ChatGPT and found benefits for teaching and learning. However, some teachers are concerned about the issues of plagiarism, and the students who depend on chatbots put in less effort.

A study by Nhan (2024) investigated the Vietnamese students' perceptions of using ChatGPT to improve their English language learning. 100 students are involved in this study to fill out the questionnaires. The findings showed that the students look at ChatGPT as a useful tool to learn English, appreciating the benefit in some parts, such as vocabulary, translation, and grammar checking. However, they were concerned about the accuracy and the correct citation. This study emphasized the importance of ensuring information security and collaboration between policymakers and educators to integrate ChatGPT into teaching and learning English and a proper and effective way.

ChatGPT

According to Klimova et al (2024), ChatGPT is a well-known and very sophisticated chatbot that supports AI. It is one of the most advanced AI-powered chatbots now, which was developed by Microsoft-backed startup OpenAI, called ChatGPT (generative pre-trained transformer), and it was released in November 2022. ChatGPT can handle a variety of tasks, including answering questions, making text translations, and even making responses up to 25 words. This application has various versions, such as GPT-3.5, GPT-4, and GPT-4.5, which has each capability that is increasing.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), as proposed by Davis (1989), forms the theoretical foundation of this study. According to TAM, two primary factors—perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use—influence an individual's intention to use a new technology. In the context of this research, these factors directly inform the design of the questionnaire and the variables being measured.

In this study, the questionnaire includes specific items that assess:

1. Perceived Usefulness (PU): Questions are designed to measure the extent to which students believe that using ChatGPT will enhance their English language skills. For example, items ask students to rate statements such as "Using ChatGPT helps me improve my vocabulary" or "ChatGPT is useful for practicing English conversation."
2. Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU): The questionnaire also includes items that evaluate how easy students find ChatGPT to use. Sample questions include "I find ChatGPT easy to interact with" and "Learning to use ChatGPT was straightforward for me."
3. Behavioral Intention to Use (BI): In line with TAM, the survey measures students' intentions to continue using ChatGPT in the future. For instance, items like "I intend to use ChatGPT regularly for my English studies" are included.

By directly measuring these TAM constructs through the questionnaire, the research design enables the identification of how students' perceptions of usefulness and ease of use predict their acceptance and intended utilization of ChatGPT. This approach not only aligns with TAM but also provides actionable insights for educators and developers to enhance ChatGPT's integration into English language learning.

METHOD

Design and Samples

This study employed the quantitative approach using descriptive statistics to explore the perceptions of higher education English learning students in the use of ChatGPT in EFL classes. The sample of this study was 55 students from several faculties who joined the EFL classes. This study employed convenience sampling, which involves selecting participants who are readily accessible and willing to participate. The participants were students who enrolled in the second semester of the 2024/2025 academic year.

Instrument and Procedures

The instrument used in this study is a questionnaire adapted from Sirirojjananan (2023), which is divided into 2 main sections, demographic information of participants and questionnaire elements which are divided into three indicators, namely, General Perceptions regarding the use of ChatGPT in EFL classes, Perceptions regarding the benefits of using ChatGPT in learning English, and perceptions regarding the challenges of using ChatGPT in learning English. Using the Likert scale ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), the data will be collected. This data was collected in April 2025, by starting with the data process through a questionnaire shared by Google Forms. These instruments targeted the students at Universitas Klabat who took the EFL class. The students received the online survey and hope to allocate their time well to finish all the

questions. The ethical considerations were discussed with the respondents. The researcher made sure to inform the students that the information collected was treated.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis employed descriptive statistical techniques, specifically means, to assess the responses gathered from the 5-point Likert scale questions. These questions pertained to the perception level of General English class students at Universitas Klabat regarding the integration of ChatGPT in EFL classes. The interpretation of students' perceptions was predicated upon insights derived from the 5-point Likert scale ratings, a methodology widely endorsed and utilized within academic research. The ordinary data was generated in terms of frequency and mean. The average score (mean) obtained from each item was interpreted into the degree of perception as shown below.

Table 1. Five Ranges Scale Value of Students' Perception by Sirirojjananan

Scale Value	Level of Perception
4.21 – 5.00	Very High
3.41 – 4.20	High
2.61 – 3.40	Moderate
1.81 – 2.60	Low
1.00 – 1.80	Very Low

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This part will show the results and discussions. The participants' demographic details will show the genders and faculties of the participants.

Table 2. Gender of Participants

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	15	27.3
Female	40	72.7
Not specify	-	-
TOTAL	55	100

The gender distribution of the participants in this study is shown in the table above. Of the 55 students who enrolled in the general English class at Universitas Klabat, 15 students (27.3%) identified as male, while 40 students (72.7%) identified as female. And none of the participants chose not to specify their gender. This showed that most of the students are female, which is almost ¾ of the sample, while males represented about ¼ of the sample. The gender distributions gave crucial context to interpret the result of the study, because it may influence the perspective and experiences related to the use of ChatGPT in English language learning.

Table 3. Faculty of Participants

Faculty background	Frequency	Percentage
Economic and Business	11	20
Computer and Science	15	27.3
Nursing	25	45.5
Philosophy	3	5.5
Agriculture	1	1.7
TOTAL	55	100

The table above shows different faculty backgrounds from 55 students who participated in this study. Most of the participants, 25 students (45.5%), were from the faculty of Nursing. The next largest group of participants was the faculty of Computer Science with 15 students (27.3%). There were 11 students (20%) from the faculty of Economics and Business. Few students were from the other faculty's background: 3 students (5.5%) were from the faculty of Philosophy, and only 1 student (1.7%) from the faculty of Agriculture. The various backgrounds of the faculty showed that the participants in this study have a wide range of interests and academic experiences.

The second part of the questionnaire was designed to examine the perceptions of EFL class students who took the General English class on the use of ChatGPT. The questionnaire consisted of 22 questions with a 5-point Likert scale, with the items divided into three groups: General perception of students regarding the use of ChatGPT in learning, students' perceptions regarding the benefits of using ChatGPT in learning, and students' perceptions regarding the challenges of using ChatGPT in learning.

Table 4. General Perception of Students Regarding the Use of ChatGPT in Learning

Perceptions regarding the use of ChatGPT	Mean	Perception level	Rank
1. It is easy to use ChatGPT	4.27	Very High	1
2. ChatGPT can provide answers quickly	4.15	High	2
3. Using ChatGPT makes me lazy to produce any ideas by myself	3.18	Moderate	6
4. ChatGPT functions as a search engine	4.02	High	3
5. ChatGPT is a helpful tool for studying English	2.93	Moderate	7
6. Chat GPT should be used in English classrooms	3.33	Moderate	5
7. Using ChatGPT for self-study offers an alternative to traditional English classes	1.82	Low	8
8. Studying English may not be essential since ChatGPT is capable of addressing English language challenges	3.67	High	4

Overall	3.42	High	

The table above shows how students' general perceptions about the use of ChatGPT in their learning. The highest perception is that ChatGPT is easy to use, with an average of 4.27, which is valued by the students as very high and at the first level. The second, with an average of 4.15 and at a high level, is the perception that ChatGPT can provide answers quickly. The students also rated ChatGPT as high level in functions as a search engine, with an average of 4.02, which is in the third rank. Other positive perspectives include the ideas that ChatGPT may help in overcoming the language challenges (3.67, fourth level) and ChatGPT must be used in an English classroom (3.33, fifth level. However, some students felt that the use of ChatGPT would make them lazy to create their own ideas (3.18, sixth level), and they think that ChatGPT is just a tool that helps enough to learn English (2.93), seventh level. The lowest perception was that ChatGPT may change the traditional English language to learn independently, with a score of 1.82, the last level. As a whole, the average rate for all items was 3.42, which was still at a "high" level. This showed that, in general, the students have positive perceptions toward the use of ChatGPT in their learning, especially appreciating its ease of use and speed in providing answers. However, they also recognize some drawbacks, such as the risk of becoming less active in thinking for themselves.

Table 5. Students' Perceptions Regarding Benefits of Using ChatGPT in Learning English

Perception regarding the use of ChatGPT	Mean	Perception level	Rank
9. ChatGPT can help me save time when researching a topic	3.64	High	1
10. I can better understand English theories and concepts (e.g. grammar, vocabulary, expressions) when using ChatGPT	3.33	Moderate	5
11. ChatGPT provides reliable and accurate translation	3.22	Moderate	8
12. ChatGPT is useful for my English language learning	3.51	High	2
13. There was an improvement in my English communication skills after using ChatGPT	3.29	Moderate	6
14. I improved my reading and writing skills after using ChatGPT	3.25	Moderate	7
15. My interest in English learning increased after using ChatGPT	3.07	Moderate	9
16. ChatGPT boosted my confidence in doing English assignments	3.35	Moderate	4
17. I gained more English vocabulary after using ChatGPT	3.47	High	3
Overall	3.35	Moderate	

The table above shows the students' perception of the benefits of using ChatGPT in learning English. The highest level of the benefits, with the average score is 3.64, is that ChatGPT helps students save time in searching for a topic. This is rated as "high" and ranked first among all benefits. The second rated is in the item of ChatGPT useful for English language learning, with an average of 3.51, followed by its ability to help students gain more vocabulary in English, 3.47, both are rated "high". The students also felt that ChatGPT improved their self-confidence in doing English tasks (the average is 3.35, and level 4), and helped them to understand more about the theory and concepts of English, such as Grammar, vocabulary, and expression (the average is 3.33, and level 5). However, some benefits were rated moderate toward the improvement of their English communication ability (the average is 3.29, level 6), ability to read and write (the average is 3.25, level 7), and the accurate and reliable of the translation of ChatGPT (the average is 3.22, level 8). The lowest average was the students' interest in the use of ChatGPT to learn English (the average is 3.07, level 9). As a whole, the average perception score for all items is 3.35, which is at the level of "moderate". This showed that even though the students admitted some benefits of ChatGPT in learning English, they found that some parts, such as the accuracy of the translation and students' interest, are not improved in ChatGPT.

Table 6. Students' Perceptions Regarding Challenges of Using ChatGPT in Learning English

Perception regarding the use of ChatGPT	Mean	Perception level	Rank
18. My interaction with teachers has decreased since using ChatGPT	2.89	Moderate	5
19. I find myself using ChatGPT to discuss topics in Indonesian rather than in English	3.27	Moderate	2
20. I experienced misleading and confusing responses from ChatGPT	3.2	Moderate	3
21. Using ChatGPT can produce inaccurate or false results and/or references	3.11	Moderate	4
22. I rely heavily on ChatGPT to assist with my learning challenges	3.35	Moderate	1
Overall			

The table above shows some challenges faced by students in using ChatGPT to learn English. The main challenge, with an average of 3.35, is that students tend to over-reliance on ChatGPT to help them overcome their challenges in learning. This showed that some students are more dependent on that tool than they are on trying to solve their problems. The other significant challenges that the students sometimes used ChatGPT to discuss the topic in Indonesia, then to practice their English, the average is 3.27 in the second level. This may limit their opportunity to improve their ability in English. The students also reported that they got some false

responses or confusion from ChatGPT, the average is 3.20, and in the third level, they realized that ChatGPT sometimes gives inaccurate results and references, or wrong, the average is 3.11 in the fourth level. Lastly, some students felt that their interaction with their teacher decreased since they used ChatGPT on average of 2.89, in the fifth level. It means that every student switches to ChatGPT to find some help, then asks their teachers, and this influences their learning experience. As a whole, the average score for all challenges is 3.16, which is the level "moderate" of the perception. It means even the students face some challenges in using ChatGPT to learn English; this problem is not extremely severe but is still important to consider.

The results of this study provide valuable insights into students' perceptions of using ChatGPT in English language learning, analyzed through the lens of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The demographic data show a predominance of female participants and a majority from the Nursing and Computer Science faculties, suggesting that the sample represents a diverse, though not fully balanced, cross-section of the student body. Consistent with TAM, the findings highlight that perceived ease of use is a major factor influencing students' acceptance of ChatGPT. The highest-rated item was the ease of use of ChatGPT (M=4.27), indicating that students find the tool intuitive and accessible. This aligns with Davis's (1989) assertion that technologies perceived as easy to use are more likely to be adopted. Similarly, the speed at which ChatGPT provides answers and its utility as a search engine were also rated highly, reinforcing the importance of usability and efficiency in technology acceptance.

In terms of perceived usefulness, students generally viewed ChatGPT as beneficial for saving time (M=3.64), supporting English language learning (M=3.51), and expanding vocabulary (M=3.47). However, the overall perception of benefits was moderate (M=3.35), with some students expressing reservations about the tool's ability to improve communication skills, reading, and writing, and the reliability of translations. This nuanced perspective suggests that while ChatGPT is seen as a helpful supplement, it may not fully replace traditional methods or direct teacher interaction in fostering comprehensive language skills. The study also reveals several challenges associated with ChatGPT use. Over-reliance on the tool (M=3.35), the temptation to use it in Indonesian rather than English (M=3.27), and occasional misleading or inaccurate responses (M=3.20) were identified as moderate barriers. These findings echo concerns in the literature about the potential for technology to encourage passive learning and introduce inaccuracies (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). A noteworthy consequence is the reported decrease in teacher-student interaction, which may impact the quality of language learning experiences.

Overall, the results suggest that students at Universitas Klabat generally have positive perceptions of ChatGPT, particularly appreciating its ease of use and time-saving features. However, the moderate ratings for both benefits and challenges indicate a balanced view, with students recognizing both the strengths and limitations of integrating AI tools into language learning. These findings underscore

the importance of guided and critical use of ChatGPT in educational settings, as well as the need for educators to address potential drawbacks such as reduced student engagement and over-dependence on technology.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, students generally have a positive perception of using ChatGPT in their English learning. They find ChatGPT easy to use, quick in providing answers, and helpful for searching information and saving time, especially when researching topics or building vocabulary. Many students also appreciate that ChatGPT boosts their confidence and serves as a useful tool for English language learning overall. However, the results also highlight some important challenges. Students reported that relying too much on ChatGPT can make them less likely to generate their own ideas or interact with teachers. Some students use ChatGPT in their native language rather than English, which may limit their language practice. Additionally, there are concerns about the accuracy of information and references provided by ChatGPT, as well as occasional misleading or confusing responses. Overall, while students recognize several benefits of using ChatGPT, such as convenience, support for learning, and increased confidence, they are also aware of its limitations and potential drawbacks. The perception of benefits tends to be high, but the perception of challenges is moderate. These results suggest that ChatGPT can be a valuable tool for English learning if used thoughtfully and in combination with guidance from teachers and self-directed learning. Educators should encourage students to use ChatGPT as a supplement to, rather than a replacement for, traditional learning methods and teacher interaction, while also promoting critical thinking and responsible use of AI tools. To maximize the benefits of ChatGPT while minimizing its potential risks, educators and institutions should consider integrating ChatGPT as a supplementary tool rather than a replacement for traditional instruction. For example, educators can design guided activities where students use ChatGPT to generate ideas, practice vocabulary, or receive feedback on writing, but then require students to critically evaluate and revise the AI-generated content. Additionally, teachers can set clear guidelines on when and how to use ChatGPT, emphasizing the importance of independent thinking and originality. Regular discussions about the limitations and possible inaccuracies of AI-generated responses can help students develop digital literacy and critical thinking skills. By adopting a blended approach that combines the strengths of ChatGPT with active teacher involvement and peer collaboration, institutions can enhance language learning outcomes while reducing over-reliance and ensuring academic integrity.

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