ChatGPT's influence on English-majored students' writing: Insights from lecturers at a university in Hanoi

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Abstract: *The study explores lecturers' perspectives on using ChatGPT as a tool to support academic writing. As AI technology, including ChatGPT, gains global attention, its role in higher education, particularly in writing, has become a focus of research. Despite widespread student use, little is known about teachers' perceptions of ChatGPT in this context. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research gathered insights from 10 lecturers through questionnaires and interviews. Results indicate that lecturers view ChatGPT positively, recognizing its potential to enhance students' writing quality and support language development. This study underscores the importance of AI tools in improving academic writing outcomes for English-majored students.*

Keywords: *ChatGPT, academic writing, AI in education, English-majored students*

I. Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming increasingly prevalent across many sectors, including education, where it is significantly changing how students learn and how teachers deliver instruction (Abdullayeva & Muzaffarovna, 2023). One prominent AI tool in the education field is ChatGPT, a language model that has garnered widespread attention for its versatility and applicability in various academic contexts. Despite its widespread use, especially in higher education, there remains limited understanding of how teachers view ChatGPT as a digital tool for English language teaching and writing.

Particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings, writing is often a challenging skill for students to master. ChatGPT has been highlighted as a potential tool to support students' writing by providing real-time feedback, correcting errors, and offering tailored suggestions to enhance their writing quality. However, while numerous studies have explored the potential of AI in education, research focusing specifically on how teachers perceive the use of ChatGPT in EFL writing is scarce. Thus, this study aims to fill that gap by investigating the perspectives of university lecturers on using ChatGPT as a digital writing tool for English-majored students in a Vietnamese context.

2. Literature Review

The integration of AI in education has led to numerous advancements, particularly in supporting students' academic development. AI-driven tools such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, and QuillBot are widely used to facilitate writing through instant feedback on grammar, vocabulary, and overall coherence (Hosseini et al., 2023). ChatGPT, specifically, stands out due to its interactive nature and its ability to engage learners in dynamic conversations, making it a valuable asset for language learning (Xue & Wang, 2022; Skrynnyk et al., 2022).

Recent studies have demonstrated that AI tools can increase students' motivation, participation, and problem-solving skills (Rudolph et al., 2023). However, they have also raised concerns about ethical implications, over-reliance, and the potential reduction in students' independent critical thinking skills (Marzuki et al., 2023). While these studies provide valuable insights into student attitudes toward AI, they do not address the critical role of teachers in integrating these tools into classroom practice.

For EFL teachers, understanding the pedagogical benefits and limitations of ChatGPT is essential. Previous research has suggested that AI writing assistants can support writing development by evaluating written work and offering suggestions on grammar, word choice, and content organization (Hosseini et al., 2023). However, the effectiveness of these tools in developing language proficiency and academic writing quality, especially from the perspective of teachers, remains underexplored. Therefore, this study aims to contribute to this field by examining how university lecturers perceive the use of ChatGPT as a tool for supporting English-majored

students' writing in higher education contexts.

This research aims to bridge the existing knowledge gap by providing a more comprehensive understanding of how ChatGPT can enhance the EFL writing experience, highlighting both its potential benefits and challenges in an academic setting.

3. Research methodology

3.1. Research approach

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to examine the impact of ChatGPT on English-majored students' writing from the perspectives of university lecturers. A combination of quantitative questionnaires and qualitative interviews was used to gather data, allowing for both broad trends and in-depth insights.

3.2. Participants

The study involved 10 lecturers from a public university in Hanoi who were selected using purposive sampling based on their experience in teaching English and familiarity with digital tools like ChatGPT.

3.3. Data analysis

The data analysis used both quantitative and qualitative methods to explore lecturers' perspectives on using ChatGPT in teaching writing. Descriptive statistics summarized questionnaire responses, revealing trends in ChatGPT's perceived usefulness, ease of use, and challenges. For qualitative data, thematic analysis of interview transcripts identified key themes and patterns, providing deeper insights into the benefits and concerns related to integrating ChatGPT in writing instruction. This combined approach offered a comprehensive understanding of its impact on students' writing skills.

4. Findings and Discussions

4.1. Findings for the questionnaire

The findings from the questionnaire reveal that the majority of lecturers view ChatGPT as a highly accessible and convenient tool. A significant 80% of respondents strongly agreed that it is readily available for educational use, with another 10% agreeing. This indicates that all participants recognize the ease of access to ChatGPT as an online resource.

Regarding its effectiveness in enhancing writing quality, 50% of lecturers strongly agreed, and 30% agreed that ChatGPT offers features that can support students in improving their writing. However, 10% disagreed, and another 10% strongly disagreed,

suggesting that while the tool is generally seen as beneficial, some lecturers have reservations about its overall impact.
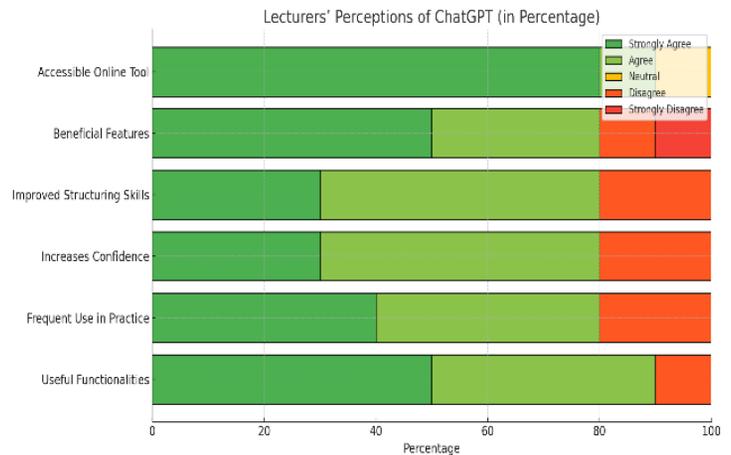

Figure 1. Teachers' Perspective toward Language Learning Supported by ChatGPT

The data also showed that ChatGPT is perceived as useful for helping students structure and organize their writing. With 30% strongly agreeing and 50% agreeing, the majority of lecturers see a positive effect in this area, although 20% still expressed disagreement, indicating that some may not feel it sufficiently addresses all organizational aspects.

In terms of boosting students' confidence, 80% of respondents (30% strongly agreed and 50% agreed) believed that ChatGPT enhances students' confidence in their writing abilities. However, 20% of the lecturers disagreed, reflecting some skepticism about the tool's influence on student self-assurance.

The findings also revealed that most lecturers (40% strongly agreed and 40% agreed) frequently use ChatGPT as part of their teaching practice. Yet, 20% disagreed, suggesting that not all lecturers are equally comfortable or inclined to integrate it into their daily instructional activities.

Finally, the perceived utility of ChatGPT's various functionalities for enhancing writing skills was affirmed by 90% of the lecturers, with 50% strongly agreeing and 40% agreeing. Only 10% expressed disagreement, indicating broad approval of its usefulness, though a small number of lecturers still have reservations.

4.2. Findings for the semi-structured interviews

The thematic analysis of the semi-structured interviews revealed five main themes regarding lecturers' perceptions of using ChatGPT in EFL

writing instruction. First, many lecturers highlighted that ChatGPT significantly enhances students' writing quality by providing real-time feedback and error correction, particularly in areas such as grammar and vocabulary. One participant emphasized, *"ChatGPT helps students identify grammatical errors and refine their sentence structure more quickly than traditional methods."* This indicates that lecturers appreciate its ability to tackle specific writing challenges effectively. Second, the tool was found to boost students' motivation and confidence, as noted by several participants who observed that students were more eager to engage in writing activities when they received instant feedback. A lecturer shared, *"Students seem more eager to write when they know they can get immediate suggestions and corrections from ChatGPT."* This finding aligns with the view that ChatGPT's instant feedback fosters a positive learning experience.

However, concerns about over-reliance on ChatGPT were also prominent. Some lecturers pointed out that students might become too dependent on the tool, which could hinder the development of independent problem-solving skills. One stated, *"Some students tend to depend on ChatGPT too much, which prevents them from developing independent skills."* This suggests that, despite its benefits, ChatGPT could limit students' ability to think critically and creatively. Furthermore, ethical issues related to academic integrity were frequently raised. Lecturers expressed worries that ChatGPT might be misused, with students using it to generate entire assignments without understanding the content. A participant remarked, *"There is a risk that students use ChatGPT to generate entire assignments without understanding the content."* Thus, while ChatGPT can facilitate language learning, its use requires careful monitoring to prevent misuse.

Finally, most lecturers viewed ChatGPT as a valuable supplementary tool rather than a replacement for traditional instruction methods. One commented, *"ChatGPT should complement, not replace, classroom teaching. It's a support tool, not a teacher."* This reflects a consensus that ChatGPT should be integrated thoughtfully into the curriculum, ensuring that it supports but does not overshadow traditional teaching practices. Overall, these themes provide a nuanced view of ChatGPT's role in EFL writing instruction, highlighting both its strengths and the potential risks associated with its use.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations for Further Studies

5.1. Conclusion

This study explored the perceptions of lecturers regarding the use of ChatGPT in EFL students' writing instruction. The findings indicate that ChatGPT is widely viewed as an effective tool for enhancing writing quality, offering real-time feedback, and improving students' motivation and confidence. However, concerns about over-reliance and potential academic integrity issues highlight the need for careful integration. Most lecturers agree that ChatGPT should serve as a supplementary tool, supporting rather than replacing traditional teaching methods.

5.2. Recommendations for Further Studies

Future research should focus on evaluating the long-term effects of using ChatGPT on students' independent writing skills and critical thinking abilities. Additionally, studies could investigate the impact of integrating ChatGPT into different instructional strategies to identify best practices for maximizing its benefits while mitigating risks. Expanding research to include diverse educational contexts and larger sample sizes would also provide a more comprehensive understanding of how AI tools influence EFL learning outcomes.

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