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A Note from the Editor-in-Chief

Dear beloved language educators,

The editorial board of the International Journal of AI in Language Education (IJAILE) is pleased to report the Volume 2, Number 1 (2025) successful publishing. This problem makes a major contribution to the expanding field of artificial intelligence in research, education, and language acquisition.

In this issue, Nguyen et al. (2025) conducted a study on the perceptions of interpretation skills and CALL among fourth-year English undergraduates at Hanoi Open University. The study discovered that students appreciated CALL for enhancing their motivation, concentration, learner autonomy, and interpretation skills, as evidenced by questionnaires completed by 194 students and interviews with three lecturers. Nevertheless, they encountered obstacles such as a fear of making errors, a limited vocabulary, and a lack of cultural knowledge.

Nguyen et al. (2025) investigated the obstacles that postgraduate English majors at IUH encounter when employing ChatGPT in academic writing. The study discovered that ChatGPT promotes idea generation and saves time, but it also raises concerns about accuracy, plagiarism, and reduced critical thinking, resulting in overreliance and academic skill deterioration. This was achieved through the use of a qualitative survey and brief interviews with 25 students.

Pham (2025) did a literature review to investigate the use of ChatGPT as a learning tool for EFL students' writing skills. Based on social constructivism, the study combined global and Vietnamese research. The findings revealed that ChatGPT increased engagement, tailored learning, and writing development while raising issues about disinformation, overreliance, and privacy, emphasizing the need for ethical and directed use.

With a sequential mixed-methods approach, Dinh (2025) looked at elements influencing ICT integration among EFL professors at a Vietnamese university. Seven of the eighty-one teachers who answered questions went to interviews. While financial support and student past experience had the least effect on ICT use, results revealed that teachers' opinions in ICT advantages, their skills, and students's motivation were the largest influencers.

Tran, Le, and Tran (2025) investigated the advantages and disadvantages of AI technologies in academic writing with 30 MA English students at IUH. They collected data using a mix of surveys and interviews. The findings found that while AI technologies enhanced grammar, idea generation, and confidence, they also highlighted issues about cost, overreliance, bogus references, and access to premium services.

Truong, Le, and Nguyen (2025) evaluated how English-major master's students at IUH perceived the use of ChatGPT for research writing. Using a mixed-methods approach with surveys and interviews with 29 students, the study discovered that students valued ChatGPT's assistance with concept structure and writing, but were concerned about disinformation, overreliance, and plagiarism threats, highlighting the importance of supervised ethical use.

We would want to sincerely thank you to all the authors of the excellent and perceptive study papers. The caliber, variety, and intellectual rigor of this issue have been much enhanced by your research work and dedication.

We also really appreciate our reviewers, who committed their time, knowledge, and careful attention to make sure every submission was closely examined. The success of this volume has been much aided by your careful comments and dedication to upholding high standards.

We also really appreciate the editorial staff's relentless effort in managing the general publishing process, editing, formatting, and review coordination. Your behind-the-scenes work guarantees flawless operation and professional presentation of every problem.

The International Journal of AI in Language Education kindly invites authors for our forthcoming Volume 2, Number 2 (2025). Original research papers, case studies, and review papers on the uses of artificial intelligence in language education—including but not limited to AI-assisted learning, automated feedback, AI-enhanced assessment, and ethical concerns in AI use—are welcome here.

Thanks be to God for everything!

Warm regards!



Associate professor Dr. Pham Vu Phi Ho
Editor-in-Chief
International Journal of AI in Language Education (IJAILE)

Using Computer-assisted Language Learning to Improve Interpretation Skills for Fourth-Year English Majors at Hanoi Open University

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Interpretation skills,
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The purpose of this study is to investigate fourth-year English majors' perceptions of interpretation skills and computer-assisted language learning (CALL) as well as difficulties in learning interpretation skills and some useful suggestions to improve this skill for fourth-year English majors at Hanoi Open University. The researchers used the mixed method of quantitative and qualitative approaches for the study. A questionnaire survey was carried out to collect data from 194 students in class K27 majoring in English. The quantitative results showed that nearly all students admitted the importance of interpretation skills and CALL in their learning process. The findings also emphasized several challenges students face in mastering interpretation skills. Besides, the results mentioned CALL offered several benefits for improving interpretation skills. Qualitative data from teacher interviews was also employed to find out the problems in the learning process and point out some effective suggestions for beneficial software and applications.

Introduction

The application of information technology plays a crucial role in education at many universities worldwide. It creates a learning environment that enables students to integrate technology into their studies. Information technology has been effectively implemented in universities, leading to successful technology-based teaching and learning models. It is widely used as a tool in teaching and learning foreign languages. However, its role extends beyond being just a tool for education; it also contributes to broader social development. Many universities are increasingly shifting from traditional teaching methods to learner-centered approaches.

Language ability and cognitive adaptability are crucial for interpretation. CALL applications like speech recognition software and digital recordings improve students' listening skills.

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Multimedia features like podcasts and video lectures enhance listening comprehension, preparing students for real-world interpreting challenges. Furthermore, for them to benefit from the ever-changing range of affordances provided by these new technologies, they must continue receiving training. In the review article, Blake (2016) highlights the ways in which computer-assisted language learning (CALL), when properly positioned within a task-based language teaching framework, can support language development. Learners are eventually pushed to integrate speaking, listening, reading, and writing, and they typically can interact with the digital aspects of their own lives when new technologies are combined with a task-based language teaching goal-oriented approach. The ability for students to learn individually and at their own pace is one of CALL's primary advantages. Godwin-Jones (2015) shows that the students can benefit most from this, as they require a lot of one-on-one work. Self-assessment modules are frequently included in CALL-based technology, allowing students to monitor their progress and analyze their performance. Zhang and Liu's (2020) study finds that students using self-assessment tools in CALL-based technology improve interpretation accuracy and fluency, potentially benefiting language acquisition in the classroom. Nim Park (2009) indicates that instructors' opinions toward computer use are generally favorable. They view computers as helpful teaching tools that can improve instruction by providing students with a range of linguistic inputs and extending their exposure to real-world situations. A study by Pham and Le (2024) explores students' perceptions of ChatGPT as a helpful tool for language learning, finding it favorable and enhancing knowledge. It suggests that educators can use AI tools to revolutionize language research and instruction. Pham & Nguyen (2024) also suggest several benefits to using ChatGPT in the classroom for language acquisition. Moreover, online applications offer a variety of listening materials, including videos, audio clips, and dialogues, which can be repeatedly listened to to improve listening comprehension. According to Sabir et al. (2021), with technological advancements, computers and multimedia have become common in language classes, allowing students to listen to native English speakers. Chandha and Chowdury (2022) explore that blended learning involves transforming traditional lecture-based classes into technology-enhanced blended classes.

Huynh (2024) reveals the adoption of AI in education, focusing on EFL high school students' autonomy. Previous research shows that AI positively impacts linguistic skills and knowledge, allowing learners to be more autonomous and self-regulated. However, concerns persist about over-dependence, especially without proper teacher guidance, and the need for proper guidance. Nguyen & Pham (2024) suggest the potential of AI avatars to overcome traditional language learning issues like apprehension and inadequate practice. The research highlights the need to improve the use of AI applications in various educational settings and enhance their impact on oral communication abilities.

However, in terms of the context for English majors at Hanoi Open University, particularly at the Faculty of English, in the learning process, the students have still faced many challenges in developing interpretation skills, including fear of making mistakes, lack of interpretation practices, confidence and motivation, limited linguistic proficiency, lack of cultural knowledge, inadequate interpreting abilities, and other factors. Utilizing computer-assisted language learning (CALL) to overcome these problems for fourth-year English majors at Hanoi Open University has become a strategic priority. This article aims to evaluate fourth-year English

majors' perceptions of interpretation skills and CALL as well as to analyze the advantages of using CALL as a modern teaching and learning methods to improve both interpretation skills in the classroom and students' self-directed learning abilities.

Literature Review

Overview of previous studies

The use of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) has been highly appreciated so far and has gained interest in the modern world. It is thought that CALL has effectively changed the teaching and learning method. CALL in classrooms is an issue of much concern for many writers in the world. Jafarian et al. (2012) demonstrate that multimedia computers can help students complete learning tasks in traditional teaching and learning environments besides providing extra practice and supplementary activities. In this study, 40 Iranian students were selected and randomly divided into two groups, namely the experimental group (20 students) and the control group (20 students). An independent sample t-test was conducted to ascertain whether there is a statistically significant difference between the writing test scores of the experimental and control groups. This significant divergence between the two cohorts with the advantage of CALL users highlighted how CALL enhanced students' EFL knowledge and ability. Furthermore, with the introduction of digital forms, CALL is now presented in a much more multimodal setting, affording learners more agency and autonomy in producing language (Blake, 2016). Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) is gaining popularity in education due to its adaptable, customizable, and engaging learning opportunities. While its benefits for general language proficiency have been widely recognized, its potential for enhancing interpretation skills has been less explored.

A study by Wang and Li (2022) developed a competence framework for interpretation technologies using empirical data from 10 interviews and 647 questionnaires. It identified factors affecting interpreters' technological competency, such as awareness, learning, and skills. The framework proposed a three-dimensional approach for interpreting technologies, examining their application in interpreting education, curriculum development, and instructional strategies. Additionally, Ramos (2022) discuss the implementation of a machine translation and post-editing module in a Spanish university's postgraduate PSIT program, assessing the effectiveness of the module. The study involved 42 students, gathered quantitative and qualitative data, and found that students were generally satisfied with the module's content. Besides, the findings of a 14-year experiment of computer-assisted interpreting activities in Hanyang University's ESL classes were presented in this research. There have been twenty-three sight translations, consecutive interpretations, and shadowing exercises between English and Korean. Additionally, speech synthesizers and video and sound editing tools were used to edit sound files and video clips from various sources. The students completed a questionnaire to find out what they thought of these exercises. The study's findings suggested that interpreting training activities could enhance language proficiency. (Lee, 2014)

Chen and Kruger (2024) present a trial of the computer-assisted consecutive interpreting workflow, which involves respeaking using speech recognition and producing assisted output

through machine translation. The study introduced a training framework and evaluated the workflow with trained students. The results showed that computer-assisted consecutive interpreting outperforms conventional consecutive interpreting in interpreting quality, accuracy, fluency, and cognitive load, with respeaking playing a critical role. The importance of respeaking in the computer-assisted consecutive interpreting workflow was highlighted by the discovery that there was a positive correlation between respeaking and interpretation quality in both directions.

However, no investigations have been identified in the context of fourth-year English students in interpretation classes at Hanoi Open University, and no studies have been found regarding the use of CALL to improve interpretation skills in the Faculty of English, Hanoi Open University. Therefore, the topic “Using Computer-assisted Language Learning to Improve Interpretation Skills for Fourth-Year English Majors at Hanoi Open University” was chosen for the study.

Theoretical background

Definition of CALL: CALL, as defined by Davies et al. (2013), is the use of computers to enhance language learning resources, including vocabulary building, grammar exercises, and interactive simulations. Chapelle (2001) expands on this to include mobile devices, multimedia applications, and online platforms. CALL is a dynamic field that adapts to technological advancements, ensuring continued diversification of methods and tools.

Definition of interpretation skills: Interpretation has been defined as the oral transfer of spoken language from a source language to a target language in real time (Pöchhacker, 2004). Interpretation is the real-time transfer of spoken language between source and target languages, requiring rapid processing, memory retention, and fluency. According to Gile (2009) and Weber (1984), it differs from translation, which uses written language and allows more review time. Interpreters act as impartial mediators, promoting clear communication between speakers.

Difficulties in learning interpretation skills: A significant barrier to learning interpreting techniques is the difficulty of language. To convey meaning effectively, interpreters need to be proficient in both the source and target languages. Pöchhacker (2004) asserts that one of the most difficult parts of interpreting is the requirement for linguistic flexibility, as interpreters often have little time to prepare and must adjust to a variety of contexts, dialects, and specialized vocabulary. Learning to understand the subtleties of two languages can be challenging for students, especially when understanding specialized or technical content. Kalina (2008) points out that inaccurate interpretation can be due to insufficient vocabulary and poor grammar in both languages. Another major problem with simultaneous and sequential interpreting is memorization. According to Baker (2018), semantically, the word from the source language could be complicated. This is a quite typical translation issue. There could be a difference in the number of semantic distinctions between the source and destination languages. What is significant to one language as a difference in meaning could not be significant to another. While a word in the target language may have the same propositional meaning as a word in the source language, its expressive meaning may differ. The difference could be significant or subtle enough to cause a translation issue in a particular context.

The benefits of using computer-assisted language learning to improve interpretation skills: Technology in the field of language education has been promoted for many years now, but it is only in recent times that the innovations have made their way into practical use, with CALL (computer-assisted language learning) being the most common form of technology implementation used to hone the language skills. The term CALL stands for the application of computer technologies and digital materials in language learning education to provide interactive, engaging comments on how the students did. This can be a challenge for teachers to deliver in a typical classroom, and this difficulty is compounded in larger courses. and individualized learning experience. In a related perspective, Gonzalez-Lloret (2015) observes that CALL technologies can relieve cognitive overload by enabling students to practice interpretation on their own terms before engaging in listening tasks. These tools make it easy to divide the act of interpretation into smaller parts, which allows students to address notetaking, active listening, and memory recall separately without being overwhelmed. It enables the graduated way of doing cognition to work better, as well as increase their confidence in these more difficult interpretive tasks. The primary advantage of CALL is that it can provide fast and individual feedback, which can be crucial for people who are learning to interpret. Specific comments on how the students did can be a challenge for teachers to deliver in a typical classroom, and this difficulty is compounded in larger course models, CALL-based platforms, dialect-wise, and a well-rounded range of interpreting scenarios and data, thereby giving the students exposure to different language models, be it content-wise or dialect-wise, which is vital for their skill development in interpretation. This progressive approach not only improves students' cognitive processing but also boosts their confidence when dealing with complex interpretation tasks. One of CALL's main benefits is its capacity to offer quick, customized feedback, which is very helpful for people learning how to interpret. It can be challenging for teachers to provide each student in a typical classroom environment with specific comments on how they performed, particularly in more extensive courses.

Furthermore, a variety of interpreting scenarios and information are frequently accessible through CALL-based platforms, exposing students to a wide range of language styles, subjects, and dialects, an essential step in developing their interpretation skills. The most salient benefit of using CALL for interpretation is that it presents students with language in actual use. They must be able to handle assorted speech patterns, dialects, and registers—not to mention deal with arena jargon. In addition to the use of CALL tools, providing learners with access to authentic materials such as recorded speeches, news broadcasts, podcasts, and simulated interpreting scenarios that reflect those likely to be met in actual interpreting work (Pérez & Alvira 2017). CALL additionally offers a personalized learning platform that lets students select the skills and materials they find important and helps them develop into self-regulated learners (Benson, 2011). CALL has the potential to revolutionize the way interpretation skills are taught and acquired, improving student accessibility, effectiveness, and efficiency through training as this field of study continues to expand. Motta (2016) mentions that conference interpreting students begin as novices and aim to become experts by the end of a postgraduate program. They need to become adaptive experts, autonomous learners, and self-regulated professionals. The University of Geneva's Interpreting Department adopts a blended learning environment and promotes real-life, problem-based practice. This approach helps students become

autonomous, metacognitive, and self-regulated, with results from a study substantiating this theory-driven approach.

Research Questions

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the survey sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions towards interpretation skills and the frequency of using computer-assisted language learning of the fourth-year English majors at Hanoi Open University?
2. What problems do the fourth-year English majors at Hanoi Open University face in learning interpretation skills?
3. What are the benefits of computer-assisted language learning and some suggestions to improve interpretation skills for the fourth-year English majors at Hanoi Open University?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

The Interpreting Skills course, offered in semester 7, is compulsory for the Translation and Interpretation major. It provides students with essential knowledge and skills in interpreting between English and Vietnamese. Lectures cover core skills such as note-taking, situation handling, public speaking, and practical translation exercises. These exercises focus on liaison interpretation for everyday communication and consecutive interpretation of news reports on social, environmental, cultural, economic, and political topics. By the end of the course, students are expected to perform interpretation tasks proficiently.

Purposive sampling was used to select participants with specific and relevant characteristics to the study's objectives. This method ensured that the sample included individuals with the necessary qualifications to provide meaningful data for the research. The study involved 194 fourth-year English majors from class K27 at the Faculty of English, Hanoi Open University. These students were chosen because they had not received systematic training in computer-assisted language learning and had encountered difficulties learning interpretation skills. Since they were studying interpretation skills in the seventh term, they were better positioned to engage with the method. Over 12 weeks, students complete 30 in-class periods and 60 self-study periods. Using computer-assisted learning methods enhances their interpretation skills, increases their motivation for self-study, and strengthens their independent learning abilities. Additionally, three lecturers of the Faculty of English at Hanoi Open University, who have been teaching interpretation skills for more than 10 years, were invited to participate in face-to-face interviews to clarify the research questions and intensify the data analysis.

Design of the Study

Practically, with a duration of 12 weeks for interpretation skills (2.5 periods/week), students only have a little time to practice interpretation in class. Therefore, combining in-class learning and interpretation practice outside of class is extremely necessary. With the characteristics of

students and the difficulties in learning interpretation skills, teachers integrated in-class learning and interpretation practice with oriented videos as an extracurricular exercise activity. This helped students practice more with an extremely rich source of documents, thereby making the teaching and learning process more effective. It is also an open source of learning materials to improve students' self-awareness and self-study. Moreover, this method also helps students apply knowledge and improve interpretation skills.

Implementation process

Step 1: Teachers prepare videos and supplementary materials for 12 weeks of study so that they are oriented and appropriate to the topics that students learn according to the curriculum in class and meet the application of output standards on knowledge and skills.

Step 2: Teachers require students to practice in class and at home every week under the supervision of teachers.

Step 3: Teachers give feedback on students' learning and practice.

This method would help students apply knowledge and skills to improve their interpretation skills. The students will make full use of CALL as a diverse material for blended learning and self-study. At the end of the semester, a survey was conducted with 194 fourth-year students majoring in English from class K27 and three teachers at the Faculty of English, Hanoi Open University. A mixed method of quantitative and qualitative approaches was employed to achieve the study's aim. The questionnaire consisted of ten questions, all of which were closed-ended. The researchers used yes/no, 5-point Likert scale, and multiple-choice questions to design the questionnaire survey. These questions focused on students' perceptions of the importance of interpretation skills and computer-assisted language learning in the learning process, the frequency of using computer-assisted language learning to improve interpretation skills, the difficulties faced by fourth-year English majors at Hanoi Open University in learning interpretation skills, and the benefits of using computer-assisted language learning as an innovative teaching method to enhance interpretation skills and self-study abilities.

Additionally, to increase the study's credibility, three lecturers of the Faculty of English at Hanoi Open University, who have been teaching interpretation skills for more than 10 years, were invited to participate in face-to-face interviews. The structured interviews consisted of four questions in English focusing on students' interpretation perceptions towards interpretation skills, students' difficulties in learning English interpretation skills, benefits of computer-assisted language learning, and some suggestions to improve interpretation skills for fourth-year English majors at Hanoi Open University. The interview outcomes will be carefully noted and analyzed together with the data collected from the questionnaire survey and discussed to find solutions to improve interpretation skills.

Data collection

The researcher used a questionnaire to gather data. An electronic (Internet-based) survey was chosen for its speed and accessibility, following Saris and Gallhofer (2007). The questionnaire, distributed via Google Forms, was sent to 194 fourth-year students majoring in English from classes of K27 to assess their perceptions of interpretation skills, the challenges they face, and

the benefits of using CALL. Regarding validity and reliability, three language specialists reviewed the questionnaire to ensure consistency among the items. The initial version was tested on five students to make the questionnaire more comprehensive, reliable, and suitable for data collection.

Furthermore, three lecturers who have experience teaching the subject of interpretation skills for the fourth-year English majors of Hanoi Open University were asked four open-ended English questions. Specifically, the researchers invited three lecturers to participate in 30-minute face-to-face interviews, and all of the interviews were recorded for data analysis. Each lecturer was asked four of the same questions as follows:

1. What are the perceptions of the fourth-year English majors towards interpretation skills and computer-assisted language learning?
2. What problems do the fourth-year English majors face in learning interpretation skills?
3. What are the benefits of computer-assisted language learning to improve interpretation skills for the fourth-year English majors?
4. What are some suggestions for useful software or applications to support interpretation skills?

Data analysis

The data was first gathered and then prepared by the researchers. The quantitative data from the questionnaires and qualitative insights from the interviews were analyzed to extract meaningful facts, figures, and information on students' perceptions, the challenges, and the benefits of CALL to improve interpretation skills. Excel and statistical software like SPSS have been used for descriptive statistics. The results and discussion were based on statistical data, percentages from the questionnaire analysis, and insights from the teacher's interviews.

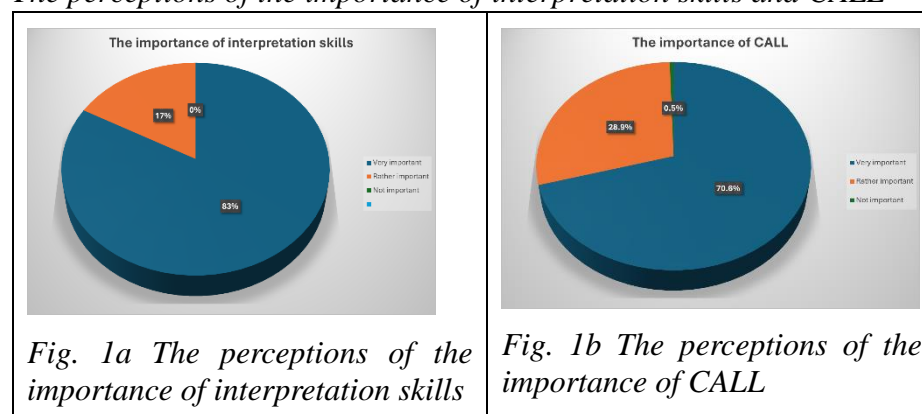
Results/Findings

Results of the questionnaire survey

The perceptions of the importance of interpretation skills and CALL

Fig. 1a & 1b

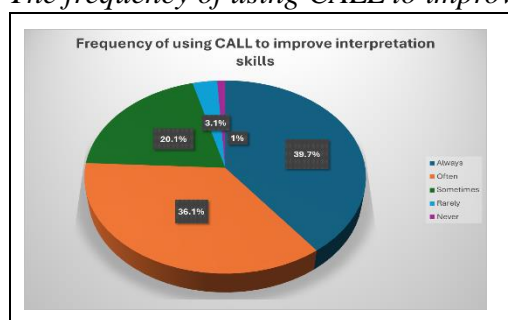
The perceptions of the importance of interpretation skills and CALL



As can be seen from figure 1.a, the percentage of students who understand the importance of interpretation skills is up to 83%. Meanwhile, the tiny proportion of respondents (17%) who consider them "rather important" indicates broad agreement over the importance of these abilities. Based on the data of Fig 1.b on the importance of CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning), the "Very important" factor rises to 70.6%, indicating that the majority of participants rated CALL as indispensable in supporting language teaching and learning. This shows the effectiveness of CALL in improving language skills. Meanwhile, the "rather important" factor is 28.9%, reflecting that some students consider CALL a useful tool. 70.6% (very important) is 2.4 times larger than 28.9% (rather important), showing that CALL has a wide influence in the learner community.

Fig. 2

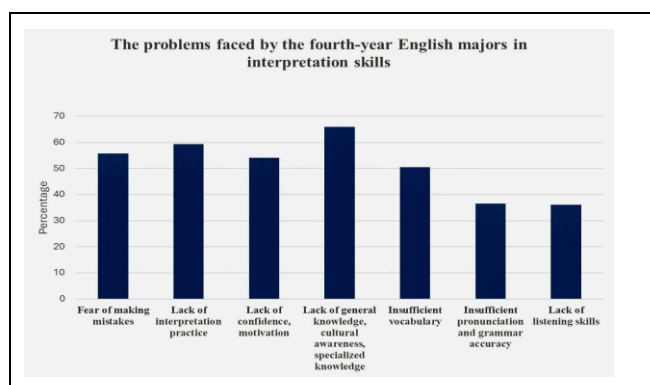
The frequency of using CALL to improve interpretation skills



Students' perceptions of their use of computer-assisted learning are described in the pie chart. According to the study, many respondents regularly employ this strategy to improve their interpretation abilities. A distinct trend of appreciating and depending on technology for learning is evident, with 75.8% of users reporting that they use it "always" or "frequently." 20.1% of students use it "sometimes." Therefore, the results highlight the importance of computer-assisted learning and its efficacy in interpretation skill development.

Fig. 3

The problems faced by the fourth-year English majors in interpretation skills

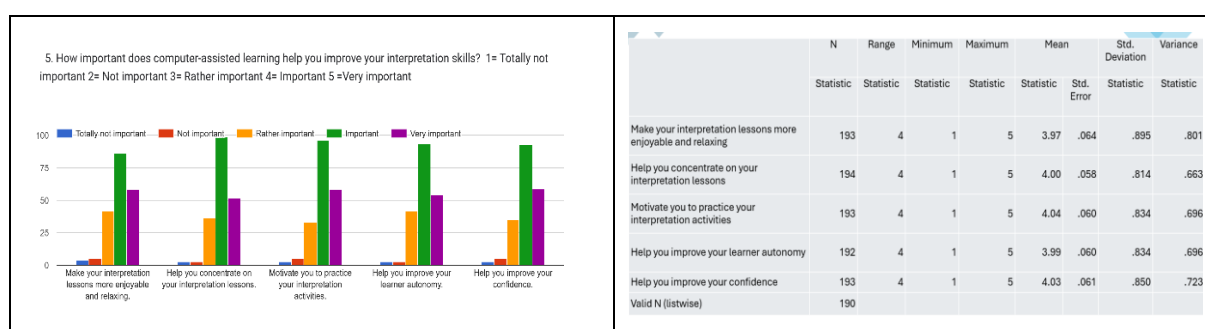


As shown in Fig. 3, this figure illustrates the problems faced by fourth-year students with their interpretation skills. The results accurately reflect the students' opinions. The proportion of 55.7% indicates that many students struggle with the fear of making mistakes. This issue affects more than half of the students. The data suggests that the proportion of students with this fear

is consistent across the sample, indicating that it is a common concern. The proportion of students experiencing a lack of interpretation practice is 59.3%, signifying that a substantial portion of students view this as a problem. Moreover, the large proportion of students reporting a lack of general knowledge, cultural awareness, or specialized knowledge is 66%, showing that a significant majority consider this issue a major problem. This percentage suggests that most students face similar general knowledge and awareness challenges. Additionally, the slight standard deviations for problems related to insufficient vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar accuracy, and listening skills indicate that these issues affect students uniformly, with little difference across the sample.

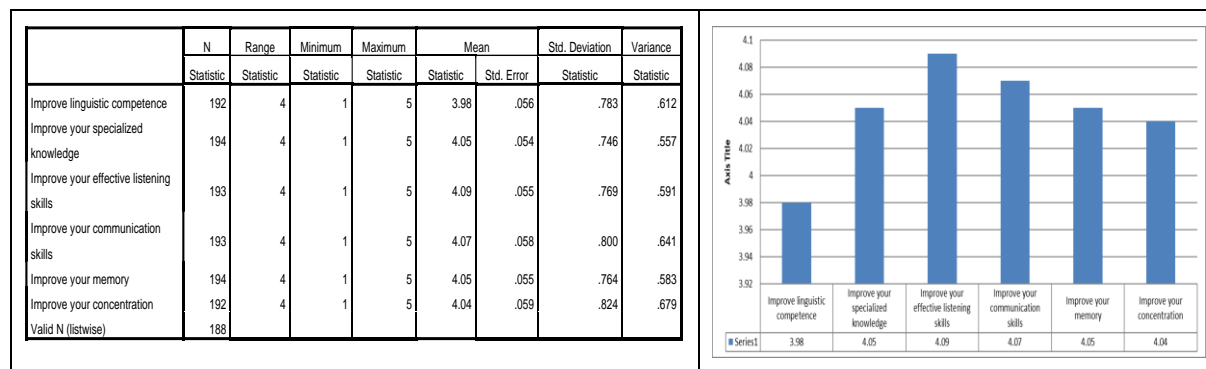
Fig. 4a

The benefits of CALL to improve interpretation skills



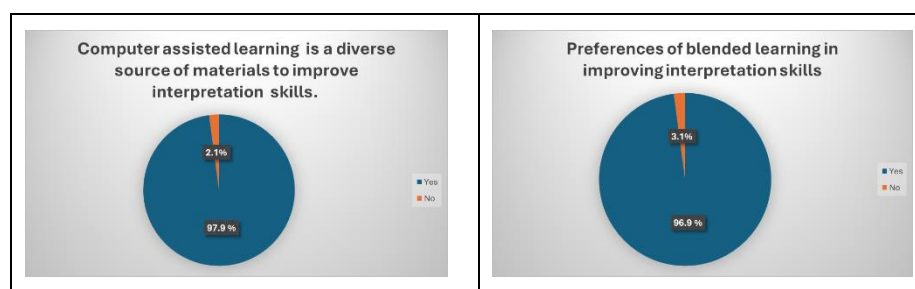
Using a Likert scale from 1 (completely unimportant) to 5 (very important), the table assesses the perceived significance of certain advantages of computer-assisted learning (CALL) in enhancing interpretation abilities. indicating a positive consensus, the majority of participants most likely selected 4 (important) or 5 (very important). As can be seen from the above chart, the majority of participants most likely selected 4 (important) or 5 (very important), indicating a positive consensus. The low number of responses to Categories 1 (totally not important) and 2 (not Important) suggests that few participants think this factor is unimportant. The average score (3.97) of the factor “make lessons more enjoyable and relaxing” indicates that learners find CALL moderately to be very important in making lessons enjoyable. Interestingly, CALL is considered effective in helping learners stay focused with a mean of 4.00 on the criterion “help you concentrate on lessons.”. The highest mean score, 4.04, of the factor “motivate you to practice activities” indicates that learners see CALL as an excellent motivator for practicing interpretation activities, which is critical for skill improvement. Standard deviation (Std. Deviation) (0.834) reveals consistent responses, reflecting a shared positive view. Meanwhile, the mean score of 3.99 for "help you improve learner autonomy" indicates that CALL is valued for encouraging self-directed learning and empowering students to take greater ownership of their development. The standard deviation (0.834) indicates similar variability to motivation, which shows broad agreement. Last but not least, the component "help you improve your confidence" with a mean of 4.03 indicates that CALL is regarded as a crucial instrument for boosting self-assurance in interpreting abilities, with motivation coming in second. Additionally, Std. Deviation (0.850) indicates that although the majority of students feel comfortable using CALL for the purpose of improving their interpretation skills.

Fig. 4b

The benefits of CALL to improve interpretation skills

As can be seen from Fig 4.b, the number of respondents is around 192-194 responses, ensuring the data is reliable. All items have a range of 4, indicating responses span the full Likert scale from 1 (least beneficial) to 5 (most beneficial). All aspects have high mean scores, ranging from 3.98 to 4.09, showing a general agreement on the benefits of CALL for improving interpretation skills. The SD values of standard deviation (SD), ranging from 0.746 to 0.824 indicate moderate consistency in responses, with some variability across participants. The variance values (0.557 to 0.679) support the SD, further confirming the spread of responses is not extreme. The factor of “improve language competence” with a mean of 3.98 (close to 4 “important”) shows that CALL is perceived as significantly beneficial for enhancing overall language proficiency, though slightly lower than other categories. The criterion “improve subject knowledge” with a mean of 4.05 reveals that CALL is recognized as an effective tool for increasing expertise in interpretation-related subject knowledge, making it a crucial resource for learners. Surprisingly, the category “improve effective listening skills” with a mean of 4.09 (the highest mean) stands out as the most highly rated, indicating that learners strongly feel CALL contributes to better listening skills, a key aspect of interpretation. Therefore, CALL tools should be enhanced to focus on listening practice, such as simulated interpretation exercises, audio-visual resources, and interactive modules. Data also highlights the positive impact of CALL on improving memory, communication skills, and concentration, with mean scores of 4.05, 4.07, and 4.04, respectively. All mean scores are above 3.98, indicating a strong consensus on the benefits of CALL in improving interpretation skills.

Fig. 4c & 4d

The benefits of CALL to improve interpretation skills

This fig. 4c shows a survey on the use of computers to assist learning, especially in improving

interpretation skills. The results indicate that most respondents (97.9%) believe that computer-assisted learning is a diverse resource for improving spoken interpretation skills, while only 2.1% disagree. Therefore, computers are a useful tool in improving interpretation skills. This shows that technology provides learning materials and tools, which can include translation software, online resources, and language learning tools. The percentage of respondents who disagreed was very low (2.1%). This figure reveals that very few people felt that computers were not useful or necessary in improving interpretation skills. This may be due to those without experience with computer-assisted learning tools or those who tend to learn traditionally. The fig. 4d also displays the survey results regarding whether they like blended learning, a learning method that mixes traditional classroom lessons with computer-based lessons. As can be seen, 96.9% of respondents answered “Yes,” showing that many learners prefer blended learning. This shows that many value combining traditional learning methods and technology tools, which allows their students to learn from richer, more flexible resources as well as develop skills in technology use in their learning. This implies that only 3.1% of the audience dislikes blended learning. These people may prefer traditional learning methods or are not comfortable with using technology in their learning process. The survey results show that the majority of participants highly appreciate the blended learning format because of its flexibility and convenience. Combining traditional learning methods and technology creates richness in the learning process and helps learners easily access and use modern learning support tools.

Results of the interviews

In this section, the research team presents data collected through interviews with three lecturers on four groups of issues: the perceptions of the fourth-year English majors towards interpretation skills and computer-assisted language learning, the problems the fourth-year English majors face in learning interpretation skills, the benefits of computer-assisted language learning to improve interpretation skills for fourth-year English majors, and some suggestions for useful software or applications to support interpretation skills.

Based on the interview's question 1 related to students' perceptions of the fourth-year English majors towards interpretation skills and computer-assisted language learning, all three lecturers agreed that all students were aware of the importance of interpretation skills and the roles of computer-assisted language learning in their learning process. Integration and globalization have enhanced the role of interpretation skills in all aspects of social life. Interpreters were responsible for converting each source language's content into the target language and acted as “language and cultural ambassadors.” Therefore, interpreters were required to have interpretation skills that were formed from the training process as well as developed throughout the working process in the future. Moreover, students all recognized the role of using technology in the interpretation process. Learning interpretation skills with the support of technology has become a habit in the digital age.

For question number 2 regarding the problems the fourth-year English majors face in learning interpretation skills, lecturers 1, 2, and 3 (L1, L2, and L3) commented:

“Well, I think language is a communication tool that plays an important role in human life activities, especially in the field of interpretation. Interpreters are considered a bridge

of communication between two languages and cultures. Poor expression skills can lead to many problems. Therefore, they are required to be proficient in both the source language and the target language. Proficiency here includes not only proficiency in vocabulary and grammar but also proficiency in the target language's culture to avoid causing misunderstandings.” L1

“As for me, students’ translations are often ambiguous and contain many errors due to shortcomings in the source language and the target language, especially in vocabulary, because the wrong use of words leads to the inaccuracy of the conveyed content. Lack of fluency in grammar is also a barrier in the translation process because of grammatical errors.” L2

“In my point of view, listening is one of the essential skills that interpreters need to have. During the learning process, students of the interpreting department experience difficulties when listening to the source language and worry when expressing it in the target language. Specifically, the first difficulty in listening is related to pronunciation. When students' pronunciation is incorrect, the sentences they hear will naturally be affected, and there will be cases where the speaker on the video says one word but the student, when interpreting, hears another word, leading to the translation being no longer accurate. The speaker's speaking speed presents the second listening challenge for students. The accuracy of the translation is greatly impacted by the speaker's speech rate. Students become easily confused and are unable to hear the speaker transmit what they want to if they speak too quickly. Students therefore frequently stammer and speak incoherently when interpreting.” L3

Meanwhile, lecturers 2 and 3 shared the same opinion that accuracy and coherence determine the quality and success of a translation, and it is also the main problem for the students. Accuracy is the accuracy level when the message is transferred from the source language to the target language. Coherence here is the level of re-expression so that it is easy to understand and clear to the listener. The translated language should not be too elaborate or complicated. In the process of learning interpretation, students often use ambiguous sentences that cause significant errors, which can lead to redundancy, omission, or change of information. Therefore, the transmission of information during the interpretation process is no longer intact or accurate, although one of the requirements for a quality translation is accuracy. The students also encounter difficulties with cultural barriers when they interpret the source language into the target language. All these factors affect the qualities of translation.

Regarding question number 3 about the benefits of computer-assisted language learning to improve interpretation skills for fourth-year English majors, three lecturers admitted:

“Actually, using information technology has changed traditional education, improving and innovating how students learn. Compared to automatically acquiring knowledge, students are free to be creative in the learning process.” L1

“Listening skill is an important factor in retrieving memorized information. If you have not listened carefully, you cannot recall information and cannot interpret properly.

Students can use CALL to improve their listening skills and then interpretation skills as well.” L2

“Personally, I think it is essential to use CALL to equip students with a solid background knowledge, build themselves a glossary of words and phrases, and overcome cultural barriers. This will not only help you gain more knowledge and vocabulary in many fields but also help you avoid confusion in unexpected situations when interpreting.” L3

In terms of question 4, related to some suggestions for useful software or applications to support interpretation skills, three lecturers recommended:

“There are numerous advantages of using CALL for fourth-year English majors at Hanoi Open University to improve interpretation skills when technology is applied and integrated. Technology. SDL Trados is a translation support software, supporting the translation of complex information and data, among the best in the world today. There are many special features of Trados, such as high accuracy and ensuring consistency in the use of terminology, keeping the original text format, avoiding spelling errors, and allowing bilingual comparison.” L1

“As for me, Grammarly is a tool that checks spelling errors when you interpret in English. The tool supports multiple platforms, including browsers, Word and Outlook, Windows and Mac, and mobile operating systems, so it is convenient for the students. Grammarly provides powerful checking capabilities, checking spelling in context or using words correctly. This will help students feel more confident when being checked by Grammarly.” L2

“Well, VOA Learning English is a free English learning application and a good choice to improve interpretation skills every day, both in class and in self-study. The application helps students easily learn and practice through news on the radio and a variety of videos. Google Translate is also a good recommendation.” L3

Finally, all three lecturers concluded that interpretation skills were crucial for advanced language mastery, requiring cognitive and communicative abilities. Integrating CALL into the curriculum enhanced student engagement through interactive modules and real-time feedback, strengthening linguistic abilities and exposing them to advanced digital tools. The effectiveness of CALL depends on its implementation within the instructional framework, proper technological infrastructure, and student familiarity with digital platforms.

Discussion

The key findings of the current study reveal that the fourth-year English majors at Hanoi Open University faced a lot of challenges in their learning interpretation skills, such as fear of making mistakes, lack of interpretation practice, lack of confidence and motivation, lack of general knowledge, cultural awareness, specialized knowledge, insufficient vocabulary, insufficient pronunciation and grammar accuracy, and lack of listening skills. The findings also demonstrate that CALL significantly enhances interpretation skills, particularly in areas such as motivating the students to practice interpretation activities, improving linguistic competence, specialized

knowledge, listening skills, memory, concentration, and learner autonomy. Besides, the results suggest that many technology applications are diverse materials and can be employed for blended learning.

The advent of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) has allowed for a more personalized way to learn a language that provides overall benefits for education. Identifying relevant studies, some previous studies investigated similar topics. Wang and Li (2022) researched a framework for ICT interpretative competence and established the factors affecting interpreters' technological competency. As Sánchez Ramos and M. del M. (2022) described in their study of a machine translation and post-editing module for a Spanish university postgraduate PSIT program, they found that their students were generally satisfied with the content provided by the module. Through a 14-year experiment of computer-assisted interpreting activities in Hanyang University's ESL classes, Lee (2014) suggested that interpreting training activities might improve language proficiency. Chen, S., & Kruger, J. L. (2024) experimented with the WCIC—an adaptation of the dictation method, wherein the interpreter respeaks for speech recognition and generalizes their output with MT. The findings indicated that computer-assisted consecutive interpreting is superior to conventional consecutive interpreting in interpreting performance quality, accuracy, fluency, cognitive load, and respeaking, which proved to be crucial, playing a key factor.

Consistent with Wang and Li (2022), this study found a significant improvement in learning interpretation skills among participants who used CALL tools. However, unlike Sánchez Ramos and M. del M. (2022), who reported specific progress in contextual understanding, the current study observed substantial gains in this area, possibly due to the integration of computer-based adaptive learning technologies with considerable factors such as differences in sample size or CALL tools used and hadn't found the long-term impact in applying CALL. However, these findings corroborated earlier evidence of CALL's benefits while also contributing new insights into its specific impact on interpretation skills for the fourth-year English majors at Hanoi Open University.

The review of the CALL questionnaire and interview data provides important understanding into language acquisition with the use of technology. By contrasting the results of this study with those of previous research, significant insights can be obtained into how Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) tools enhance interpretation skills. The study concludes with numerous recommendations for using CALL to help fourth-year English majors at Hanoi Open University enhance their English interpretation skills. These suggestions are based on the theoretical structure discussed above as well as the findings on the results.

To motivate the students to succeed in the learning environment, teachers must bring something new, such as blended learning, to their classrooms. Thanks to developments in online technology, students now have more flexibility, convenience, and access to learning than ever before (Tinti-Kane, 2014). The name Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) best captures computers' important role in English language instruction and learning (Ifioma, 2010). Through the integration of diverse technological resources into the curriculum, students can more efficiently achieve the following course learning outcomes: using appropriate words and structures to reproduce messages fluently; applying interpretation techniques and skills to

interpreting news, speeches, and communicative interpretation.

Firstly, using CALL technologies, like grammar checkers, vocabulary improvement apps, and machine translation software, can greatly increase students' fluency. Students can quickly advance their language proficiency with real-time feedback on grammar and word choice from resources like Grammarly, Linguee, or Google Translate. The students can improve their vocabulary and sentence structures to quickly convey ideas. Therefore, their accuracy and fluency in interpretation skills make them create more natural word selections and structures.

The second major benefit of CALL technology is the wealth of resources available for interpreting practice. CAT (Computer-Assisted Translation) products such as SDL Trados Studio, MemoQ, or Wordfast provide powerful functionality to support the interpreting task. Using these resources, students can use their paraphrasing memory, break down texts into comprehensible parts, and use terminology to check for accuracy and consistency. By using these tools, students can ensure that their translated content is accurate and acceptable for the context by continually applying professional interpreting practices when interpreting communication.

Thirdly, interpretation of live speeches or news broadcasts requires advanced skills, including speed, accuracy, and cultural sensitivity. CALL platforms that simulate real-world translation tasks help students develop these skills. Subtitling software like Aegisub or Amara allows students to practice translating live media, while simultaneous interpretation software like Speechpool offers a space to practice interpreting speeches.

All in all, these tools provide not only an interactive and immersive learning experience but also the opportunity to practice and perfect the interpretation skills effectively.

Conclusion

Based on the data analysis, several key findings were withdrawn for the research. The study explored the fourth-year English majors' perceptions of the importance of CALL and interpretation skills. In addition, it attempted to find the problems the students encountered in their learning process. The questionnaire survey data and interview results are expected to be valuable for teachers and students. Remarkably, the recommendations of using CALL inside and outside the classroom will motivate the fourth-year English majors at Hanoi Open University to improve their interpretation skills. Based on the result of this study, it can be implied that CALL can contribute positively and effectively to language teaching and learning.

Although the study's findings provide insightful information about using CALL to enhance interpretation skills, it has some limitations. The sample size for this study was limited to 194 fourth-year students from the Faculty of English at Hanoi Open University. While this sample provides useful insights into CALL's effectiveness in improving interpretation skills for this group of students, the findings may not be generalizable to other universities or language learners in different contexts. A larger and more diverse sample would provide a broader perspective on the impact of CALL in supporting interpretation skills.

Furthermore, future research should be done with practical action research comparing pre-

technology users with post-technology users for the participants of the fourth-year students in the English Faculty, Hanoi Open University. It will help the findings become more convincing, and the authors may have a deeper insight into the effectiveness of CALL to improve interpretation skills and long-term impacts in teaching and learning processes. In conclusion, lecturers and students should apply new technologies because they benefit teaching and learning processes.

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Biodata

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The Challenges of Applying ChatGPT in the Academic Writing of Postgraduate Students in English Major at IUH

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

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postgraduate
students, IUH

Nowadays, AI chatbots like ChatGPT have brought many innovations to different fields, especially in education. Due to ChatGPT's benefits, users tend to become overly reliant on using it in their learning process. Postgraduate students who have to face the transition into higher education might face difficulties in their writing tasks because it requires advanced learning and research. This study aims to investigate and discover the disadvantages students in higher education encounter when using ChatGPT for their writing purposes. The research was conducted on twenty-five postgraduate students majoring in English at the Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City. The researchers apply qualitative research to gather data, including survey questionnaires and short interviews. Closed-ended and open-ended questions about the disadvantages that postgraduate students confront when using ChatGPT in their writing process are focused on. This study's findings indicate that ChatGPT's challenges outweigh the benefits it brings that enhance the efficacy of writing skills of postgraduate students majoring in English at the Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City.

Introduction

Background of the study

Recently, the use of ChatGPT has been bringing a variety of benefits to academic writing. ChatGPT is an artificial intelligence chatbot from an Open AI company that was released in 2022. ChatGPT is a supporting tool for non-native students in writing that might provide immediate information through the user's question or prompt, such as analyzing a topic, giving ideas, summarising ideas, and writing a model paragraph (Sok & Heng, 2024). On the other hand, Barrot (2023) highlights that besides the benefits, there are still serious issues caused by this AI tool. In higher education, first-year students still have to accustom themselves to the advanced academic writing requirements, including precise organization, ideas, in-depth analysis, and critical thinking. Students can use ChatGPT as a writing assistant in writing procedures (Gultom et al., 2024). However, Barrot (2023) stated that students applying ChatGPT to their writing and being overdependent on this tool might obstruct their proficiency in Academic writing. The efficiency of ChatGPT became a controversial problem with students

and teachers in learning and teaching language (Huynh, 2024). According to Elsen (2023), in the United States, many schools and Universities in New York City prohibited using this tool on networks because of concerns about its impact on student learning and the accuracy of its content.

Statement of the problems

In today's modern life, the development of digital technology has created many beneficial and efficient software tools, the most popular of which is ChatGPT. It is applied in many fields, benefiting users, particularly students and teachers, in language learning and teaching. According to AlAfnan et al. (2023), ChatGPT is considered a supportive tool for teachers in researching lessons and designing exercises in many different ways with technology integration. At the same time, students are also provided with many practical problems to analyze and discuss in seminars. Moreover, ChatGPT is expected to become an effective alternative to other search engines thanks to its ability to provide comprehensive information and save time. The beginner can even use ChatGPT proficiently without any training (Nguyen, 2024). However, in addition to providing many benefits beyond expectations, ChatGPT causes many challenges, especially for students and postgraduates of the Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City, in developing their writing skills. Cultivating writing skills is very important for postgraduates because written documents require high accuracy, perfecting ideas, and improving the ability to analyze content in depth. Additionally, limited training data for ChatGPT (Gilson et al., 2023; Talan & Kalinkara, 2023) causes AI to provide responses that lack human-like vision and creativity, which makes the problem become more difficult (Chakravarti, 2023; Dwivedi et al., 2023).

Purpose of the study

There is no doubt that ChatGPT is very beneficial because it almost always gives prompt responses that help students complete their writing tasks effectively. However, if students count a lot on this AI tool, their writing skills and critical thinking may be negatively affected. Cotton (2023) highlights that ChatGPT has numerous troubles concerning students, such as accuracy and plagiarism. He also warns that it can cause inequitable learning results and cheating on examinations, both of which lead to adverse effects on education. This study aims to discover the elements that make IUH students depend on using ChatGPT and reveal some main challenges that may happen when IUH students use ChatGPT for their writing assignments. It is a useful reference material for both teachers and students to comprehend this AI tool's operation.

Literature Review

Imran and Almusharraf conducted research in 2013 on the possible use of ChatGPT in education for writing skills in postgraduate education. Researchers collected data from four prestigious journals, including Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, and Pubmed. They found 30 suitable records that adapted quality standards to analyze the information. The study reveals that ChatGPT is a significant achievement in science, technology, and education.

A study on ChatGPT and its application to help postgraduate students improve their academic writing skills was conducted by Acosta and colleagues (2024). The selected participants were postgraduate students with different experiences and backgrounds at schools in Latin America. Data were collected through closed-ended questions about the advantages and negative effects of academic writing using AI tools. The findings in the study emphasize the advantages that

chatGPT brings to students in terms of their writing skills rather than the disadvantages and violations of ethical issues. The research is recommended to improve the skills of postgraduate students to balance the use of ChatGPT for their learning and skill development purposes.

The research to date by Rahma and Fithriani (2024) has been carried out using a qualitative case study approach about the positive impact of ChatGPT on non-native students in their writing from teachers' perspectives. Ten teachers in an Indonesian private school were chosen as participants in this research. The participants answered the closed-ended questions on a Likert scale and the in-depth interview questions, which the researchers prepared. The most interesting finding was that all participants approved of the quality of students' writing being enhanced by using ChatGPT. However, the drawbacks of ChatGPT were not mentioned in the study.

In 2023, Haggag conducted a study in order to identify ChatGPT's application in helping students improve their writing skills. He collected data by using statistics from a one-group quasi-experimental design, including pre and post-testing processes. There are 30 students in the Hurghada Faculty of Education taking part in the study. According to the results, thanks to ChatGPT, students can enhance their writing skills, such as in writing paragraphs, summaries, editing, and proofreading.

A great deal of previous research into ChatGPT by Maghamil and Sierras (2024) has focused on its impact on students' writing skills. The study involved senior high school students at a Philippine University. The participants were trained in Academic English, writing skills, and English for specific purposes courses. The researchers compared the control group and experimental groups. Pre-tests and post-tests were conducted in two groups of participants to analyze the influence of ChatGPT on their writing skills.

Alquahtani (2024) conducted a study to explore the perceptions and experiences of using ChatGPT among teachers and students. This survey was conducted with 152 participants, including 62 females and 89 males, as well as teachers and students at Shaqra University. From there, we can find out the benefits and challenges of using ChatGPT's special support in writing assignments. The research follows a qualitative method, analyzing data based on survey results collected and running data through the SPSS program. Overall, this study does not highlight the reasons why users become worried about problems occurring when using this tool.

More recent attention has focused on the provision of Gultom et al. (2024), which investigates how Indonesian students in higher education think about utilizing ChatGPT in their Writing skills. The researcher applied a qualitative method to collect the data from Yogyakarta University. Open-ended questions were prepared to interview postgraduate students and gather information, and then the data were analyzed by descriptive analytics in their own language. The result of this study indicates that the students' awareness of the potential of ChatGPT can boost their learning process. The strategies of applying ChatGPT in academic writing were exposed by assisting in writing tasks, generating ideas, and making a draft quickly, and there are challenges of using ChatGPT in academic writing.

A study by Agus and Lis (2024) was done to determine students' abilities to use ChatGPT to do writing activities. They conducted an investigation into 90 students of a university in Lampung, namely State Islamic University. This investigation occurred between 2022 and 2023. The study has three purposes, including students' viewpoints of ChatGPT and the advantages and disadvantages of the tool. This research showed that more than three-fourths of participants had developed their writing capabilities after they had used this AI tool. About one-fourth of them were afraid of being subject to ChatGPT.

Mubaroq et al. (2024) conducted a study on high school students using ChatGPT to learn their writing skills and find out their strengths and weaknesses when using this tool. The research sources for this study were from digital media and scientific repositories. Using the Google Scholar and Zandy platforms to search, the result was six articles that fully met the criteria of the research. The results of the research's strengths are that ChatGPT can support creating outlines, brainstorming ideas, translating text, and excellent text creation capabilities. The weaknesses found in ChatGPT are inaccurate information, over-reliance on AI tools, lack of creativity, and poor understanding of the process of using ChatGPT for their writing skills.

Previous research by Santosh (2024) focused on investigating how ChatGPT impacts students in their Academic Writing by using a qualitative method. The participants of this research were 134 students around 18 years old at an Indian University. All the students were divided into 2 groups: the control group and the experimental group who had never tried to use ChatGPT before the research. The data analysis through pre-test, post-test, and delayed post-test in 6 hours showed that ChatGPT has a negative impact on student's motivation and idea creation.

There is a relatively small body of literature from Jarrah et al. (2023) that concerns the drawbacks of ChatGPT in education. The study was conducted for around one year at American Universities in the USA and concluded in 2023 by analysing almost 11,000 articles from different authors. The most significant finding is that using ChatGPT's responses or ideas in writing might lead to plagiarism.

Bok and Cho (2023) conducted a study to address the benefits and challenges of error-correcting articles with support from ChatGPT. The 80 participants were all students at a university in Korea. Data was collected through open-ended questions formed on a Google form so that students could give answers easily, and information about applying ChatGPT to their writing skills was collected accurately. The findings of this study show that ChatGPT brings users many benefits, but this tool also provides a lot of inappropriate or misleading information.

Elkatmis (2024) conducted a research paper to investigate graduate students' experiences using ChatGPT to improve their writing skills. Postgraduate students officially enrolled in spring 2022-2023 were selected as participants for the study. The researcher chose semi-structured interviews to emphasize students' senses and estimation during the process of using chatGPT for their writing. After being instructed to use ChatGPT, students have three weeks to complete three articles. Data was collected from direct interviews with students. The findings in this study show that ChatGPT plays a special role in improving their writing skills. However, a few students also have mixed opinions about ChatGPT's positive contributions. They believe that it causes students to suffer greatly in their learning process as well as become lazy and overly dependent on this tool.

In a study conducted by Shakil and Sadaf (2024), they investigated teachers to find out the drawbacks of the development of students' learning language process, particularly in critical thinking. A close-ended questionnaire was used to collect data from 30 ESL teachers who teach in a public school in Pakistan. According to the study's results, the main threat to writing skills is the frequent use of ChatGPT.

The purpose of the research done by Juan, Kennedy, Allam, and Lakshmana (2023) was to find out the potential risks and limitations of AI chatbots in HEIs. They analyze 80 records from different websites, including PubMed, Web of Science, IEEE Xplore, Scopus, Google Scholar, ACM Digital Library, ScienceDirect, JSTOR, ProQuest, SpringerLink, EBSCOhost, and ERIC in the first stage and 537 records for the second stage. Their research found that ChatGPT may contribute to reducing human connection and support. The study also revealed some serious

risks, including misinformation, technology overreliance, and cognitive bias.

According to several previous studies, scholars highlight many beneficial and disadvantageous aspects of ChatGPT, which help students enhance their writing tasks in many universities worldwide. Nevertheless, not much research has been conducted in Vietnam to investigate the challenges of using ChatGPT in writing skills.

Research Questions

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the survey sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the factors that make postgraduate students rely on using ChatGPT in their writing skills?
2. What are the difficulties postgraduate students in English Major at IUH confront when applying ChatGPT to their Academic writing?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

The use of ChatGPT has emerged in many schools due to its benefits, and the Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City is no exception. The study was carried out at the Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City (IUH), particularly in the Faculty of Foreign Language (FFL). The researchers conducted a survey and interview in a postgraduate class. They are majoring in English language and are training in Academic Writing skills. The study will be implemented in twelve weeks, from August to October 2024, including giving survey questions, interviews, and writing the research.

The data and interview scripts were gathered from twenty-five students in a Master of English Language class who are instructed in the same program and training level. Students in this class have all the necessary elements and are suitable for their major, so the information collected is reasonable and valid for our research. They are the appropriate participants for this study, which helps researchers examine the challenges of using ChatGPT in their Academic Writing.

Design of the Study

The convergent mixed-method method was chosen for this study. The mixed-method approach includes the qualitative and quantitative methods to collect the data. The convergent mixed method is the process of conducting qualitative and quantitative methods at the same time. According to John (2014), applying qualitative and quantitative data can show the researcher an inclusive evaluation of the research problem. The survey questions were to investigate the postgraduate students' opinions about the effectiveness of ChatGPT and the elements that make students rely on applying these tools to their Academic Writing. Simultaneously, the researchers carried out a short interview to collect information about the difficulties of using this tool in students' writing skills.

The process of the study is carried out through 3 main stages:

First stage: We build the survey questionnaire to collect data, which is the main source of the paper.

Second stage: We then find a suitable platform to make an effortless and convenient questionnaire.

Third stage: Questions are then sent to participants.

In order to ensure the results are valuable and trustworthy, a diverse approach is used to collect information. The questionnaire is delivered to students by Google, which is very easy to access. It also goes with the guide to make sure everything goes in order. Moreover, there is no place to fill students' personal information to protect their privacy. If there are any problems in the process of answering questions, participants can let us know, and the issues will be solved immediately via the Internet. The data from the students' answers will be collected, saved, and broken down carefully.

Data Collection & Analysis

The questions for the survey and interview were planned and discussed, and then prepared for three weeks. Twenty-five participants who are postgraduate students majoring in English at IUH received the survey questions by email. At the same time, the researchers conducted a short interview with only twenty participants, a total of twenty-five.

After finishing the data collection, the researchers carried out the data analysis. All the data was summarized from Google Forms and linked to Google Docs, and then the researchers downloaded the data from these two applications. Next, the researchers analyzed the related data and described each question's result to find the answers to two research questions. All the questions in the survey and interview were divided into three themes, and the researchers used theme descriptions to analyze data.

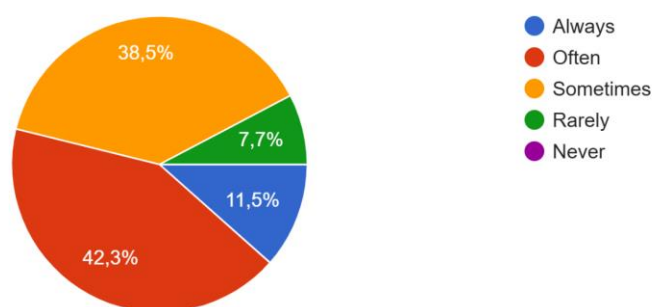
Results/Findings

Theme 1: The effectiveness of ChatGPT for postgraduate students in their writing and learning.

Figure 1.

Question 1: How often do you use ChatGPT in your Writing skill?

26 câu trả lời



The chart above shows that only a small percentage of students rarely use ChatGPT for their writing skills, 7%. 42.3% of students regularly use ChatGPT, and nearly 40% of them sometimes use it. Some students always use ChatGPT for their writing skills. Overall, almost all students access ChatGPT to serve their learning purposes, which shows the frequency of using this tool by postgraduate students in Academic Writing.

Figure 2.

Question 2: Compared with other supporting tools (Google, Youtube, Grammarly, ect.), Do you think that ChatGPT is more preeminent?

26 câu trả lời

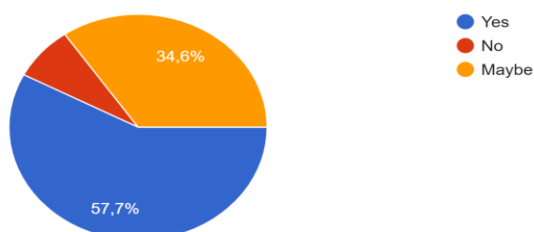
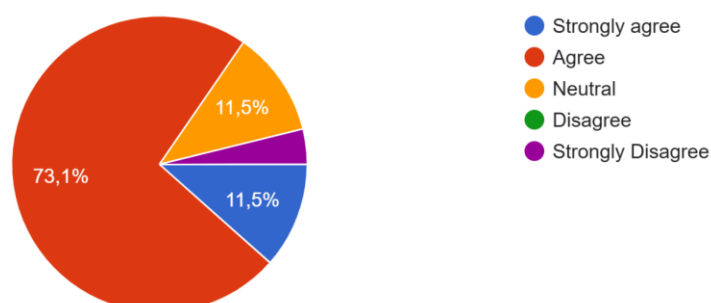


Figure 2 shows that more than half of students agree in comparing ChatGPT's superiority over other support tools. 34.6% of students considered ChatGPT effective when compared with Google, YouTube, and Grammarly. Survey participants who disagree with the above view account for a very small percentage in this chart. From this chart, we can see many students believe that ChatGPT is a useful tool that is more preeminent than the other tools

Figure 3.

Question 3: Do you agree that ChatGPT is an efficient supportive tool for postgraduate students in Academic Writing?

26 câu trả lời

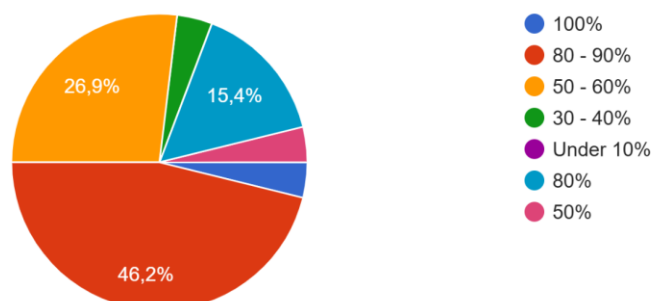


In chart 3, graduate students choosing ChatGPT support plays a huge role in academic writing, accounting for 11.5% with "strongly agree" and more than 70% with agreement. A small number of students with a "neutral" opinion accounted for 11.5%, and only a few participants disagreed with the above opinion. Overall, a majority of students agreed that ChatGPT is an effective and supportive tool for their writing skills.

Figure 4.

Question 4: How many percent of ChatGPT' answers are accurate compared to the information you are looking for/ giving prompts/ asking?

26 câu trả lời

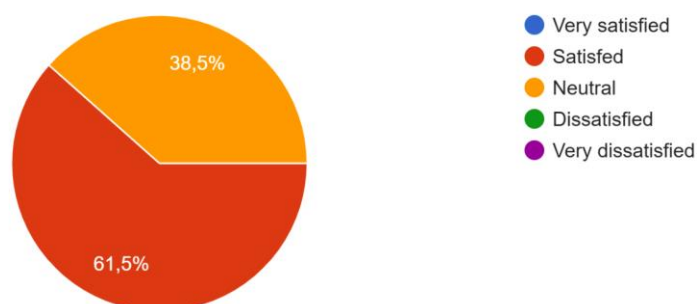


Overall, postgraduate students rate ChatGPT's answers as 100% correct at a low rate. However, according to the chart, ChatGPT's answers still have a high accuracy of over 80%, accounting for more than 40%. Postgraduate students did not choose answers about ChatGPT accuracy below 10%. Generally, many students agreed that ChatGPT gives them accurate answers, from 60% to 100% in comparison with the prompts or requirements.

Figure 5.

Question 5: How satisfied were you with the quality of ChatGPT's answers?

26 câu trả lời



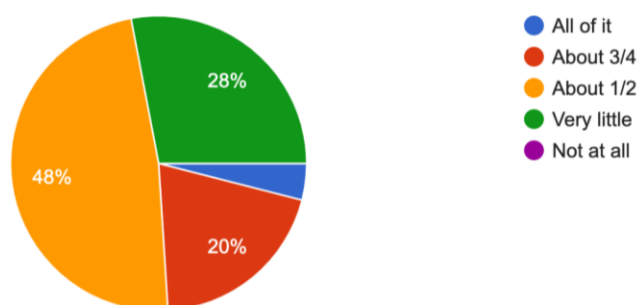
The chart above shows that more than 60% of students are satisfied with the quality of chatGPT's answers, while the remaining students choose to be neutral with that opinion. No students feel "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied" with the quality of ChatGPT's answers.

Theme 2: The factors that make postgraduate students rely on using ChatGPT in their writing skills (Research question 1)

Figure 6.

Question 6: How much of the ChatGPT response that you often apply in your writing?

25 câu trả lời



This chart shows the number of responses from ChatGPT that postgraduate students apply to their writing. All the students used the information from ChatGPT particularly nearly 50% of students applied half of the answers, 28% of them applied a little ChatGPT information, 20% of students used $\frac{3}{4}$ information, and 4% of students applied all the information from this tool into their writing task. Typically, students tend to apply ChatGPT's answers to their writing depending on the context, and no student denies using information from ChatGPT in their writing skills.

Figure 7.

Question 7: Do you think postgraduate students tend to use ChatGPT because they find their writing very challenging to them?

25 câu trả lời

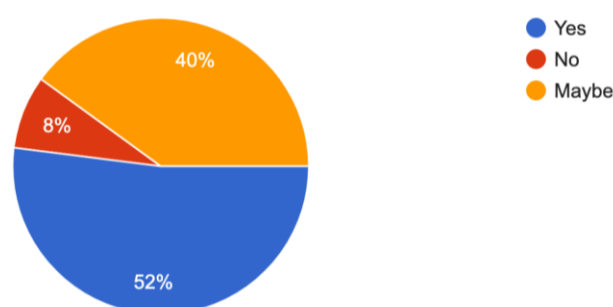
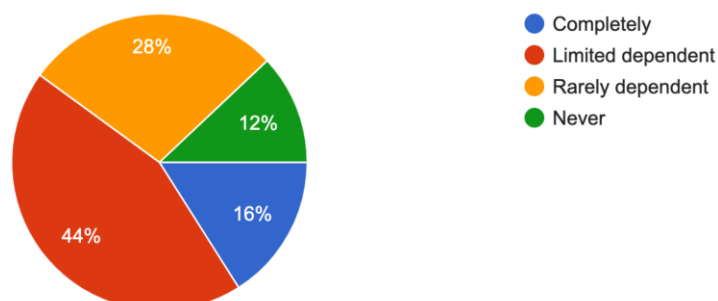


Figure 7 shows students' opinions about using ChatGPT for complicated writing tasks. 52% of students agreed that they tend to use ChatGPT because Academic writing is challenging, whereas 40% of students didn't completely deny using ChatGPT due to writing difficulty. Only a small percentage of students believed that writing skills were not the main reason. Generally, a majority of postgraduate students believe that academic writing might be challenging for them.

Figure 13.

Question 13: ChatGPT gives us good ideas and coherent sentences. To develop writing skills, do you think you will depend totally on chatGPT to create a good essay for yourself?

25 câu trả lời



ChatGPT is a writing support tool. This chart highlights postgraduate students' opinions on the reliance on using ChatGPT to write a good essay. 16% of students state that they might be completely dependent on this tool, 44% of students are limitedly dependent on it, and more than 20% of students hardly rely on it. Only 12% of students believe that they will never depend on ChatGPT to create a good essay.

Short Interview - Question 2:

Question number 2 from a short interview provides an in-depth understanding of the main factors that make students in higher education rely on using ChatGPT in the writing process.

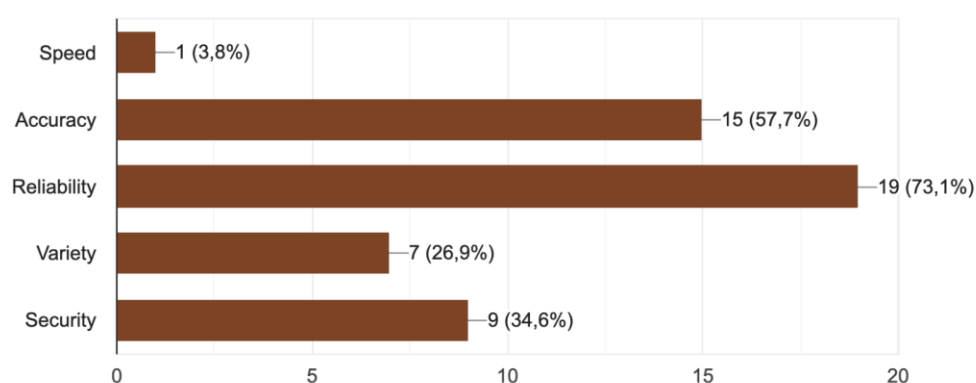
According to the analysis, 14 students out of a total of 20 approved that it's hard to stop using ChatGPT for several reasons. Students indicated that ChatGPT is a useful tool; it supports them in generalizing ideas, giving instant information about any topic or by user's prompts; the immediate responses from ChatGPT might save time for searching in many sources; it can paraphrase the complicated topic and make it easier to understand; ChatGPT can arrange ideas and summarize for learners, which might be a writing supporter; it can enhance the use of vocabulary and grammar structure; if the learner knows how to use ChatGPT properly, it might become a great assistant.

Theme 3: The main difficulties postgraduate students majoring in English at IUH confront when applying ChatGPT to their academic writing. (Research question 2)

Figure 8.

Question 8: In your opinion, which aspects of ChatGPT need the most improvement? (You can choose more than one aspects)

26 câu trả lời

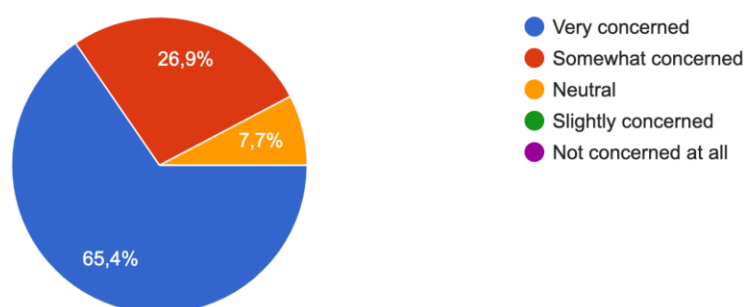


This figure shows that more than three-fourths of participants think the reliability degree of this tool is the most significant factor needed for development. Over half of them think accuracy is a necessary concern. Moreover, the students also worry about security and variety, with around 25% and over 30%. However, they feel satisfied with ChatGPT's speed.

Figure 9.

Question 9: How concerned are you about the answers from ChatGPT that could be considered plagiarism?

26 câu trả lời

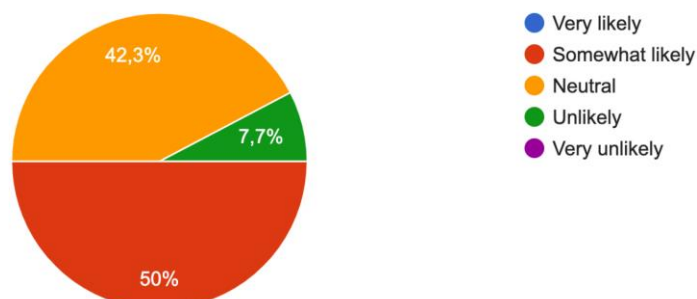


In general, this chart shows that about two-thirds of the surveyed students find the results created from ChatGPT to be involved in plagiarism. No one in the survey completely believed in ChatGPT's answers without relating to plagiarism.

Figure 10.

Question 10: How likely are you to trust factual information provided by ChatGPT?

26 câu trả lời



Overall, most students who were asked feel confused about how truthful ChatGPT's answers are. For more details, half of the students chose "somewhat likely," while 50% of them chose neutral and unlikely choices.

Interview Question 1: What difficulties do you struggle with when using ChatGPT to support your academic writing?

The interview has three questions in total. For question number 1, we plan to explore the challenges the surveyed students face when applying ChatGPT to their writing tasks. Over half of the respondents expressed concerns regarding the accuracy of ChatGPT. In fact, 13 participants (students number 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 13,15, 16, 17, 19, and 20) do not believe in the data created by this AI tool in order to use it in their writing assignments. Moreover, plagiarism and unknown sources of information are the main anxieties of some students. For example, answers 1, 14, 16, and 20 show that students worry about plagiarism. They found that it is very hard to be aware of where ChatGPT's answers come from (in answers number 2, 7, and 10).

Interview Question 2: Do you think that it impacts your capabilities to self-study and think critically?

In this survey question, we plan to explore the potential influence of this AI tool on the way students think or teach themselves. The answers of students are various, but most of them suppose that it limits their thinking process, while some believe ChatGPT assists them in improving their ability to think critically. In detail, over 10 students found it harmful to their critical thinking and self-study, while 6 participants thought ChatGPT was very helpful because it had an effective approach to control it. In addition, others assume it does not impact their thinking and self-study much.

Discussion

Although ChatGPT has only appeared in recent years, it has greatly affected writing skills. This tool allows users to upgrade their writing in both content and format. Most of ChatGPT's

responses are evaluated well. Maghamil and Sierras (2024) show in their research paper that ChatGPT can assist university students in improving their essays by providing quick and acceptable data. However, taking advantage of this tool is challenging for many students. This study mainly focuses on revealing 2 issues. The first one is to know the possible difficulties that postgraduates are encountering. Besides, this study has also found some students' legitimate excuses for dependence on ChatGPT.

The results indicate that most participants choose ChatGPT as an assistant for their writing due to its unquestionable benefits which lead to overuse. According to Huang and Min (2023), in spite of ChatGPT's pending questions, students still use this tool to build up their writing papers such as essays and reports. They supposed that ChatGPT could meet users' needs because of its features, such as giving answers quickly and correctly. Besides, other researchers like Mahapatra (2024), Mubaroq (2024), and Sok (2024) highlight that this tool can help students brainstorm new ideas, save time, and translate to numerous languages with high precision. Sarin (2024) mentions that data made by ChatGPT can help postgraduates improve their research writing which is unfamiliar and complicated to them, especially first-year students.

Talking about difficulties, the research found 2 main reasons. This research shows that the inaccuracy of data created by ChatGPT is the biggest challenge that higher students in IUH are concerned about. Almost all students are confused about the answers given by ChatGPT because they believe the information is unreliable and cannot be applied to their writing task. Furthermore, some students stated that verifying the accuracy of ChatGPT's answers is difficult. The information from this tool is not always accurate, which might give users untrue or incorrect answers (Elkatmis, 2024). According to a study by Baskara, Risang, and Mukarto (2023), students' writing tasks may be influenced by using ChatGPT's data based on various references, including unproven and untested sources. Students can check the information from ChatGPT's answers or use other tools or websites such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and International articles for reliable sources.

Another serious issue is plagiarism. The results show that it is quite hard for students to keep away from this problem. Information from unknown sources or dependence on this tool are the main reasons for plagiarism. This problem may happen since students do not know how to use ChatGPT's answers in a suitable approach (Adeeb, 2023). Hassanipour (2024) between one-third and one-half of the AI tool's content is much the same as its sources, which raises worry about the dependability of paraphrasing data. Jarrah et al. (2023) indicated that users should paraphrase and cite correctly the information given by ChatGPT to avoid plagiarism.

Conclusion

This chapter summarizes the main findings of this research. Primarily, the responses of postgraduate students in the first five questions highlight how effective ChatGPT is compared to the other tools in their opinion. The result from these questions concluded that almost all postgraduate students majoring in English at IUH apply ChatGPT to their writing tasks. They stated that compared to other tools such as Google, YouTube, Grammarly, etc. ChatGPT is much more preeminent. Besides, most of the participants agreed that the responses from ChatGPT are suitable, more than 80% with the answers they intended to look for. From the first theme, the result showed how preeminent ChatGPT is and the effectiveness of using ChatGPT in students' writing skills. ChatGPT's answers are useful and supportive, which helps students with their academic writing compared to the other tools.

The second theme from the next survey questions and question 2 in the short interview showed several factors that make students rely on using ChatGPT in their writing tasks. Over 50% of participants stated that academic writing is a difficult subject for first-year students in higher education, which might be the main element that makes students use ChatGPT. Other elements are the effectiveness and the time savings with ChatGPT's instant responses. The second theme showed the effectiveness of ChatGPT with specific details such as how ChatGPT helps them in writing skills, how it works, and many useful features that lead to the dependence of utilizing this tool.

The third theme from the other surveys is questions 8, 9, and 10, and two questions left in the short interview highlight the challenges of using ChatGPT in students' writing skills. Chat GPT might bring learners various benefits. However, the difficulties of using this tool have been revealed in the results. The unreliable and inaccurate information from ChatGPT is a concern for students. Many students supposed that ChatGPT might give them information without any references and citations or false references and citations, which causes plagiarism. Furthermore, the motivation for learning and self-learning in Academic writing might be affected if students depend on tools like ChatGPT. In the long term, indolence in self-learning and searching might hinder students' critical thinking in their writing skills and learning process.

This research aims to discover the challenges of applying ChatGPT in academic writing for postgraduate students majoring in English at IUH. The researchers' purpose is to make an obvious observation that focuses on two main elements: the factors that postgraduate students majoring in English at IUH depend on applying this tool to their writing task and the difficulties of using a technological tool like ChatGPT. The findings of Chapter 4 have given a better understanding of this research problem. The complicated task of academic writing, along with the advanced requirements combined with ChatGPT's effectiveness and instant information, is the main reason why postgraduate students rely on it. Moreover, students are worried about the safety, accuracy, and reliability of ChatGPT's information and plagiarism problems. The over-dependence on this tool causes many negative outcomes, such as laziness in self-studying and thinking, impedes critical thinking, and affects learning manners.

Although the researchers conducted the study based on the specific context, this study's limitation is the narrow scope of the number of postgraduate students majoring in English at only one university. On the other hand, the result of this research still contributes to its value.

Implications

This study shows that postgraduates using ChatGPT face many challenges in their writing skills. Having a deeper and more complete awareness of the impacts that this AI tool brings to students, they are more careful and responsible in the process of using it to serve their learning purposes. Thanks to that, the use of ChatGPT achieves high efficiency in learning, ensures fairness, and better meets the learning needs of students. In particular, students should avoid overusing this tool to ensure they maintain and better develop critical thinking and creativity during the idea-generation process. The role of schools and teachers is indispensable in providing clear tips and regulations regarding the use of ChatGPT or other AI tools to bring students optimal results. Schools and teachers should organize the classes to guide students on how to use this tool effectively. ChatGPT can be a useful tool and a skillful assistant for students in their writing skills if they know how to use it appropriately. To avoid plagiarism, students

should try to think and brainstorm ideas first, then use ChatGPT to support their ideas. Furthermore, students need to check all the answers given by ChatGPT to ensure accuracy and select reliable information. When students understand how to apply this tool and combine it properly in their Academic Writing, it can become a valuable tool in their writing skills in particular and their learning process in general.

Recommendation

The findings in this study primarily emphasize the challenges associated with postgraduate students' use of ChatGPT in supporting their writing skills. In the future, researchers should further explore the potential difficulties and opportunities that ChatGPT brings so that students can apply and exploit the maximum potential of this tool in the learning process. This helps students and teachers better understand how to apply ChatGPT effectively and overcome challenges in using this tool. In addition, the effectiveness and ethical implications of using ChatGPT for work or study should also be investigated so that users have a correct view of this popular tool. The goal is to prevent users from falling into a passive position of having to depend entirely on ChatGPT, causing the brain to become limited in creativity and diverse conversion of new ideas. This study has limitations due to its narrow scope. The research was conducted in one university with only twenty-five postgraduate students majoring in English in the Faculty of Foreign Language. This leads to restrictions in the results when researchers investigate the challenges of using ChatGPT in students' writing skills. Further research should be conducted in a broader context with more universities in Ho Chi Minh City, which will bring a thorough finding to the study.

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Biodata

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Phan Nguyen Khanh Hoa, is a postgraduate student at the Faculty of Foreign Languages of Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City. Because the society is increasingly progressive and the need to spread international integration, she is determined to help people learn English more effectively. She hopes to find new methods with the support of AI tools so that learners can easily access and bring high results to contribute to the development of education.

The Use of ChatGPT in EFL students as a Learning Assistant in their Writing Skills: A literature review

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ABSTRACT

Keywords: Writing Skills, ChatGPT, EFL Students

This literature review explores the use of ChatGPT as an assistant learning tool for Writing Skills in EFL students. Writing is one of the most important skills for English learners who want to be fluent in the language. Therefore, much research has been done into these aspects to determine new pedagogical benefits for the linguistic field. Guided Social Constructivism by Lev Vygotsky, the review investigates the potential of AI tools like ChatGPT as a learning-supported tool for Writing Skills in EFL students. The findings from previous studies show that ChatGPT enhances students' engagement, personalized learning experiences, and time efficiency by providing immediate feedback. However, overuse, privacy, and misinformation issues are not addressed. The review emphasizes using ChatGPT to enhance EFL students' writing skills while highlighting the significance of ethical issues and efficient implementation with appropriate instruction by experts. This review also provides valuable insight for experts, educators, and students interested in using ChatGPT in language acquisition in general and writing skills in specific.

Introduction

This part has two main components: a background of the study and its purpose. In terms of the background of the study, the author indicates the importance of English in human society and that writing is one of the most significant parts of the language. Moreover, it also includes the emergence of ChatGPT in the process of students learning writing skills. The purpose of the study is to show the main objective of this paper, which is the efficiency of ChatGPT and its advantages and disadvantages.

Background of the study

Academic writing is a significant component of how English language learners improve their language skills. They need to be good at some particular aspects, such as organization, clarity,

grammar, and vocabulary (Campbell, 2019). Being proficient in writing skills helps students get their ideas across, make their thoughts understood, and do well in school and in many professions (Yoon, 2011). According to Altinmakas and Bayyurt (2019), Grabe (2001), and Matsuda (2019), One of the most challenging aspects of learning English for speakers of other languages is writing. Many factors contribute to this, such as an inadequate background in many areas, difficulty comprehending written material, an inadequate vocabulary and poor grammar skills, an absence of critical thinking abilities, an inadequate amount of formal writing instruction, and an absence of experience with a variety of writing styles.

It is obvious that the emergence of artificial intelligence is a game-changing phenomenon that helps people in many fields. Nguyen (2023) stated that the use of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies to aid language learning has become more prevalent in recent years, marking a notable change in how languages are taught. The realization that AI can provide "interactive and personalized support" to language learners is the driving force behind this shift (Ngo, 2023). Helping students improve their writing with the use of AI-powered tools is a rapidly growing field of research (Rudolph et al., 2023). The field of artificial intelligence (AI) has garnered considerable attention across several industries, one of which is education. There are many ways that AI could be used in schooling that would be very useful (Truong, 2023). Artificial intelligence (AI) is a modern technology trend that can be used for any reason (Fitria, 2023).

According to Ngo (2024), language learning-supported platforms, networked applications, and AI-powered tools have allowed students to perform their assignments more interactively and enjoyable. Artificial intelligence (AI) progress opens up new ways to save time, which is a valuable resource. Even though AI language models have been in the works for years, it wasn't until OpenAI released ChatGPT in November 2022 that most people really understood how they could be used. According to Kacena et al. (2024), Natural language processing (NLP) is a subfield of computer science that enables computers and humans to communicate with tools like generating pre-trained transformers (GPT). A growing number of individuals in many industries use artificial intelligence (AI), and its use in the classroom is no exception. The field devoted to studying computers and programs with intelligence sufficient to reason, learn, connect, control, and discriminate between objects is known as artificial intelligence (AI) (Alafman et al., 2023). The effectiveness of Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems in facilitating language acquisition has been the subject of several global research. Evidence from this research shows that AI tools may help with vocabulary expansion, sentence construction, and overall writing proficiency (Basic et al., 2023; Huang & Tan, 2023).

The use of technology in English language classrooms is widely recognized as a way to tackle particular difficulties in language learning (Roll & Wylie, 2016; Knox, 2020). According to Yan (2023), technology and the internet are everywhere these days, so language learners can practice their skills, especially writing, whenever and wherever they want. This includes using advanced computer and mobile apps based on artificial intelligence (AI). These offer personalized and engaging tools for improving writing skills and boosting drive (Jiang, 2022; Meunier et al., 2022; Yan, 2023). With these AI-assisted writing tools, users can get automatic feedback on different parts of their writing, such as organization, coherence, grammatical structures, and lexical resources. This makes it easier to improve their writing skills (Song & Song, 2023).

Additionally, AI tools are able to help students improve their writing skills rapidly by finding and fixing grammar and vocabulary mistakes and then offering fixed-error sentences with general quality and structure writing (Zhao, 2022; Chen, 2023; Salvagno et al., 2023).

There are numerous discussions about bringing ChatGPT into education because it has many useful features for long articles, short stories, songs, and even email messages (Dergaa et al., 2023). ChatGPT is seen as an Artificial Intelligence application of OpenAI in the industrial era 4.0. ChatGPT has been considered a possible platform employed in different domains, including the educational field (Thu & Nguyen, 2024). Several research studies have examined the potential of AI to improve English language acquisition (Sun et al., 2021; Huang A. Y. et al., 2023). To be more specific, Huang X. et al. (2023) compared students' engagement and their academic achievement in an AI-tool-applied class with those in a non-AI-assisted class. The research revealed that the performance and engagement of students in AI courses outweighed the others for non-AI classes. More importantly, there are various articles exploring the advantages of applying AI language tools to improve EFL learners' writing skills (Liu et al., 2021; Seufert et al., 2021; Wu et al., 2021; Fitria, 2023; Hsiao & Chang, 2023; Yan, 2023). Meanwhile, Liu et al. (2021) indicated that EFL learners' writing skills were enhanced significantly thanks to AI language support; Yan (2023) proved that AI-assisted language learning (ChatGPT) improved EFL learners' performance in writing substantially.

Fathi and Rahimi (2022) indicated the complicated effects of AI language tools on EFL students' intrinsic motivation; however, researchers have not studied writing skills in ESL acquisition. The research gap becomes quite critical considering the numerous obstacles that EFL students confront. Due to limited practice chances, their overall writing competence declines.

Purpose of the study

This literature review aims to investigate the efficiency of ChatGPT in assisting EFL students' writing skills. This review also attempts to fill the gap concerning the efficacy of AI-assisted writing-improving tools and the impact of interactive platforms such as ChatGPT on enhancing writing skills and engagement. Moreover, this study will explore the benefits and drawbacks of students employing Chat GPT or AI-powered applications in their writing course. This paper explores current research on AI-based language learning aids to emphasize the advantages of incorporating technology into EFL classes to enhance students' writing skills.

Literature Review

This section has two main parts: the theoretical framework and related studies. The author shows Lev Vygotsky's social constructivism and the Zone of proximal development (ZPD) regarding the theoretical framework. Turning to the review of related studies, this part includes a review of previous studies mentioning the efficiency of ChatGPT in improving Writing Skills in both international and Vietnamese contexts.

Theoretical framework

Lev Vygotsky's Social Constructivism amplifies the interaction among people and social context in learning. Social Constructivism by Lev Vygotsky (1984) is the main theoretical

framework of this paper. This framework highlights that human interaction is important for students in their learning process. According to Vygotsky, the interaction between individuals and their social contexts is the main force that drives learning, especially when working in groups with more seasoned classmates. People learn social standards from their early encounters (Lev Vygotsky, 1984). Furthermore, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) concept is central to Vygotsky's social constructivism. It stands for the gap between a student's current problem-solving skills and their capacity to grow by working with better classmates. Through group language study and asking for clarification, students may get closer to their Zone of proximal development (ZPD), which shows how well they can learn on their own in a given context.

In the framework of AI-assisted learning, Vygotsky's constructivist viewpoint showed the concept of self-regulation. Specifically, It is helpful for students to collaborate with AI-powered tools in writing tasks to develop self-regulation and reduce their reliance on their teacher's and parents' support. Zimmerman (2002) asserted that AI technologies play a crucial role in helping students improve their writing skills and complete writing tasks without others' help. The development of long-lasting skills requires the transformation to self-regulation, which is an essential part of the learning process.

Concepts from Vygotsky's social constructivism are aligned with personalized learning experiences which AI powers because students are able to study at their own pace and get prompt, tailored feedback on their work (Huang A. Y. et al., 2023; Huang X. et al., 2023). Theoretically, Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development" (the area between an individual's current competence and their potential for growth with suitable schooling) is valid. Through supportive and instructional coaching, students are helped to reach their Zone of proximal development (ZPD) via the AI tool, which helps them gradually improve their writing talents. Improved motivation and writing skills are two outcomes of this personalization (Fulton et al., 2021). This study helps us understand collaborative learning better by investigating how students and AI-powered virtual assistants co-working.

Reviews of related literature

AI tools in improving Writing-Skill acquisition around the world

According to Aldosari (2020), "Artificial intelligence" (AI) describes computer systems that can learn and do tasks that people previously did. In the present classroom, AI is able to eventually make decisions for students, similar to a human teacher (Akerkar, 2014). Researchers in applied linguistics assert that artificial intelligence (AI) has the capacity to transform language education and acquisition. The researchers want to enhance instructional methods and facilitate student language learning (Luckin et al., 2016; Zhang & Zou, 2020; Nazari et al., 2021; Sun et al., 2021; Xia et al., 2022). Barrot (2023) asserts that artificial intelligence-driven internet platforms may provide language learners with the necessary input and output, facilitating their linguistic advancement. These AI technologies, which can be used

on desktops, laptops, and mobile phones, really help with writing skill improvement. Opening AI's ChatGPT, an AI-assisted Chatbot, stands out among AI-powered tools. Students' writing skills can be greatly improved with ChatGPT's help in various language-learning courses (Barrot, 2023). Thanks to its extensive knowledge base, Song & Song (2023) claimed that ChatGPT could automatically produce words and grammatically accurate structures to help writers craft texts that flow smoothly and cohesively. The tool can understand human questions and provide suitable answers. Also, ChatGPT helps students of foreign languages with issues with organization, coherence, grammar, and vocabulary in their writing. It provides other recommendations for better writing skills and to fix grammatical errors.

ChatGPT has been acknowledged for its capacity to improve writing efficacy (Huang & Tan, 2023). Huang & Tan (2023) stated that the AI-driven tool enhances the generation of clear and cohesive prose by offering learners prompt feedback and alternative grammatically accurate phrases. Nonetheless, it is crucial to acknowledge certain limits while using ChatGPT for various writing assignments. Excessive dependence on text created by ChatGPT may impede language learners' writing skills. Moreover, it is vital to meticulously tackle any plagiarism concerns that may occur from using the produced content without comprehensive review and editing (Huang & Tan, 2023).

Suryana et al. (2020), Divekar et al. (2021), Liu (2021), Bašić et al. (2023), Bishop (2023), and Fitria (2023) are among the several studies that have investigated how AI-assisted language learning technologies facilitate ESL students' improvement in their language acquisition abilities.

Rahman et al. (2022) investigated how an AI-driven language learning tool facilitated EFL students in enhancing their writing skills by identifying and rectifying grammatical faults. The finding showed that EFL students' writing skills were significantly improved thanks to the use of AI-assisted language learning on their writing skills. Xiao and Zhi (2020), Lingard (2023), and Song and Song (2023) demonstrated that AI-powered tools like ChatGPT provided immediate feedback for users, which was essential for language learners, especially for their writing skills including grammar, vocabulary, and organization.

In addition, Utami and Winarni (2023) investigated the use of AI-assisted language acquisition by three Indonesian EFL seniors in high schools to improve their writing skills. The researchers used quantitative survey data and qualitative interviews. The study findings showed enhanced student involvement and performance in research writing.

Moreover, Seufert et al. (2021) examined the impact of AI-powered tutoring applications on EFL students' writing skills, comparing them to both teacher and peer feedback. The finding showed that students gradually improved their writing skills after using the AI-assisted tutoring system to give feedback on their writing works. In addition, Hwang et al. (2023) carried out research with a control group to find out the effects of an AI writing feedback tool on undergraduate EFL learners' writing skills, while the experimental group applying the AI tool

outweighed their counterparts. The results showed that EFL learners enhanced their writing tasks by using AI tools to analyze and review their works.

Next, Fitria (2021) showed that “Grammarly”, an AI-powered language learning application, notably improved EFL students’ writing skills. Specifically, the constructive comments that were provided by “Grammarly” helped students improve their writing skills. Additionally, Chang et al. (2021) investigated the impact of an AI-assisted writing feedback tool on EFL students’ writing performance. The authors conducted a quasi-experimental method in their research, and the result showed that the control group who did not use AI-driven tools to assist their writing tasks had a small improvement in their writing skills, whereas the experimental group used it to revise and enhance their writing skills had a big improvement.

Furthermore, Gayed et al. (2022) created an AI-powered tool to help EFL students improve their idea-generating problems in their writing tasks. The result showed that the AI-driven application significantly improved students' writing skills and reduced brain-storm obstacles in their writing tasks. Yan (2023) explored students' perceptions of using the AI-driven tool to enhance their academic writing skills. The result showed that the AI-driven tool markedly enhanced students' writing skills and helped them complete their writing tasks rapidly and effectively. Besides, Su et al. (2023) demonstrated that ChatGPT improved English learners' performance in argumentative writing tasks. The finding showed that it was difficult and wasted time for teachers and peers to give rapid feedback with useful and effective comments for the learners due to their use of language and structural complexities. Meanwhile, ChatGPT offered more insightful comments and suggestions on sentence structure, organization, and content of learners' writing work, which helped learners significantly enhance their argumentative writing performance. Furthermore, Ippolito et al. (2022) used "Wordcraft, " an AI-powered text editor, to make the creative writing processes of seasoned writers easier thanks to the idea-generation function of the tool. The finding showed that the AI-powered tool helped writers improve their writing creativity.

In addition, Abdullayeva and Musayeva (2023) investigated the impact of ChatGPT on EFL students' writing skills. The finding revealed that ChatGPT enhanced students' writing by providing writing prompts, immediate feedback, and recommendations. Besides, Nazari et al. (2021) conducted an actual experiment on EFL students to see how their writing performance improved after using an AI-power tool to learn a new language. The finding showed that students who learned writing skills with the support of AI-powered applications performed much better than students who learned writing skills without AI-assisted tools. Furthermore, students showed a strong interest in the efficacy and convenience of the AI-powered tool when it was their writing assistance. In another research, Liu et al. (2021) investigated the effects of AI-assisted tools on the writing skills of EFL students by using a quasi-experimental method. The finding showed that students' writing-skill performance was enhanced markedly compared to their performance in a conventional classroom where AI-driven tools were not used. Students' improved writing was attributed to the AI-assisted tool, which increased their

confidence in their ability, helped them enhance their self-regulation, and reduced their pressure in studying. Surprisingly, artificial intelligence's exposure to several English dialects and cultural quirks can help EFL students (Baskara, 2023; Farrelly & Baker, 2023).

Eventually, the literature reviews show how artificial intelligence has many different effects on education, including how ChatGPT helps students with their writing by giving them immediate feedback, how it motivates them to take charge of their own learning, how it makes them more engaged, and motivated, and how it exposes them to different accents and cultural nuances in English. Thanks to the previous studies on AI-assisted students' writing skills, the understanding of how it affects language acquisition and language education has been dramatically improved (see, for example, Suryana et al., 2020; Divekar et al., 2021; Liu, 2021; Bašić et al., 2023; Bishop, 2023; Fitria, 2023). Furthermore, the ground-breaking findings of previous studies about AI-supported tools in improving language acquisition have substantially helped many aspects of language competency including vocabulary growth, grammatical development, and overall language ability. While there is some indication that AI might enhance EFL students' academic writing abilities and drive to write, many unanswered questions remain. Among the few research studies that have examined writing skills, we find Rahman et al. (2022) and Fitria (2021). However, most of these studies have concentrated on enhancing general language competence and addressing grammatical faults, such as Liu et al. (2021) and Gayed et al. (2022). Despite their value, these studies have failed to investigate academic writing's intricacies or the many factors that affect writers' motivation. In addition, few studies have looked at the combined impacts of AI technology on academic writing motivation and competence.

ChatGPT in improving Writing-skill acquisition in Vietnam

Several researchers have attempted to employ AI programs, notably ChatGPT, to assist Vietnamese students in improving their writing skills; the reviews below summarize their efforts. In different educational institutions, these new tools are used to see if they can improve teaching methods, student involvement, language development, and general learning success. The reviews show that there is a growing need for new ways to improve writing skills in Vietnam by using AI technology.

The research conducted by Nguyen & Dieu (2024) seeks to assess the familiarity and utilization of ChatGPT as an Artificial Intelligence writing-assistant tool among third-year English Language Teaching students, exploring their perceptions regarding its adoption and offering recommendations for effective use. The research included 46 third-year English Language Teaching students at the University of Danang - University of Foreign Language Studies and used a sequential explanatory mixed-method design. Quantitative data were gathered using a questionnaire primarily based on the Technology Acceptance Model, while qualitative data were acquired via semi-structured interviews to enhance and corroborate the conclusions from the quantitative data. The result of the research showed that third-year EFL students had a positive attitude in using ChatGPT as a technological writing-learning assistant and felt it was easy to use.

Pham and Le (2024) investigated the perceptions of Vietnamese students studying in both America and Vietnam in using ChatGPT as a tool for language acquisition. To be more specific, the research polled seventy-seven Vietnamese students enrolling in educational institutions in the United States and Vietnam. The authors used "Microsoft Forms" to create the survey sent to students in both countries via their own networks. The finding showed that ChatGPT was an effective tool for students to enhance their language acquisition and improve students engagement in their learning process. The authors assumed that ChatGPT was regarded as an excellent resource for enhancing students' learning and information acquisition.

In addition, Nguyen et al. (2024) studied eight parts of writing skills: vocabulary, grammar, idea construction, organization, comprehension, writing style, and plagiarism of EFL students. Specifically, EFL students used ChatGPT to improve their writing argumentative essay performance in the course "Reading-Writing B2.2". Specifically, the authors conducted a 92-item survey to collect students' perceptions and how they used ChatGPT. The research polled one hundred students who had already finished the "Reading-Writing B2.2" course. The finding indicated that students had a favorable attitude towards using ChatGPT to enhance their skills in writing argumentative essays. However, there were students who had negative expressions when using ChatGPT in their study. Moreover, the findings also indicated that there was a notable difference in students' perspectives. This study provides valuable insights into how artificial intelligence systems, such as ChatGPT, are able to assist EFL students in enhancing their argumentative essay-writing skills.

The aforementioned studies within Vietnamese settings indicated that ChatGPT and other artificial intelligence apps are able to assist students writing skills across all educational levels. Specifically, students' engagement, individualized learning, and writing-knowledge retention were improved thanks to AI-powered tools in writing courses. However, there were some adversities in using AI-assisted tools: holistic accuracy, technology-use difficulties, and content privacy. Furthermore, further research is required to enhance the integration process and ensure that AI-driven education positively impacts writing abilities in the Vietnamese context. Both the potential benefits and drawbacks of AI need further research. There are still a lot of undiscovered territories to cover, but studies done in Vietnam and elsewhere suggest that AI might greatly improve writing quality. Very little is known about the long-term effects of AI on skills like advanced writing and memory recall. In Vietnam, standards for efficacy, technical deployment, and content privacy remain unresolved. Academic and community-based longitudinal studies are necessary to fully grasp the pros and cons of AI in writing instruction.

Discussion

The use of ChatGPT and other artificial intelligence (AI) technologies to enhance students' writing skills has been extensively studied in the field of education worldwide, including in Vietnam. Numerous studies using diverse analytical techniques have investigated the efficacy

of these AI-driven tools in improving the skills of EFL writers. This section examines the methodology of much research, focusing on their design, data gathering, and analytical techniques.

Discussing the research methodologies

A large number of researchers have looked at the impact of AI on writers' abilities using quantitative methods. In order to assess third-year English language teaching students' views on ChatGPT, Nguyen et al. (2024) used a structured questionnaire based on the Technology Acceptance Model. The authors used the quantitative method. To be more specific, a total of 46 students were polled to collect their knowledge and expertise with the AI-powered tool. The finding showed that students had a positive attitude toward using AI-assisted writing tools and had promise in technology-based classrooms in the future. In addition, Pham and Le (2024) polled 77 Vietnamese students' perspectives from different colleges with the help of ChatGPT in their language-learning process. The authors used "Microsoft Forms" to send the survey to the students to get feedback from them about their perception of using AI-supported tools in learning language. The finding showed that AI-powered tools like ChatGPT improved students' class engagement and learning performance. Nguyen et al. (2024) used qualitative data from semi-structured interviews and the quantitative method to perform their research. A qualitative method was used to provide the students' perspectives on using AI-powered tools to improve writing skills. A qualitative method was employed to explain why students use AI-powered tools in their writing tasks. To be more specific, qualitative research revealed different students' perspectives on the advantages and disadvantages of using AI in their writing tasks.

Utami and Winarni (2023) used quantitative and qualitative methods to study how three Indonesian EFL seniors in high schools used AI-assisted tools to improve their writing skills. The researchers used questionnaires presented with a Likert scale to demonstrate how AI technology impacted students' engagement in writing-skill learning. Besides, Nguyen et al. (2024) used quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate how ChatGPT improved students' argumentative essay writing performance. While the quantitative survey provided students' perspectives on statistics, the qualitative interviews gave the practical use of different students' attitudes in using AI in doing their writing tasks.

Hwang et al. (2023) used a controlled and experimental group to explore the effects of AI-driven tools in giving feedback to EFL students' writing performance. This research gave a thorough insight into the AI tool's efficacy thanks to quantitative data on students' writing scores and qualitative data on their experiences with the tool.

Discussing the results and findings

It is clear that many studies in both Vietnamese and global contexts investigate the effects of AI-powered tools in supporting language acquisition. Moreover, it is obvious that even though several studies have shown the benefits of AI-driven tools in enhancing students' writing skills, the use of AI-powered tools to help students improve their writing skills has some disadvantageous aspects that need to be considered. Moreover, the results of earlier research have brought benefits and attention to both the present state of education and the need for more study. In addition, numerous studies have shown that EFL students significantly improve their writing skills thanks to AI-powered tools. According to Rahman et al. (2022), students were pleased with the assistance of the AI-driven language learning tools because it effectively

detected and corrected grammatical errors, which had taken much time before the emergence of the AI-powered tool. Besides, according to Yan (2023), students' writing skills were enhanced thanks to ChatGPT providing immediate feedback and appropriate prompts, leading to higher-quality writing. When it comes to learning a new language, the function of AI systems in providing instant feedback is crucial. To be more specific, Xiao and Zhi (2023) and Lingard (2023) showed that AI-powered tools like ChatGPT were able to help language learners have more ideas, vocabulary, and writing structure for their writing works. Moreover, ChatGPT not only helped students improve their writing performance but also improved their engagement in class. According to Pham and Le (2024), polled students had a good attitude toward the use of AI-powered tools and considered them tools as useful assistance for their language acquisition. Moreover, AI-driven technology like ChatGPT was able to adapt the needs of students whenever needed, which increased students' engagement and allowed students more tailored instruction (Nguyen et al., 2024). In addition, Nguyen et al. (2024) showed that AI-assisted learning tools helped students in their writing tasks by providing them with vocabulary and ideas, suggesting well-organized work, and avoiding plagiarism. Thanks to this, students were able to develop a more well-rounded writing process.

Discussing the research gaps

Even though previous studies on the effectiveness of AI-powered tools like ChatGPT in enhancing writing skills among EFL students from Vietnam have shown favorable results, further investigations are necessary to fill certain gaps in the use of AI-driven tools to improve writing skills.

Research on AI's influence on fundamental writing skills, such as spelling, grammar checking, and vocabulary enhancement, is limited in comparison to research investigating AI's effects on more sophisticated writing competencies, including critical thinking, argumentation, and the structural complexities of academic writing.

Comprehending how AI technologies might facilitate enhancing higher-order writing abilities is crucial for completely actualizing their promise in educational settings.

A crucial aspect that requires further examination is the long-term impact of AI-assisted writing on student motivation and writing retention. While several research, such as those by Rahman et al. (2022) and Fitria (2021), have examined writing skills, they mostly emphasize rapid enhancements rather than the long-term effects of AI on learners' writing proficiency in order to understand the effects of AI tools on students' writing motivation and competence across different classroom settings, longitudinal studies are necessary. Learning how long-term use of AI tools influences students' writing motivation and competence necessitates longitudinal study, particularly in different educational settings. Even though studies have shown that students generally have positive impressions of AI tools, qualitative research on students' perspectives and experiences with AI in writing is lacking. One possible way to understand the educational impact of AI tools is by studying students' emotional responses, confidence measures, and interactions with them. Academic credit is another major concern when students are able to rely on AI-generated content. Huang & Tan (2023) showed that despite studies pointing out the possibility of plagiarism, a lack of study assessing how students handle ethical challenges presented by AI is noticeable. Instructors must provide students with knowledge of academic credibility and their strategies for preventing plagiarism while using AI in their assignments.

Conclusion

In conclusion, ChatGPT and other AI-driven technologies have completely transformed the way EFL students learn writing skills. The paper investigated numerous benefits of ChatGPT, including personalized learning, student engagement improvement, and immediate feedback. Using AI-powered tools like ChatGPT to enhance writing skills is an indispensable part of the learning process nowadays. Even though AI-driven tools like ChatGPT have a number of beneficial effects on improving EFL students' writing skills, they contain numerous drawbacks that need to be addressed. Because AI-powered tools can give unreliable and inappropriate answers, students can be misled and severely affected by their writing knowledge. If students have too much faith in ChatGPT, they are at risk of limiting the development of their creativity and critical thinking. It is necessary and timely to investigate the concerns of misuse and overuse of AI-powered tools in language learning, especially writing skills. These systems present major societal issues to ensure that AI systems like ChatGPT are used fairly and effectively for language acquisition,

It is necessary for teachers and parents to have clear guidance and well-incorporation with ChatGPT and ChatGPT's features are only considered as a tool for students to give feedback and point out grammatical errors, which help students not rely on AI-powered tools. Furthermore, strict implementation criteria and ethical frameworks must be used to solve problems with erroneous data, over-reliance, and incorrect information. Moreover, writing assistance tools powered by AI must undergo continuous inspection and development to maintain accuracy and avoid the transmission of disinformation. In addition, it is timely and relevant for experts including educators and innovators to make AI better and ensure it effectively helps all EFL students. AI technology like ChatGPT, which promotes a balanced approach and highlights ethical concerns, has the potential to greatly enhance EFL students' writing skills.

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Biodata

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Factors Affecting ICT Integration of EFL Teachers at a Vietnamese University

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ABSTRACT

Keywords: factors, EFL teachers, ICT integration, University, Vietnam

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has increasingly been applied in English teaching, with extensive research on English teachers' ICT integration and the affecting factors. However, little has been known about the impact of the factors. This study was thus implemented to complete the gap. Employing a sequential mixed methods research design, the study recruited 81 English teachers at a Vietnamese university to complete a questionnaire and seven teachers to participate in a semi-structured interview. Drawing upon the innovation diffusion theory, the study found that the most significant impact factors were English teachers' perceptions of ICT benefits in English teaching. The least influential factor was students' prior experience. Other noteworthy factors included the advantage of the teachers' English knowledge, students' motivation to use ICT, and peer support. The study offers theoretical contributions to confirm some innovations in diffusion theory variables and practical implications for the University.

Introduction

Around the globe, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has increasingly been applied in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, especially after COVID-19 (Nguyen, 2024; Tran, Pham & Dinh, 2023). Vietnam is no exception because ICT implementation in EFL education is part of the national agenda on digital transformation (Cand.com.vn, 2024).

The Law on Information Technology Application, which stressed the importance of using ICT in education, was put into effect in 2006. In light of the Law, Chỉ Thị (Directive) 55/2008-CT-BGDDT was issued by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), stressing the use of ICT in education in general and in higher education in particular over the period 2008-2012.

National policy efforts to implement ICT in EFL teaching in higher education became one of the foci in Quyết Định (Decision) No 1400/QĐ-TTG/2008 signed by Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung in November 2008. This policy, the National Project on Foreign Language Training,

emphasized the application of ICT in the teaching and learning of EFL. Included in the Project Plan was a list of actions that focused on “more investment into technological infrastructure for the teaching and learning of foreign languages” (Decision No 1400/QD-TTG/2008, p. 5), which involved building multi-media language labs for participating universities. The Plan also indicated that to make the most of ICT in language teaching, professional development on how to use ICT equipment should be considered (Decision No 1400/QD-TTG/2008).

In August 2023, the MOET issued Official Dispatch 4771/BGDDT which detailed the responsibilities of implementing technology and digital transformation of institutions in the country. In response, a nationwide competition on EFL e-lesson plans was organized to attract the participation of schools across 65 provinces and cities and 36,595 lesson plans (Cand.com.vn, 2024).

The University being researched, a public university renowned for its EFL training, is one of the eight participating universities in the National Project on Foreign Language Training. Through such projects, the University has been investing in technological infrastructure. It now has 15 Internet-connected computer labs and 18 language labs, which house nearly 1,000 desktop computers. There are about 45 projectors (Dang, 2012), one Student Access Centre, and one Conference room. In addition, the University has purchased some English language software packages, such as *English Discovery* and *English Discovery Online*, for use in EFL instruction (Pham, Thalathoti, Dakich, & Dang, 2012).

However, political and technological infrastructure conditions are not always synonymous with teachers’ use of ICT. As Bax (2003, p. 26) has emphasized if we are “over-optimistic ... that technology should be able to do everything ...” without proper planning, it is very hard for teachers to use ICT in their practice.

The literature has pointed out that there are a plethora of factors influencing EFL teachers’ use of ICT, which centered around the teachers, the students, and the educational institutions (Ahmed, Qasem, Pawar, 2020; Canals & Al-Rawashdeh, 2018; T. X. Dang, 2012; T. X. Dang, 2014; Dang, Nicholas, & Lewis, 2012; Liu, Lin & Zhang, 2017; Noori, 2019; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2021; Ziad, 2016). However, most research seems to focus on identifying the factors rather than investigating the impact of these factors on the teachers’ actual use of ICT in their classroom practice. This research study was thus conducted to answer the following research question:

In the view of EFL teachers, what factors influence their ICT integration in their classroom practice?

Literature Review

Conceptualizing the affecting factors

The factors influencing EFL teachers’ integration of ICT in classroom practice can be framed in light of the Diffusion of Innovations Theory (Rogers, 2003). This theory considers ICT as an *Innovation* that is adopted by the EFL teacher (*The Adopter- the decision-making unit*), during which process, a number of factors come into play. The factors at the individual level (EFL teacher) can include their characteristics as well as their perceptions of the five attributes of the

technology: *relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, observability and trialability, and communication channels*. At the organizational level, the factors could encompass *prescribed roles, rules and policies of technology use, and the formal and informal structure* of the organization.

This representation of factors in the study first considers the EFL teachers' background (*Adopters' characteristics*-Rogers, 2003), such as age, gender, teaching experience, the subject taught, and highest qualification, as factors influencing their ICT use. Other factors related to the teachers are their beliefs in the benefits of ICT to EFL teaching (*relative advantage of an innovation*-Rogers, 2003), their knowledge and skills, and their commitments. During the ICT use process, the *EFL teacher* comes into interaction with their Colleague through channels such as peer support/willingness to share resources/commitment (*observability of an innovation*-Rogers, 2003). As for the Student, students' motivations to use ICT, technical knowledge and skills, technical assistance, prior experience, and commitments are also considered influencing factors. The *EFL teacher* also interacts with the Technician through technical support (on-site and after-hours) and with the Administrator through policies, approaches to implementing change, professional development, and support (*prescribed roles, regulations, and authority structure*, 2003). The *teacher* also comes into contact with technology innovation through such channels as their perceptions about the relevance of the technology to the curriculum and their teaching practice (*compatibility of innovation*, Rogers, 2003) and their perceptions about the complexity of using technology in teaching (*complexity of an innovation*-Rogers, 2003).

Related Studies

Teacher-related factors

Teachers' background – Adopters' characteristics (Rogers, 2003)

Previous research suggests that EFL teachers' gender, years of teaching experience, age, main area of specialization, and highest qualifications have a role to play in their use of ICT in their classroom teaching, though the findings are somewhat contradictory.

Topkaya (2010), Mahdi and Al-Dera (2013), and Dinh (2015) argued that male teachers tended to have more self-confidence in using computers than females. In contrast, Mollaei and Riasati (2013) concluded that there was no gender difference in Iranian EFL teachers' attitudes toward the use of computers for classroom teaching. Noori (2019) and Tran, Pham, and Dinh (2023) found that there was no relationship between teachers' gender and their use of ICT.

When it comes to teaching experience and teachers' use of technology, Alkahtani (2011), Mahdi and Al-Dera (2013), Noori (2019), Tran, Pham, and Dinh (2023) proved that there was no relationship between teachers' teaching experience and their use of ICT. However, Li and Walsh (2011) and Rahimi and Yadollahi (2011) found a negative correlation between the two variables.

Similarly, age was found to have no relationship between teachers' age and their use of ICT in Alkahtani's (2011), Madhi and Al-Dera's (2013), and Ziyad's (2016) studies. Meanwhile, Boulter's (2007) and Li and Walsh's (2011) research studies established a relationship between the EFL teachers' uptake of instructional technology and

Teachers' main subject content or skills related to their ICT use. Nguyen, Le, Nguyen, and

Nguyen (2025) found that EFL teachers claimed that interpretation skills could be enhanced with the use of ICT. Also, as Alkahtani (2011) pointed out, teaching listening, pronunciation, reading, writing, and vocabulary rather than other subjects could be best enhanced by ICT. Additionally, Celik (2013) reported that more Turkish EFL teachers used the Internet to teach reading and writing skills than those who used the Internet to teach listening, speaking, and writing.

Contrasting findings regarding teachers' highest qualifications and ICT use are also reported. Noori(2019) found no difference, while Sadeghi, Rahmany, and Doosti (2014) found that EFL teachers from Iran who hold a PhD have more positive attitudes towards using ICT in their practice.

Teachers' beliefs in ICT benefits – Perceived relative advantage (Rogers, 2003)

As far as teachers' beliefs are concerned, if EFL teachers in the benefits of technologies in their teaching, they tend to integrate ICT (Dang, 2014; Park & Son, 2009; Ziad, 2016; Noori, 2019; Tran, Pham & Dinh, 2023). This is because, to many of them, computers are perceived “as a motivator” (Kim, 2008, p. 250) for students' learning.

Teachers' knowledge and skills

Teachers' skills and knowledge are seen as important to EFL teachers' use of ICT (Chen, 2008a; Hu & McGrath, 2012). Several reasons are put forward to support this view, such as that it is a pre-requisite for their ICT use because even if teachers have a positive attitude towards using technology in their classroom, they cannot do so without relevant knowledge and skills (Hu & McGrath, 2012). Next, "the effectiveness of language instruction depends on the knowledge, skills and teaching methods of those who incorporate them" (Chen, 2008a, p. 555).

In contrast, a lack of knowledge and skills could be a barrier to the integration of ICT among EFL teachers. This "second-order barrier" (Galvis, 2012, p. 108) could make the teacher feel uncomfortable about using technology, requiring the teacher to invest more time and effort in their instruction (Park & Son, 2009), and could eventually add more pressure to the teachers' already heavy workload. It is, therefore, very difficult for EFL teachers to integrate ICT if no support is provided (Galvis, 2012).

Teachers' commitment to use ICT

Another factor that influences teachers' use of ICT in classroom practice is their commitment to using ICT. Chen (2008b) suggested that EFL teachers in Taiwan will stop being committed to using ICT in their instruction if they feel isolated and lack peer support.

Peer-related factors – Perceived observability (Rogers, 2003)

In an educational institution, teachers' use of ICT tends to be influenced by their peers' support, willingness to share resources, and commitment. Regarding resource sharing, Li and Walsh (2011) established that EFL teachers were willing to adopt new technology when sharing resources with their peers because it would be easier to learn how to use ICT in their specific contexts. Peer commitments can even help teachers' continuous use of ICT as an EFL teacher in Chen's study (2008b, p. 1023) claimed that other “tech-savvy” teachers helped her create learning materials online; accordingly, she continued to do so later.

Student-related factors – Prescribed roles (Rogers, 2003)

Research studies have shown that when EFL teachers perceived that students were motivated to use ICT, they were likelier to adopt ICT use. This is true for EFL teachers in different countries such as Vietnam (Dinh, 2009), Iran (Mollaei & Riasati, 2013), and Turkey (Celik, 2013). As confirmed by Celik (2013, p. 478) "a shared understanding about technology's value for student learning among the EFL instructors enhances the diffusion of using Internet-assisted language resources".

Students' knowledge and skills are also regarded as an influencing factor. The varied levels of students' technical knowledge and skills resulted in EFL teachers' "managerial difficulty, necessitated [teachers'] guidance in autonomous learning and differentiated teaching" (Hu & McGrath, 2012, p. 160). Also, if students lack knowledge and skills, they may have limited use of "high-order computer tasks" (Alharafsheh & Pandian, 2012, p. 10), which negatively affects the EFL teachers' full ICT integration.

Another student-related factor is the possibility that students provide technical assistance to their teachers in classes. In fact, a number of EFL teachers in China acknowledged that they asked for assistance from students with better technical skills and knowledge when attempting to use ICT in their classroom teaching (Hu & McGrath, 2012). Additionally, student prior experience is identified as a factor influencing teacher use of ICT. For example, Hong and Samimy (2010) found that students who had experience in blended learning had a more positive attitude toward their teachers' use of computers in language learning.

Finally, students' commitment to ICT use is identified as an influencing factor. If students found that teachers' computer integration motivating, they wanted their teachers to use computers more frequently (Ilter, 2009). In contrast, if the students were not committed, the EFL teachers would be demotivated to integrate ICT (Li & Walsh, 2011).

Technician-related factors – Prescribed roles (Rogers, 2003)

Technicians were identified in previous research studies as influencing teachers' use of ICT (Dinh, 2009; Hu & McGrath, 2012; Zhao et al., 2002). Often, technical support provided by technicians was seen as a "key factor" (Hu & McGrath, 2012, p. 160) because this directly affected the "effective use of ICT resources" (Hu & McGrath, 2012, p. 160) and could save teachers time because they did not have to solve technical problems and could focus on their teaching. Without technical support, EFL teachers might experience difficulties such as losing control in classroom management (Bordbar, 2010) or having to improvise the lessons by relying on their creativity and quick-mindedness (Dinh, 2009).

Administrator-related factors – Prescribed roles (Rogers, 2003)

Within a university/school context, administrator-related factors can encompass approaches to implementing technology, support, and professional development (Carr, 2013). For example, in China, it is often claimed that "school leaders and local educational authorities are important in motivating teachers to use technology in their teaching" through support and encouragement (Li & Walsh, 2011, p. 115).

There should also be clear guidelines on ICT implementation that should be clearly communicated with the teachers because this will result in higher chances for success of ICT

integration (Dinh, 2015). Another important factor is support provided to teachers, which can take the form of financial support /continuous funding or administrative support (Chen, 2008b, p. 1025). In contrast, a lack of support from schools/universities could result in teachers' negative perceptions of technology compatibility with their teaching practice (Aydin, 2013; Bordbar, 2010).

Technology-related factors – Prescribed roles (Rogers, 2003)

ICT relevance – Perceived relative compatibility (Rogers, 2003)

Research has shown that EFL teachers decide to use ICT in their classroom teaching only when they perceive that such use is relevant to their teaching curriculum/textbooks and teaching practice. For example, Shin and Son (2007) found that EFL teachers in Korea reported the need to develop Internet resources that are more relevant to their textbooks so as to be able to use the Internet more often. Similarly, Park and Son (2009) point out that some of the EFL teachers in their study were not willing to use ICT because not many ICT teaching resources were relevant to the classroom textbooks as these textbooks were normally designed for traditional activities with no room for ICT.

Access to technology resources, time, ICT supporting curriculum, and teaching resources– Perceived complexity (Rogers, 2003)

Access to technology resources is commonly acknowledged to influence EFL teachers' use of ICT (Dang, 2014; Dashtestani, 2012; Park & Son, 2009). Furthermore, time is commonly cited as an important factor affecting the EFL use of technology in the classroom. (Li & Walsh, 2011). This is because EFL teachers find it very time-consuming to search for, select, and adapt instructional materials to find a fit for the materials in the class schedule and for their students' levels and needs. Also, if there is a rigid curriculum, it would be hard for the teachers to integrate ICT because they have to “follow the teaching plan and prepare for tests based on textbooks” (Park & Son, 2009, p. 91) and the allocated teaching blocks with no flexibility to use ICT (Dashtestani, 2012). Finally, locating teaching resources with ICT is also an important factor that affects the EFL teachers' ICT use because, with difficulties locating appropriate teaching materials, the EFL teachers would not be willing to integrate ICT into their practice (Park & Son, 2009).

As can be seen from the review of previous research on the factors influencing EFL teachers' ICT integration, most research done in both developed and developing countries has focused on identifying the factors from different perspectives. Little research has explored the perspectives of EFL teachers on the level of impact of these factors on their integration of ICT into their classroom practice. This gap needs to be filled, and this is the rationale for this research study.

Methods

Research context

The study was conducted at a public university in Hanoi, Vietnam. The University has a history of more than 60 years of training in foreign languages. 81 EFL teachers from the English Department and the Foundation Studies Department took part in the study.

The English Department, the largest Department in the University, prepares English major students to become teachers of English, interpreters, or translators upon graduation. In line with its training focus, the Department has five divisions: Language Skills, English Literature, Interpretation and Translation, Language Theories, and English Culture Divisions. In this study, the teachers from all five divisions are referred to as EFL teachers. The students participate in programs to enhance their language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the first two years of their four-year training course, which the Language Skills Division delivers. In the remaining two years, students attend regular lectures and tutorial sessions carried out by teachers from the English Literature, Language Theories, and Culture Divisions, as well as classes and lab sessions to develop their interpretation and translation skills conducted by teachers from the Interpretation and Translation Division.

The Foundation Studies Department was established in 2005 to provide a one-year English training course for non-English major students majoring in English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in Computer Sciences, Business administration, Tourism and International Studies departments. At the Foundation Studies Department, students are trained to develop their four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), IELTS test-taking, and research skills. There are three main Divisions in the Department, which are the GET (General English Training) and BEL (Basic English Language) Divisions, the EAP (English for Academic Purposes) Division, and the ESP (English for Specific Purposes) Division. All the teachers from the three divisions in this Department were also referred to as EFL teachers in this study.

Research design and procedures

The study employed a mixed methods methodology; that is, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used. Mixed methods research can provide "more comprehensive evidence for studying a problem [than] either quantitative or qualitative research alone" (Creswell & Plan-Clark, 2011, p. 12). As the study used a sequential mixed methods approach (Creswell, 2018), a quantitative questionnaire was first designed to gauge quantifiable information about EFL teachers' views on the impact of the factors influencing their use of ICT. The participants were asked to rate the impact on a four-point Likert scale from No impact (1), Little impact (2), Moderate impact (3) to High impact (4). The four-point Likert scale was decided upon with no Neutral option to avoid the possibility that the participants might automatically choose this alternative without reading the questionnaire items carefully. A qualitative semi-structured interview schedule was then used to gain insight into their experience and practice.

The questionnaire was designed based on previous studies on the factors affecting EFL teachers' ICT integration. A pilot was conducted to check the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. First, the questionnaire was sent to two experts to seek their comments on its face validity. Some changes were made in the wording of the questionnaire items. Then, the questionnaire was sent to 22 EFL teachers to complete, and the reliability of the questionnaire was obtained via Cronbach alpha. The Cronbach alpha was .917, proving internal consistency among the items.

Based on some outstanding findings of the questionnaire, a list of semi-structured interview questions was designed to collect data on the impact of teachers, students, administrators, and peers on the teachers' use of ICT. The wording of the questions was checked with two EFL

teachers before the actual interviews, and "member checks" (Mertens, 2005), that is, the interview transcripts were sent to the interviewees for their consent, were used to increase the validity of the interview data collected.

81 EFL teachers at the University answered the questionnaire, and seven participated in semi-structured interviews. Questionnaire data were analyzed using SPSS software to obtain descriptive statistics (means core and standard deviation), and interview data were coded using analytical coding (Richards, 2009). The participants' identities were protected because they remained anonymous in the questionnaire. In addition, pseudonyms such as Valerie and Mark were used for the seven interviewees.

Results/Findings

Questionnaire findings

EFL teachers' demographic information

The questionnaire first asked the EFL teachers to give information on their demographics. Table 1 presents findings on their sex, qualification, and main expertise, and Table 2 presents findings on their age and years of teaching experience.

Table 1

EFL Teachers' Sex, Qualification, and Main Expertise

	Sex		Highest qualification			Main expertise (teaching areas)	
	Female	Male	Bachelor's	Master's	PhD	Reading, Writing, Listening & Speaking skills	Other subjects (Literature, Language Theories, Interpretation & Translation)
Number	63	18	12	67	1	60	14
	78%	22.2%	15%	84%	1%	81%	19%
Total	81		80			74	

As seen from Table 1, most of the teachers were female (around 78%) and the remaining 22% were male. When it comes to their highest qualification (n=80), a big proportion (84%) held a Master's degree. Only 1% had a PhD and roughly 15%- a Bachelor's degree. Also, most of them taught four language skills (81%), while only one-fifth taught other subjects.

Table 2

EFL Teachers' Age and Years of Teaching Experience

	Age	Years of teaching experience
Mean (SD)	31.74 (7.0)	8.71 (7.0)
Minimum-Maximum	24 - 59	2 - 38
Number	76	78

Table 2 clearly shows that the average age of the EFL teachers ($n=76$, missing 5 cases) in this study was 31.74 ($SD=7.0$) and the average number of years of teaching experience ($n=78$, missing 3 cases) was 8.71 ($SD=7.0$). However, the teachers' ages varied from the minimum of 24 to the maximum of 59. Similarly, the number of years of teaching experience differed considerably, with the lowest being two years and the highest being 38.

Thus, most of the EFL teachers in this study were female, held a Master's Degree, taught four language skills (Reading, Writing, Speaking, and listening), and varied considerably in age and years of teaching. Only a small ratio were male and taught other skills such as Literature, Language Theories, Interpretation, and translation.

Impact of the factors influencing EFL teachers' ICT integration

Next, the questionnaire asked the EFL teachers to provide information on their ratings of the impact of factors on their use of ICT. A four-point scale from *No Impact (1)*, *Little Impact (2)*, *Moderate Impact (3)* to *High Impact (4)* was used. The calculation of the ratings' mean score (M) and standard deviation (SD) was implemented. The findings can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3 demonstrates that the EFL teachers viewed all of the listed factors as impacting their use of ICT in classroom instruction (no mean scores below 2, SD varied).

The EFL instructors ranked "Teachers' beliefs in ICT benefits to EFL teaching" as having the highest mean influence on their use of ICT in classroom instruction out of the 27 factors ($M=3.57$, $SD=0.61$). In second place were factors such as "Teachers' knowledge and skills to use ICT to teach English," "ICT relevance to curriculum," and "Students' motivation to use ICT" (all three had $M=3.28$, $SD=0.7$, 0.5 , and 0.6 , respectively).

The teachers then rated that the three factors that had the third-highest influence on their usage of ICT were "Having enough time to prepare lessons to teach with ICT," "ICT relevance to teaching practice," and "Teachers' knowledge of where to look for support." The ratings for these three factors were $M=3.27$ ($SD=0.6$), $M=3.25$ ($SD=0.6$), and $M=3.21$ ($SD=0.6$), respectively.

Moreover, factors such as 'Having access to reliable technology', 'Having enough computers for students', 'Having a supporting syllabus for ICT use', 'On-site technical support', 'Access to a computer lab when needed', and 'Provision of teaching resources by the department' had the fourth highest impact rating (with a mean score of approximately around 3, although the corresponding standard deviations were different).

A wide range of factors, including "Easy access to teaching resources," "Professional development opportunities," "Students' ICT knowledge," "Colleagues' sharing of teaching resources," "Students' assistance," "Clear guidelines," and "Teachers' commitment," were rated similarly, with the mean score falling between 2.8 and 2.9 (with varying corresponding SDs)

Finally, the factors that were rated for their lowest impact were 'University financial support' ($M=2.54$, $SD=1.0$), and 'Students' prior experience' ($M=2.54$, $SD=0.7$). 'After-hours technical support' was rated to have the second lowest impact ($M=2.64$, $SD=0.8$). This was followed by 'Colleagues' commitments to using ICT' ($M=2.69$, $SD=0.7$), 'Administrative assistance' ($M=2.79$, $SD=0.8$) and 'Colleagues' help in using ICT' ($M=2.80$, $SD=0.8$).

Table 3

Ratings on Impact of Factors on Teachers' Use of ICT

(1= No Impact, 2= Little Impact, 3= Moderate Impact, 4= High Impact)

	Item (N=81)	M	SD
1	Teacher beliefs in ICT benefits	3.57	0.6
2	Student motivation to use ICT	3.28	0.7
3	ICT relevance to curriculum	3.28	0.5
4	Teacher knowledge of ICT to teach English	3.28	0.6
5	Having enough time to prepare lessons	3.27	0.6
6	ICT relevance to teaching practice	3.25	0.6
7	Teacher knowledge of where to look for support	3.21	0.6
8	Access to reliable technology	3.20	0.8
9	Access to enough computers for students	3.12	0.9
10	Having on-site technical support	3.11	0.8
11	Knowing that the Department has a supporting syllabus	3.11	0.8
12	Access to computer lab when in need	3.07	0.8
13	Provision of teaching resources by the Department	3.01	0.8
14	Teaching resources are easily located	2.98	0.8
15	Having access to professional development	2.96	0.8
16	Student technical knowledge	2.96	0.6
17	Knowing ICT use required by the Department	2.93	0.7
18	Knowing colleagues willing to share technological resources	2.91	0.8
19	Teachers believe in students' assistance	2.90	0.8
20	Having access to clear guidelines	2.88	0.9
21	Teacher commitment to using ICT	2.84	0.6
22	Knowing colleagues will help use ICT in instruction	2.80	0.8
23	Having administrative assistance	2.79	0.8
24	Knowing colleague's commitment to using ICT	2.69	0.7
25	Having after-hours technical support	2.64	0.8
26	Student prior experience	2.54	0.7
27	University financial support	2.54	1.0

Interview findings

The interview findings seem to provide further explanation for some of the important questionnaire findings.

Teachers' beliefs about ICT benefits

It was found from the questionnaire that in the EFL teachers' view, their beliefs in ICT benefits had the biggest influence on their ICT-integrated lessons. The interview with seven teachers further explained this finding. All of the seven EFLs mentioned the benefits of ICT. However, their perceptions of the benefits were different. While three teachers commented on such benefits as ICT making lessons more engaging and motivating students to learn English, the other teachers emphasized the supporting role of ICT in their lesson preparation and teaching delivery. These findings can be illustrated in the following quotes.

ICT plays a big role in English language teaching... First, it makes the lessons more interesting and professional. Second, students could be more motivated to learn because I think they prefer a bit of ICT in a lesson to the traditional way of teaching, where there is only the teacher, the students, talking, writing, and a text book (Mary).

... ICT would be more interesting than paper-based lessons. With ICT, not only the teacher but also the students could engage more into the lesson to make it more interesting, for example, through the use of some software packages, movies or recording software. These will make the instruction process much more effective ... (Daisy).

...Not all textbooks are current, so teachers could look for online teaching resources and electronic lesson plans to help engage students more in classroom lessons (Cindy).

ICT helps me to prepare lessons at home.. (Judy)

ICT brings new ways of teaching English. (Valerie)

...The use of ICT has helped bring about more quality teaching and made the teaching job less time-consuming ... All these will bring a more authentic context for students to learn English (Mark)

In modern times, ...ICT helps us a lot in teaching four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. ...in teaching pronunciation, if teachers use some software or pronunciation websites for students, it would be much easier for them to learn properly if they are provided with some visual aids on the structure of vocal organs such as mouth and nasal cavities, or the proper positions of the vocal organs, they can imitate more easily (Cindy).

Some teachers provided their views on the communication aspect of ICT, such as with their students, as commented by Helen and Judy.

I think ICT assists in communication between teachers and students in terms of assignment marking and correcting... the teacher will need to use email and Skype or a chatting software to communicate with students whose work has not been marked/corrected in class... (Helen)

I think ICT is assisting both teachers and learners ... it facilitates communications between both teachers and students, for example, ...on an online forum (Judy)

Two teachers (Judy and Mary) pointed to their voluntary use of ICT as a result of their perceptions of ICT advantages. They emphasized that they seized every chance to integrate ICT, although the University did not mandate it.

No one forces me to use ICT in teaching English. I have been using ICT because I see the positive impact of ICT on my teaching, ... my lessons would be more interesting and ICT could assist both teachers and students ... In my opinion, we can't say why we must use ICT; instead, why we should use ICT in teaching. (Judy)

I sometimes take my students to the projector room during the speaking lesson, although I am not officially required to do so. Learning with projectors ... is an advantage, students could feel more motivated to study... because projectors can bring about audio-visual effects, which makes students like the lessons better. (Mary)

Students' motivation

The questionnaire findings show that the factor 'Students' motivation' had the second biggest impact. The interview findings then provide further explanations on this aspect, directing the emphasis on students' better technical knowledge as a benefit.

Cindy believed that better technical knowledge of students would even inspire her to pursue ICT learning. She claimed that she would be "happy to learn from her students" because this would be "a good chance for her to know her students' learning needs", so she "could design lessons with ICT to meet their expectations". Also, despite expressing worries about "losing her managerial position in class," Judy believed that if students were more technically proficient, she would need more expertise in ICT expertise.

Interestingly, the teachers viewed their students' higher technical skills as advantageous in that those students could help their peers in class, as Mark commented.

... If teachers could ask students who are better technically to assist those who are weaker, or to teach their teachers some tricks to use ICT, I think students would be willing to do so because their skills are highly appreciated ... Teachers should not think that they must always be better than their students, especially when it comes to ICT....

Teachers' knowledge of the English language

The questionnaire findings showed that the factor "Teachers' knowledge and skills" had the second biggest impact on their ICT usage. The interviews further clarified this, detailing the impact of teachers' knowledge of English.

Three out of the seven interviewed teachers commented on the positive impact of their knowledge of the English language on their ICT use in relation to professional development and access to resources. Mary remarked that since technical manuals were typically written in English, the teacher's proficiency in the language made it easier for them to comprehend technical instructions.

Furthermore, Daisy believed that thanks to their fluency in English, they could self-learn technical features of various software packages, test them, and attempt to incorporate them into their classroom practice without the technicians' help.

Helen added that "the teachers' English language knowledge" also made it easier for them to access and comprehend actual English publications on the Internet, such as when they searched for teaching and professional development materials. She believed that by doing this, the teachers would be able to comprehend the materials more precisely than they would if they were reading translations.

Students' prior experience

It was established in the questionnaire findings that the EFL teachers rated "Students' prior experience" as having the lowest impact on their use of ICT. In the interview, the teachers' comments confirmed the questionnaire findings:

I think my students have a small impact [technical skills] because the subject I am teaching does not require me to use much ICT. As stated earlier, I use ICT applications such as email or chat software to correct and mark students' writing work. I think 99% of the students could use those

applications, even at the expert level (Helen).

... The application of ICT into teaching is not too hard for teachers. In my lectures on the Culture of English-speaking countries, if my students need to use projectors for their presentation, they can have weeks of preparation, so they can seek technical assistance from me or from the technicians immediately... thus [the impact of their prior experience to ICT use] is not very considerable (Judy).

University support

The questionnaire found that the factor "University financial support" had the smallest impact on the EFL teachers' use of ICT. Coincidentally, no teachers mentioned this type of assistance throughout the interview; instead, they described in detail the University's lack of assistance with regard to professional development, administration, and clear guidelines.

First, three teachers mentioned a lack of administrative support. Mark, for example, remarked that the only support is posting announcements on websites. According to Helen, training provided to teachers only focused on using software to keep students' marks. Cindy disclosed that the Department provided only some portable projectors for the teachers to use.

Four teachers claimed they were unaware of any explicit rules or regulations about using ICT in the classroom. This viewpoint is demonstrated by the following remarks made by Helen, Daisy, Judy, and Valerie.

There are no clear regulations on ICT use in English teaching (Helen).

I don't think that any regulations are widely known to the teachers (Daisy).

ICT use in teaching practice is not compulsory; it is impulsive and totally up to the teachers. But in my opinion, even if there is encouragement, there should be clear guidelines and proper assessment to make ICT use more effective in teaching and learning (Judy).

I don't know of any policies that require teachers to incorporate ICT into their teaching. I think this is impossible because of a lack of facilities and coordination, so even if teachers are forced to do so, they cannot do it (Valerie).

Lastly, two teachers (Mary and Valerie) reported a lack of support for professional development, stating that there was essentially no "official" professional development other than a few "minor" workshops or seminars that did little to help them gain the confidence they needed to use ICT in their practice. This is because those workshops or seminars did not meet the teachers' expectations as they only focused on the technical aspects rather than the pedagogies. As a result, some teachers, such as Mary, Daisy, and Cindy, stated that the primary sources of their professional development were their friends and colleagues who could give them prompt responses.

Peer support

Despite the fact that the questionnaire's "Colleague commitments" item was regarded as having one of the smallest effects on EFL instructors' use of ICT, all seven participants gave positive feedback on peer support. Comments about the teachers' chances to share resources and discuss ideas for using ICT in the classroom with their colleagues echoed this. To illustrate, Daisy

shared how her colleague assisted her in setting up *Audacity*, a recording program, on her laptop and gave her usage instructions. This allowed her to use *Audacity* to record talks and edit audio files from conferences and seminars as teaching resources for her Interpretation classes. Helen mentioned that teachers teaching the same language skills shared their lesson plans and teaching materials, such as video clips.

The other four teachers-Cindy, Valerie, Judy, and Mary-also mentioned that if they needed assistance with ICT, such as modifying audio files or downloading instructional materials from the Internet, they could ask their peers for it "through chatting during breaks" (Judy) in between sessions.

Mark and Mary stressed the importance of peer support by mentioning that "it is normal practice for teachers to seek help from their colleagues for those things that they don't know and to offer assistance to their colleagues on aspects that they are good at." (Mark) because "being helpful is one typical feature of peers at the university" (Mary).

Discussion

It was established in this study that, in the view of EFL teachers, those factors that were related to them had the biggest impact on their classroom ICT integration. Teachers' ICT use in this study was most influenced by their "Beliefs in ICT benefits in EFL teaching" and "Knowledge and skills in using ICT to teach EFL." The results thus support earlier research on the importance of their attitudes and beliefs (Dang, 2014; Saglam & Sert, 2012; Zyad, 2016; Noori, 2019; Tran, Pham & Dinh, 2023). The findings also help confirm the relative advantage element in Rogers's Diffusion of Innovation Theory (2003).

It would be interesting to investigate why the teachers stated that they played the most significant role in using ICT, even though this was not the focus of the study. It would also be interesting to explore whether there were any other explanations or if a teacher-centric perspective that mirrored the larger Confucian tradition of the teacher's central role comes into play (T. X. Dang, 2014).

The results demonstrate that when using ICT for classroom education, several EFL teachers exhibited a welcoming attitude toward their students. This was reflected in the fact that those students with superior technical knowledge and skills inspired them to learn in order to catch up with their students. These educators don't seem to have viewed themselves as the "expert" (Lam & Lawrence, 2002, p. 296), which was typically thought of as the conventional role of EFL teachers.

Furthermore, according to interview data, several teachers, such as Mark, have mentioned using students who are proficient in ICT as a tool. The idea that teachers "need to realize that students should play an active part" (Li & Walsh, 2011, p. 117) in their use of ICT for classroom instruction is expanded upon by this study. Additionally, several of the teachers interviewed thoroughly explained why "Students' prior experience" had a minor influence. Students had time to prepare ICT-related assignments, they could ask teachers and technicians for help throughout the preparation process, and the subject they taught did not need them to utilize a lot of ICT. Therefore, it appears that the subjects they taught affected how they used ICT.

In terms of the EFL colleagues, although according to the questionnaire results, colleagues did not appear to have a significant influence on the EFL instructors' use of ICT in the classroom, all the seven teachers interviewed claimed that their peers were open to exchanging ideas, and ICT resources for use in the classroom. Even when some teachers believed that peer usage of ICT would put pressure on them, they tended to view the pressure as an incentive to study and use ICT in the classroom. The majority of the instructors who participated in the interviews also mentioned using their peers for informal ICT-related professional development. The findings were in alignment with Aydin's (2013) research studies in that colleagues are commonly cited as a source for idea exchange by teachers. The findings also confirm the *observability* variable and "interpersonal channels" for communication of an innovation (technology) in the form of talks during the breaks among the teachers in the Theory of Innovation Diffusion by Rogers (2003).

The results of the questionnaire show that, with regard to administrator-related factors, the EFL teachers were worried about knowing "where to look for support," but they were not worried about "financial support from the university." The interviews with seven teachers supported the questionnaire results on this topic by revealing information regarding a lack of administrative support, clear guidelines, and professional development possibilities. As a result, some EFL teachers turned to their friends and coworkers as their primary source of professional learning. The teachers also saw their English language knowledge as an advantage that helped them in self-learning about ICT. This study, therefore, adds to the literature that the EFL teachers' knowledge of the English language might be an enabler to their ICT use.

Lastly, the interviews' results show that almost no ICT-related policies or procedures are currently in place at the University. The results highlight a recurrent problem found in earlier research studies: whereas implementing government ICT-related policies in particular school or university contexts is a crucial component of leadership support, this is often "underperformed" (Carr, 2013, p. 179).

Conclusion

This study has proved that ICT implementation is a "complex and messy process" (Zhao et al., 2002, p. 482). Based specifically on the perspectives of EFL teachers at a public university in Hanoi, Vietnam, the study found that many factors, albeit with varying degrees of effect, affected these teachers' usage of ICT. The study also revealed that the influencing factors originated from a variety of sources, including the teachers themselves, their colleagues, students, and administrators. This suggests that the EFL teachers in this study had an understanding of "the social dynamics" (Zhao et al., 2002, p. 494) at the institution.

This study also established that the most significant factor influencing instructors' use of ICT is the EFL teachers-related factors. Thus, policymakers should pay attention to teachers and consider the kinds of support that could be offered to accomplish policy goals. For instance, a stronger emphasis on professional learning and professional learning practices may benefit teachers.

Also, the study's findings imply that the University being researched could benefit more from

providing clear guidance for teachers about implementing national and institutional policies on ICT through monthly forums or meetings between EFL teachers and administrators.

In conclusion, despite some limitations, such as the small sample size, which affects the generalisability of the findings, or the sole reliance on the EFL teachers' perspectives, the study has provided the voice of the most important EFL teachers in the process of ICT integration in their classroom practices.

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Biodata

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AI Tools in Learning Academic Writing: Benefits and Challenges for MA Students in the English Language Studies at the Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City

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ABSTRACT

Keywords: AI tools in academic writing, challenges in academic writing, advantages of AI tools in academic writing

Many Master of Arts (MA) students believe that these tools offer significant benefits for improving writing abilities, though some challenges can hinder progress. This study explores the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in academic writing among MA students, focusing on English majors at IUH. The research investigates both the benefits and challenges of AI tools like writing assistants and language models in improving students' writing proficiency. A sample of 30 MA students was selected, and a mixed-method approach was employed, combining quantitative data from questionnaires and qualitative insights from semi-structured interviews. The questionnaires collected students' perceptions on the advantages and difficulties of using AI tools for academic writing, while the interviews provided a deeper understanding of how these tools are utilized in practice. Findings indicate that AI tools offer significant benefits, such as improving writing skills and providing support, but they also introduce challenges, including over-reliance and limitations in addressing complex writing issues.

Introduction

Background of the study

Academic writing plays a vital role in research and education, as it is marked by a structured method for presenting ideas clearly. It is considered a cornerstone of the MA curriculum and scholarly endeavors, demanding a range of skills to produce high-quality papers. Tardy (2010) emphasized that students must develop a range of skills when working with source material. These include selecting relevant information, evaluating its credibility, paraphrasing effectively, choosing appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures, and ensuring they avoid plagiarism. These skills help students engage with academic writing more ethically and proficiently. Moreover, Mudawy and Mousa (2017) added that the success of postgraduate

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students heavily relies on their ability to critically engage with the words, ideas, and opinions of others.

AI tools such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, Quillbot, Turnitin, Notion, and EndNote have become essential in academic writing, each serving a distinct purpose. ChatGPT assists in generating and organizing ideas, while Grammarly enhances grammar and style. Quillbot supports paraphrasing, and Turnitin helps detect plagiarism. Meanwhile, Notion and EndNote aid in note organization and citation management. This research focuses on the use of AI tools such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, Quillbot, Turnitin, Notion, and EndNote in academic writing, examining both their benefits and the challenges they present.

Statement of the problems

Being a master of these skills is challenging, and assistance is needed. For example, Bautista and Pentang (2022) said that students often find it challenging when they have to with different styles of citations and references due to a lack of understanding in rules and conventions. It is common for students to utilize AI tools, such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, Quillbot, Turnitin, Notion, and EndNote, to enhance their writing competence. While these tools enrich writing efficiency, accuracy, and organization, they also pose several concerns. Over-reliance on AI can hinder the development of critical thinking and independent writing skills, potentially leading to superficial engagement with academic content. Tools like ChatGPT may also generate inaccurate or biased information while paraphrasing software such as Quillbot could inadvertently alter the meaning or produce unnatural phrasing. Furthermore, plagiarism detection systems like Turnitin may not always differentiate between intentional plagiarism and legitimate academic work, raising ethical concerns for students.

Purpose of the study

With the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence, AI-powered tools have become integral to academic writing, assisting students in generating ideas, refining grammar, paraphrasing, managing citations, and ensuring originality. While these technologies offer significant support, their role in shaping students' writing skills, particularly at the graduate level, remains an area that requires further exploration. In the context of higher education, students increasingly adopt AI tools to facilitate their writing process. However, despite growing interest in AI-assisted learning, research on its impact has primarily focused on general education rather than on graduate-level academic writing. Specifically, there is a lack of studies investigating how AI tools influence the writing development of MA students in Vietnam, particularly at IUH.

This study, therefore, aims to examine both the benefits and challenges associated with AI tools in academic writing among IUH MA students. By analyzing their usage, perceived effectiveness, and potential limitations, this research seeks to provide valuable insights into how these technologies contribute to or hinder students' writing development.

Literature Review

One of the biggest challenges in academic writing is plagiarism. A study conducted by Bautista and Pentang (2022) investigated the pre-service teachers' level of awareness of plagiarism. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, in which 235 random pre-service teachers participated as samples. The data were gathered through a web-based survey. As a result, pre-service teachers did not have full knowledge of plagiarism, resulting in their fair academic performance.

Aldabbus and Almansouri (2022) conducted a study in order to investigate the problems of academic writing faced by university students, involving 36 English majors from the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi. A 25-item questionnaire was used to address the research questions. They found the same point: students struggled with avoiding plagiarism. Besides, the findings also showed that selecting appropriate academic vocabulary and using grammar correctly, including word classes, subject-verb agreement, and singular/plural forms, were the main problems students had to deal with.

These problems were also found in research by Mudawy & Mousa (2017) on twenty teachers from the English language department in the College of Education at Zulfi. The study aimed to investigate the academic writing challenges faced by English language students. Utilizing a questionnaire and experimental task, the two main issues were highlighted: the students were challenged by spelling mistakes as well as vocabulary and structure when they wrote, and the existing Academic Writing Curriculum didn't cover the writing Techniques. Accordingly, the study suggested five solutions: it is essential to combine writing and reading skills together to improve their critical thinking; there should be a lot of writing practice; improving students' writing skills through using computer; increasing the number of credit hours; adopting a writing syllabus that concentrates on practicing writing rather than teaching about writing.

AlMarwani (2020) studied new insights regarding postgraduate TESOL students' views on academic writing challenges and strategies to address them. The research identified literature gaps and the practical requirements of postgraduate TESOL students in the study context. Data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured focus group interviews. Findings reveal that students face obstacles in producing quality academic writing, including language skills, academic writing abilities, and source management skills. Feedback from supervisors and digital tools played a crucial role in fostering independent learning and critical thinking, supporting students' success at this stage. The study also provided valuable insights into postgraduate TESOL students' perceptions of Google Classroom's impact on their academic writing.

ChatGPT, developed by OpenAI, is an AI-powered chatbot based on Chatbot technology and text-generation tools like GPT-3 and GPT-4. It utilizes Natural Language Processing (NLP) to engage in human-like conversations, providing responses based on its vast database. ChatGPT generates accurate replies if user input matches stored data; otherwise, it suggests relevant information. According to Su & Tran (2024), GPT-3 significantly advanced text-related tasks such as translation, summarization, and paraphrasing, while GPT-4 further improved creativity, problem-solving, and multimodal input processing. ChatGPT is widely applied in various fields like business, education, and tourism, enhancing efficiency and minimizing workloads.

In a research conducted by Ghufon et al. (2018), Grammarly is seen as an online proofreading tool that helps EFL learners improve their writing by detecting grammar, spelling, punctuation, and vocabulary errors. It also offers style-specific corrections and plagiarism detection by comparing the text against a vast database. Features like an adaptive spell checker and context-optimized synonyms enhance word choice and accuracy. Grammarly effectively supports both teachers and students by identifying punctuation errors, spelling mistakes, and verb form issues, though some explanations can be complex. Overall, it serves as a valuable tool for enhancing writing quality in EFL classrooms.

Quillbot is a widely used AI-powered paraphrasing tool that helps users rewrite text, check grammar, summarize content, and detect plagiarism. Kurniati et al. (2022) said that it simplifies paraphrasing by automatically generating alternative versions of the input text with a single click. Additionally, Quillbot offers automated writing evaluation (AWE) through its grammar

checker, making it a valuable tool for students, writers, bloggers, and educators. Its ease of use and reliability make it a trusted resource for improving writing quality and clarity.

Launched in 1998, Turnitin is a widely recognized plagiarism detection tool designed to uphold academic integrity by comparing student submissions against an extensive database of sources. It plays a crucial role in promoting originality, detecting plagiarism, and providing constructive feedback. As a pedagogical tool, Turnitin helps teach proper research methods, writing practices, and ethical information use. Highlighting similarities in texts encourages students to prioritize originality and proper citation. Additionally, Turnitin fosters a culture of integrity by reinforcing diligence in research, writing, and attribution. According to Obeng-Ofori et al. (2025), this application is used in over 10,000 institutions across 126 countries, it has gained global acceptance as a reliable tool for educators and administrators. Its core function of identifying text similarities aids in detecting and preventing academic dishonesty and supporting policies that uphold academic standards.

AI tools are now commonly utilized among English learners. Accordingly, Amyatun & Kholis (2023) aimed to assess whether QuillBot AI could enhance eleventh-grade students' skills in crafting hortatory exposition texts. This study, conducted as Classroom Action Research (CAR), included 20 students from class XI IPA 2A. A qualitative approach was applied, using a writing test for data collection. The scores demonstrated improvement in students' writing abilities following the use of QuillBot AI in their writing class. Prior to using the AI tool, students' average score was 53.55, which rose to 78.90 on the post-test. Consequently, the study highlighted a positive effect of QuillBot AI on students' proficiency in creating hortatory exposition texts.

Positive about the influence of these tools on students' writing was also found in the research of Marzuki et al. (2023). They aimed to examine the variety of Artificial Intelligence (AI) writing tools and evaluated their effects on student writing, focusing on content and organization, as perceived by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers by using a qualitative approach and a case study design. Besides, the findings revealed a wide range of AI tools (e.g., Quillbot, ChatGPT, WordTune, Copy.ai, Paperpal, and Essay Writer) employed by EFL teachers, though the benefits identified varied slightly among the teachers. However, one educator expressed concern about the potential for over-reliance on AI tools, emphasizing the need to maintain a balanced approach to their use.

Chauke et al. (2024) aimed to explore postgraduate students' opinions related to the usage of AI tools, especially ChatGPT, in their academic learning progress in South Africa's universities. The study employed a qualitative approach with 10 postgraduates, and semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect perceptions from the postgraduate students who majored in master's degrees in South Africa's historically disadvantaged universities, selected through purposive sampling. Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the collected data. The study found that ChatGPT proves beneficial for postgraduate students as it refined students' research topics before submission to their supervisors, identified grammatical errors, and paraphrased their academic writing, contributing to improving their writing skills. However, an innovative AI ethical use policy in these universities is a concern that the researchers recommend for future studies.

Nguyen et al. (2025) investigated the challenges higher education students face when using ChatGPT for writing purposes. The study was conducted at the Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City (IUH) and focused on postgraduate English majors. Twenty-five postgraduate students participated in the research, which employed qualitative methods, including survey questionnaires and short interviews, to collect data. The findings reveal that the challenges

posed by ChatGPT outweigh its benefits in improving the writing skills of postgraduate English majors at IUH.

Pham's research also found paraphrasing and grammatical structure management (2024). This study investigated how QuillBot helps postgraduates improve their paraphrasing skills in academic writing and explored their perceptions of QuillBot as a support tool during the paraphrasing process. A survey was conducted with twenty Master of Arts in English Language students, and the data was analyzed to assess QuillBot's impact on their paraphrasing abilities and their views on the tool. The findings highlighted three main benefits of QuillBot: it enriched students' vocabulary and grammatical structures, improved clarity in their writing, and saved time in learning to paraphrase. The study also noted how QuillBot indirectly supported postgraduates in their paraphrasing learning process. Additionally, Pham suggested the need for further research into the potential negative effects of QuillBot on English learners' writing skills and at which stage in the learning process students should begin using AI-paraphrasing tools for optimal benefit.

AI tools are helpful not only for non-professional learners but also for students whose majors require academic writing. Khalifa & Albadawy (2024) evaluated the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in enhancing academic writing and research. The study identified 24 studies through six important aspects where AI helps academic writing and research. This search targeted peer-reviewed articles, review papers, and empirical studies examining the use of AI in academic writing and research. Findings showed that AI is an essential productivity tool that substantially supports academic writing and research by transforming idea development and research design, enhancing content quality, ensuring comprehensive analysis and integrity, streamlining the publishing process, and supporting ethical compliance in research dissemination.

Similarly, Khongtim et al. (2024) looked at the growing field of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) and how it affects academic discussions in postgraduate studies at North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong. This study included the participation of 100 students from departments of the School of Economics, Management, and Information Sciences. The study used a quantitative approach. The data was collected through a survey that employed Likert-scale items and then analyzed using regression analysis. Research findings agreed that AI engagement, AI literacy, perceived ease of use, and perceived usefulness all positively influence academic writing output. These tools enhanced the writing process by improving efficiency and effectiveness and played a significant part in developing students' understanding of academic writing norms and enhancing their academic work.

Meanwhile, two researchers, Song C & Song Y (2023), examined how an AI-assisted language learning approach affects academic writing skills and motivation among Chinese EFL students, using a blend of quantitative and qualitative methods. Their study included 50 Bachelor's degree students from a national university in China. Qualitative feedback revealed various perspectives, including recognition of AI's innovative contributions to teaching and its beneficial effects on writing skills and motivation, as well as worries about contextual accuracy and the risk of becoming overly dependent on AI. Participants also discussed the long-term effects and sustainability of AI-assisted instruction, underscoring the importance of ongoing development and adaptation of these tools. The results showed that students who received AI-assisted instruction significantly improved their writing skills and motivation compared to those in the control group. The experimental group showed higher organization, coherence, grammar, and vocabulary skills.

Approving the benefits of AI tools in academic writing, Kim et al. (2024) explored and examined students' perceptions and experiences about Gen AI-assisted academic writing. They conducted a semi-structured interview of 60–90 minutes via Zoom with 20 Chinese students in higher education after the participants finished academic writing tasks using a ChatGPT4-embedded writing system developed by the research team. A mixed-methods approach was employed to analyze data, utilizing both inductive and deductive thematic analysis through a structured seven-step process that included transcription, familiarization, coding, and validation. The findings indicated that Gen AI improves students' writing quality and efficiency and fosters a collaborative and interactive writing experience.

Su and Tran (2024) aimed to identify the limitations of ChatGPT that learners commonly face when studying writing, particularly in the Research Writing Course. The study involved seven learners from the Master Course at the Faculty of Foreign Languages at Van Lang University, all of whom are English teachers at public schools, English centers, or private tutors in Ho Chi Minh City. Through qualitative data collected from interviews, the researchers found that despite its challenges, ChatGPT can help improve writing skills, mainly for beginner to intermediate learners in vocabulary, structure, and organization. However, its major drawback is unreliable information, requiring students to verify sources. It also lacks credible academic references and updates on recent research, making it unsuitable for advanced research writing.

Besides its advantages, AI tools still hinder many challenges that students have to deal with when engaging in these. Utani et al. (2023) sought to explore perceptions, challenges, and suggestions for improving the use of AI in teaching academic writing in Indonesia. This article presents a case study of three senior high schools in Central Java. The quantitative data were analyzed using percentages based on a Likert scale scoring system, while the qualitative data focused on key themes and responses from selected participants. Findings reveal that challenges such as incomplete editing features for the Indonesian language and the necessity for manual writing skills were noted, indicating that AI tools should supplement traditional instruction rather than a replacement.

These disadvantages were affirmed by Ozfidan et al. (2024) in a study investigating the perceptions of AI tools in Saudi undergraduate students' academic writing skills. The researchers conducted a survey of 189 students who were proficient in English and enrolled in freshmen academic writing courses. Two factors were identified by exploratory analysis: "instructional support of AI tools" and "instructional practices of AI tools". The results showed other dissatisfaction, called accessibility, cost, and customization of these tools, and the need to post, edit, and cross-check the content produced by these tools.

Likewise, Miao et al. (2024) addressed the ethical challenges brought about by using artificial intelligence (AI) in academic writing, particularly within nephrology. The study involved multiple stakeholders, including authors, journal editors, peer reviewers, nephrologists, ethicists, and AI experts, in a proposed framework for ensuring responsible AI usage. Generating text that might not be properly attributed or thoroughly reviewed identified significant ethical concerns, especially the risk of AI undermining academic integrity. This raised issues such as plagiarism and the authenticity of scholarly work. The authors emphasized the need for transparency in disclosing AI's involvement in the research and writing processes. Additionally, the study pointed out several gaps in the current understanding of AI's impact on academic integrity, particularly in terms of how often AI-generated content appears in scholarly work and whether existing plagiarism detection tools were effective in identifying such content. The research highlighted the importance of addressing these challenges to safeguard the integrity of academic writing.

While the current research provides valuable insights into immediate student experiences and benefits from using AI tools, it lacks a longitudinal perspective that could reveal how sustained interaction with AI tools influences writing proficiency, confidence, and attitudes toward academic writing. Additionally, there are few investigations into students' dynamics, especially in a range of educational settings, to establish the most effective and morally acceptable methods for incorporating AI into academic writing. The purpose of this paper was threefold: (1) to find out some popular AI tools that IUH Master of Arts uses in English language students, (2) to identify the benefits of AI tools in academic writing, and (3) to recognize the challenges that students have to face when applying these tools.

Two research questions were addressed:

1. What benefits do AI tools offer to IUH Master of Arts in English language students while learning academic writing?
2. What challenges do IUH Master of Arts in English language students face when using AI tools to learn academic writing?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

AI tools can significantly enhance the academic writing process by providing students with real-time assistance, improving their writing quality, and offering personalized feedback to foster skill development. This study was conducted at the Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City (IUH), Faculty of Languages, which offers a Master of Arts in English Language program for postgraduate students. The research aimed to explore how AI tools assist students in improving their academic writing skills.

A purposive sampling method was used to select participants, ensuring that they had relevant academic backgrounds and experiences with AI tools in writing. The study involved 30 first-semester postgraduate students enrolled in an Academic Writing course. Among them, 4 were male and 26 were female. Since these students were in the early stages of their academic journey, AI tools were integrated into their learning process to support their writing development.

Design of the Study

A mixed-method approach was employed, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods through questionnaires and interviews.

Questionnaire

The online questionnaire consisted of 13 questions:

- Questions 1–4: Identified the most commonly used AI tools.
- Questions 5–6: Used a Likert scale to measure the perceived benefits of AI tools in learning academic writing.
- Questions 7–13: Explored the challenges students faced when using AI tools.

The questionnaire was designed based on previous research results to ensure its validity. The Likert scale questions were carefully designed to enhance reliability and maintain consistency in responses. The wording and structure of the questions were reviewed to ensure clarity and minimize potential misinterpretations among participants.

Interview Design & Reliability Measures

After completing the questionnaire, 12 students were randomly selected for semi-structured interviews. Each interview included four predefined questions, aiming to gain deeper insights into students' experiences, benefits, and challenges when using AI tools. The interviews lasted approximately 10 minutes per participant.

To improve reliability, the interviews were conducted individually in a consistent setting to ensure uniform conditions for all participants. Each interview was recorded and transcribed verbatim to maintain accuracy and prevent data loss. Additionally, two researchers independently coded the transcripts to enhance inter-rater reliability and minimize potential biases in the analysis.

Data collection & analysis

Data was collected through questionnaires and interviews to gather comprehensive insights into students' experiences with AI tools. The online questionnaire was distributed via Google Forms to 30 Master's students, allowing for efficient data collection. Responses were automatically recorded and summarized using Google Forms' built-in analytics. Following the questionnaire, 12 students were selected for face-to-face interviews, each lasting approximately 10 minutes. These interviews were recorded and transcribed to ensure accuracy in qualitative analysis.

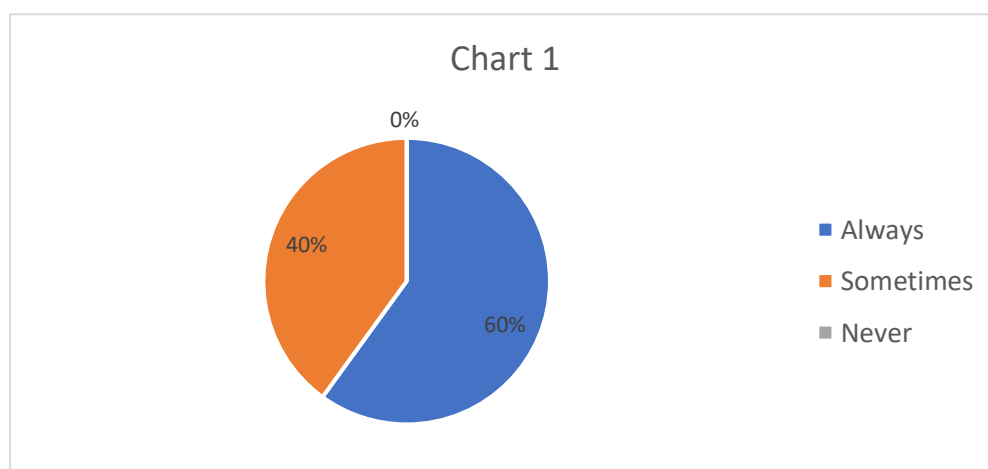
The collected data were then analyzed systematically. Quantitative data from the Likert scale questions were examined using descriptive statistics, while thematic analysis was applied to open-ended responses. Interview transcripts were coded for qualitative data to identify recurring themes related to students' perceptions, benefits, and challenges of using AI tools. This methodological approach ensured a rigorous and structured process, allowing for a well-rounded understanding of AI tools' impact on postgraduate students' academic writing skills.

Results/Findings

Research question 1: What benefits do AI tools offer to IUH Master of Arts in English language students while learning academic writing?

Figure 1

The frequency of using AI tools for academic writing



As seen from fig. 1, 60% of postgraduate students always employ AI tools for academic writing, while 40% say they sometimes use them. In short, all students apply AI tools to assist with their academic writing.

Table 1

Usage of popular AI tools in academic writing among postgraduate students

ChatGPT	Grammarly	Quillbot	Turnitin	Notion	EndNote
28	23	12	5	2	1
93.3%	76.7%	40%	16.7%	6.7%	3.3%

The researchers offer the six most popular AI tools for the participants to choose from. According to the table, ChatGPT is the most favored application, accounting for 93.3%. This was followed by Grammarly and Quillbot with 76.7% and 40%, respectively. Just five students utilized Turnitin, while the least of them applied Notion and Endnote. In the next short-answer question, 4 students said that they also used an application called Gemini AI to assist their writing. In the interview, answering the question "Do you use other AI tools (except those from the Questionnaire) for academic writing?" many students revealed that they also use Gemini AI, which similarly functioned as ChatGPT, as a useful tool in writing academic papers.

Table 2

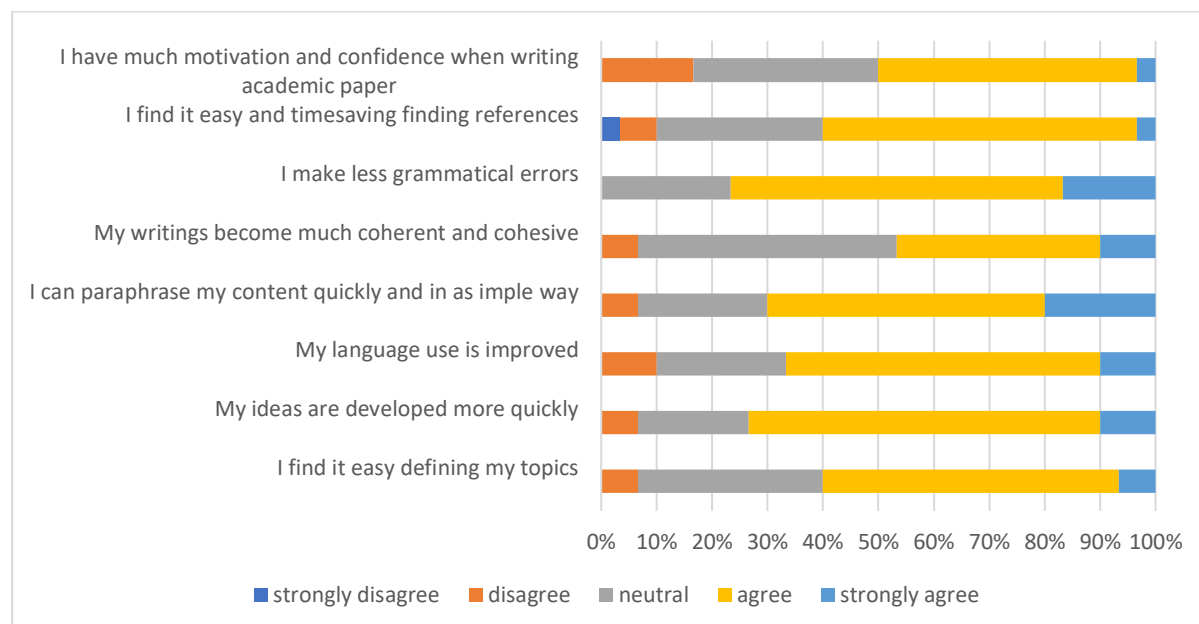
How postgraduate students apply AI tools in academic writing

define topics	develop ideas	find citations	write references part	paraphrase	check grammar errors	check plagiarism
14	22	14	5	21	23	15
46.7%	73.3%	46.7%	16.7%	70%	76.7%	50%

The researchers listed 7 main activities in academic writing. As can be seen from the table, AI tools are helpful for postgraduate students in checking grammar errors and paraphrasing their writings, accounting for 76.7% and 73.3%, respectively. Besides, paraphrasing is also a popular part of AI tools that are utilized at 70%. 50% of the students check plagiarism using those technologies, and less than half of them define topics and find citations using AI tools. 16.7% reported that they take advantage of the advantages of writing references.

Figure 2

Benefits of using AI tools for academic writing



As can be seen from Fig. 2, there are 8 benefits gained by postgraduate students from using AI tools for academic writing. Approximately 63% of them agree that they developed their ideas more quickly while making fewer grammatical errors. Meanwhile, many postgraduate students agreed that their language use is developed and found it easier and more time-saving to search citations, accounting for over 55%. Half of them said they could paraphrase their content quickly while staying neutral so to make their writings more coherent and cohesive. Participants shared their points of view about the benefits of using AI tools for academic writing during the interview. The second question is: "What is the most beneficial point that AI tools offer you in academic writing?"

When I had to write paragraphs for my assignments, I sometimes made mistakes regarding grammatical structure. Thanks to chat GPT, the errors in my work were all checked and corrected suitably. AI tools also helped me refine my vocabulary to suit my academic writing style and pointed out grammar mistakes I didn't notice. This enriched my lexical range by giving synonyms or various word choices in different styles.

Other participants gave deeper opinions about the advantages along with specific applications:

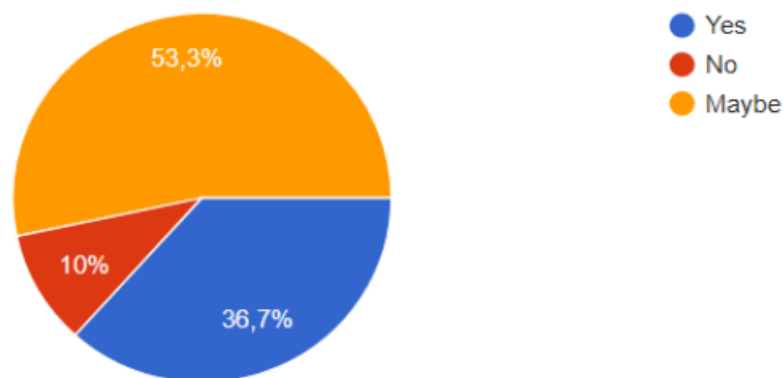
With vocabulary, I find synonyms for words; with grammar, I check spelling, tenses, and punctuation. AI tools also support and propose ideas for my writing, check plagiarism, and give citations. Gemini AI improved my ideas and vocabulary, and Grammarly and Quillbot helped me with grammatical mistakes.

The next question is to find out if postgraduates' motivation in writing academic paper. The participants share their perspectives about the third question: "Have AI tools promoted your motivation in academic writing and improved your grades/performances?"

I feel more confident in my work because the errors are checked and fixed. I was supported with my ideas so that I could prepare better for my tasks. I used to be very shy about writing academic papers, but now I'll be more confident.

Figure 3

Perceived impact of AI tools on academic writing performance

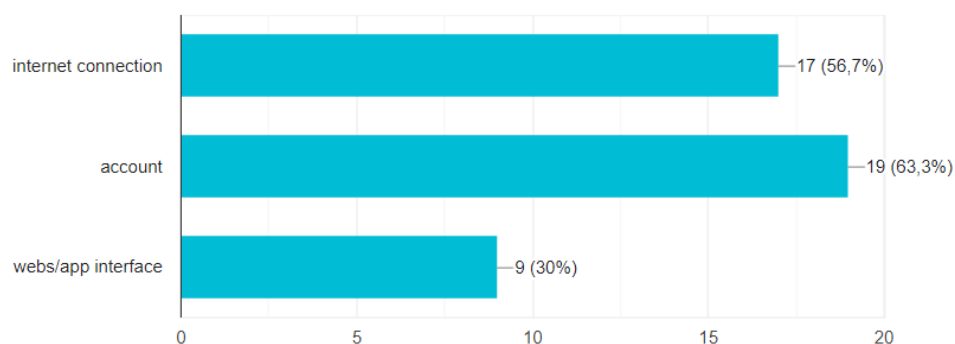


By the benefits mentioned, 36.7% of postgraduates said that their grades or performances in academic writing improved after utilizing AI tools, while 53.3% of them were not sure about that. Only 10% of the participants saw no improvement.

Research question 2: What challenges do IUH Master of Arts in English language students face when using AI tools to learn academic writing?

Figure 4

Challenges faced by postgraduate students when using AI tools in academic writing



According to the fig. 4, 63.3% of postgraduates have difficulties logging in or signing up for accounts when using AI tools. Besides, 56.7% of them were also found to be disrupted by the internet connection. Web/app interface challenged 30% of participants.

Some AI tools, particularly ChatGPT, could not understand what I needed, which led to confusing responses. Besides, it's easy to be detected as plagiarism or AI-made if you extract ideas from AI tools even after paraphrasing.

Some students expressed that cost is the most disruptive angle:

I have to log in to access more functions or support features, but I can only use free versions. Moreover, some websites and applications require an international payment method, which prevents me from approaching official versions. Besides, without an internet connection, I am just offered information from unreliable resources.

Figure 5

Disruptive issues experienced by postgraduate students with AI tools

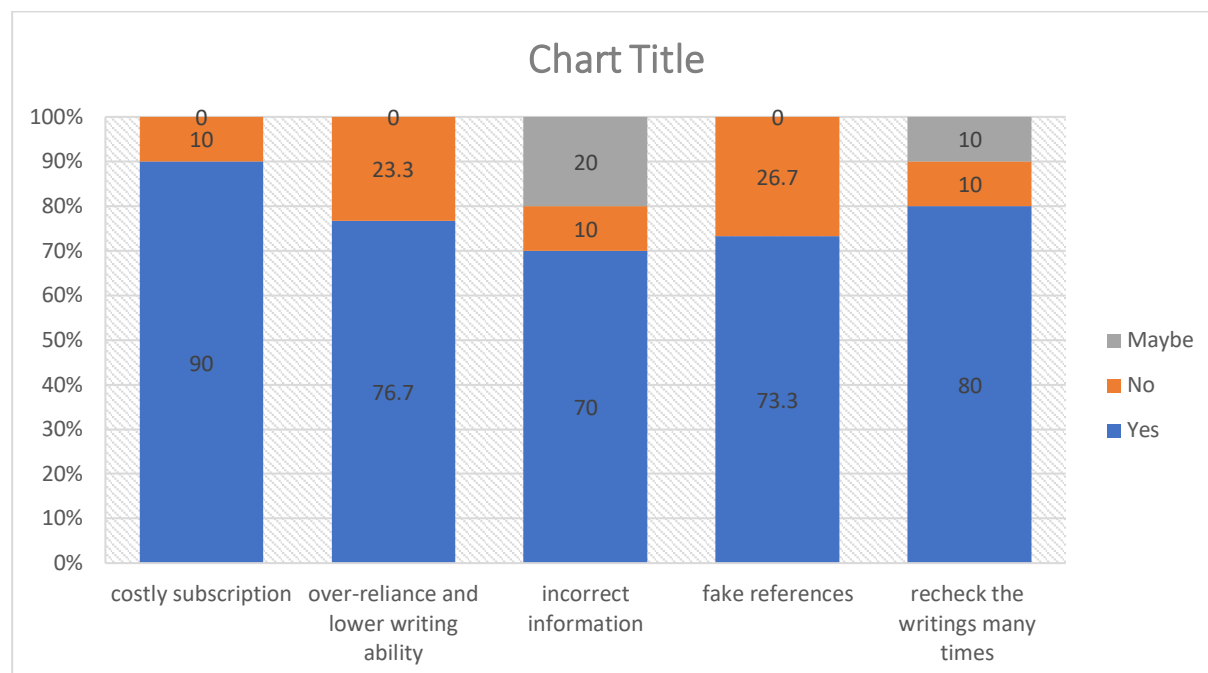


Fig. 5 shows five main challenges that postgraduates face when using AI tools for academic writing. Most of them admitted that costly subscriptions hinder their technological appliance process, accounting for 90%. The next most common difficulty is the worry of over-reliance and lower writing ability, which is the case for nearly 80% of the participants. The same number applies to students who have to recheck their writing many times after using AI tools. Over 70% of postgraduates reported receiving incorrect or fake information from AI assistance. According to the fourth question of the interview, "What are some other challenges that you faced when using AI tools for academic writing?" students shared that:

In my humble opinion, I suggest that MA students use AI tools in academic writing because they provide them with many benefits, such as correcting grammatical errors, generating ideas, and brainstorming sentences. However, there shouldn't be more reliance on it, and especially avoid making mistakes regarding plagiarism.

Generally, most of them recognized that they may become overly reliant on AI tools unless they use them in a suitable manner. Besides, lots of students raised the question of why they were accused of plagiarism even when they just asked the AI tools to check spelling and grammar errors. One other obstacle is that *"My writing style will gradually become robotic like AI, and I sometimes show the potential for bias based on prompt."*

Discussion

The results suggested that a significant majority of EFL college students often or always use these tools in their academic writing work. These findings aligned with the increasing prevalence of AI-powered tools in educational contexts. EFL MA students' familiarity with tools like ChatGPT, Grammarly, and Quillbot may be attributed to the broader accessibility and integration of AI technology in writing processes. However, while the usage was high, it is essential to be aware of the validity level of these tools. The validity level of AI writing tools

can vary depending on the task, and students should be aware of which part of those tools are about how to make the best use of them.

AI tools, particularly ChatGPT, provide significant benefits for the IUH Master of Arts in English language students' academic writing. Participants reported improvements in grammatical accuracy, coherence, and lexical variety, which aligns with the study by Su and Tran (2024). Their research similarly highlights ChatGPT's effectiveness in enhancing language accuracy and providing immediate feedback, reinforcing our results. However, both studies also point to potential weaknesses. Our findings suggest that students may become overly reliant on AI-generated content, which could hinder their ability to develop independent critical thinking and writing skills. Additionally, while the previous study emphasizes issues related to creativity and originality, our research identifies an additional challenge: students struggle with integrating AI-generated text into their writing without losing their own academic voice. This highlights the need for instructional strategies that balance AI assistance with students' active engagement in the writing process.

Moreover, EFL postgraduate students believed that AI-powered tools had improved the quality of their academic writing and had had a positive influence on their performance, the positive influence of AI-powered tools on students' writing quality resonates with previous studies highlighting the benefits of these tools in improving writing skills and providing constructive feedback (Al Mahmud, 2023). However, more than half of the participants expressed uncertainty about this matter.

The second dimension of the questionnaire explored EFL university students' perceptions of the primary benefits of AI writing tools. The results showed that students largely agree on the advantages of using these tools, such as developing their ideas more quickly while making fewer grammatical errors, improved language use, easier and more time-saving searching citations, and paraphrasing the content quickly.

This result agrees with Khongtim's research that the positive influence of academic writing output enhances the writing process by improving efficiency. It is effective but significant in developing students' understanding of achieving norms and enhancing their academic work. Notably, EFL university students also found AI-powered tools valuable in helping students become more conscious of proper references. The students' motivation and confidence were considered as they felt supported by their ideas, leading to better preparation for the tasks. This finding also aligned with the idea that AI-assisted instructions significantly improved students' writing skills and motivation in completing academic writing assignments (Song C & Song Y, 2023).

The result also showed that most postgraduates had difficulties logging in or signing up for accounts when using AI tools; more than half of the responses were found disrupted by the Internet connection. Moreover, the level of validity of some AI tools, such as Chat GPT, did not satisfy the user's demand as it seemed unable to meet the user's needs through the questions and then gave confusing responses. In addition, the participants also addressed the unreliability of references provided by Chat GPT. One of the most disruptive angles of AI tools is a costly subscription to access more useful features of the tools, as many of them require international payment. These findings approve the result of Ozfidan et al. (2024) that the cost and customization of these tools are key disadvantages of using AI tools in academic writing when postgraduate students have to pay lots of money to afford the applications.

Besides, the results revealed mixed feelings regarding the improvement in their grade with both agreement and uncertainty. The findings from the three dimensions of the questionnaire

provided valuable insights into EFL university students' attitudes toward AI writing tools. While there was a general agreement on the benefits and use of these tools, it is important to recognize that students' perceptions are not uniform. There was some diversity in their opinions, highlighting that EFL postgraduates may have different levels of confidence and reliance on AI-powered tools for specific aspects of their writing.

Conclusion

The study explores the use of AI tools in academic writing among MA students majoring in English at IUH. It investigates the benefits and challenges of AI tools like writing assistants and language models in improving students' writing proficiency. Findings indicate that AI tools offer significant benefits, such as improving writing skills and providing support, but also introduce challenges, including over-reliance and limitations in addressing complex writing issues. This study was conducted at the Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City, specifically within the Faculty of Languages, which offers a Master of Arts in English Language program for postgraduate students. The participants were selected from a group of 30 first-semester postgraduate students currently enrolled in an Academic Writing course. The author used qualitative and quantitative approaches to explain the context through questionnaires and interviews.

Most postgraduate students always employ AI tools for academic writing. The most favored application is ChatGPT, followed by Grammarly and Quillbot. AI tools are helpful for postgraduate students in checking grammar errors and paraphrasing writing. The researchers found that approximately 63% of the participants agreed that they developed their ideas more quickly while making fewer grammatical errors. 36.7% of postgraduates said that their grades or academic writing performance improved after utilizing AI tools. Most postgraduates have difficulties logging in or signing up for accounts when using AI tools. Most postgraduates faced costly subscriptions, which hindered their technology appliance use.

EFL MA students showed familiarity with tools, such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, and Quillbot, which may be attributed to the broader accessibility and integration of AI technology in writing processes. EFL postgraduate students believed that AI-powered tools had improved the quality of their academic writing and positively influenced their performance. The motivation and confidence of the students were considered as they felt supported by their ideas, leading to better preparation for the tasks. Most postgraduates had difficulties logging in or signing up for accounts when using AI tools, and the Internet connection disrupted more than half of the responses.

Implications

This study highlights the challenges postgraduates face when using AI tools for writing. While AI offers various benefits—such as idea development, paraphrasing, finding references, citations, and correcting grammar—it also presents significant challenges, particularly the risks of over-reliance and Integrity concerns. To maintain critical thinking and creativity, students should use AI tools as supporters rather than a substitute for their own ideas. Schools and teachers play a crucial role in setting clear guidelines and providing training on effective AI tool usage. Properly integrating AI tools into academic writing can enhance learning, but students must first brainstorm independently, verify AI-generated content, and ensure the reliability of information. When used responsibly, AI can be a valuable assistant, improving both writing skills and overall learning outcomes.

Limitations

While this study may offer valuable insights, certain limitations should be acknowledged. First, the small sample size of 30 participants may limit the generalizability of the findings, as it does not fully represent the broader population of MA students. Second, since the research was conducted exclusively at IUH, the results may not be applicable to students in different institutions with varying academic programs and access to AI tools. Third, the study relied on self-reported data from questionnaires and interviews, which may be influenced by social desirability bias or recall inaccuracies. Lastly, the cross-sectional nature of the research captures students' perceptions at a single point in time, limiting insights into how their experiences with AI tools may evolve over a longer period.

Recommendation

The research included only 30 participants, which may not be representative of the broader population of MA students. A larger sample could provide more generalizable insights and improve the validity of the findings. The study specifically targeted students at IUH (International University of Ho Chi Minh City). This localized focus may limit the applicability of the findings to other institutions or educational contexts, as different settings may yield different experiences with AI tools. We suggest that future studies should engage in longitudinal research that follows students over time across different institutions, observing how their experiences and perceptions of AI tools evolve.

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Biodata

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She is particularly focused on how AI tools and technologies can enhance language acquisition, improve EFL writing skills, and provide personalized learning experiences for students. She is also interested in exploring innovative AI-based methods to engage both young learners and university students in more effective and interactive English language education.

English-Major Master's Students Regarding the Use of ChatGPT in Learning Research Writing at IUH

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ABSTRACT

Keywords: ChatGPT, research writing, English major, students, perspectives

Researchers in the field of artificial intelligence (AI) have significantly focused on the use of ChatGPT for writing. Many studies have shown that the use of ChatGPT has somewhat influenced students' attitudes toward applying ChatGPT in academic writing. The researchers conducted a study to gather the perceptions of English-major master's students regarding using ChatGPT to learn research writing at a university in Vietnam. A mixed-method approach was employed to assess students' perceptions, with a sample size of 29 students participating in a research writing course. This study examined not only the general benefits and challenges of using ChatGPT but also its impact on critical thinking and the risk of unintentional plagiarism. These findings suggest that educators should guide learners to approach ChatGPT not merely as a simple language correction tool but as a double-edged resource requiring functional, cognitive, and ethical considerations in AI-assisted learning environments.

Introduction

Currently, the implementation of ChatGPT, an AI learning chatbot, has garnered significant attention in the area of language education (Slamet, 2024). Since its release on November 30, 2022, ChatGPT, an acronym for "Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer" (OpenAI, 2023), has been described as "a language model application that allows users to extrapolate information in a human-like manner." (Singh, 2023, p. 204). Due to its ability to replicate intelligent human behavior, Shalevska and Kostadinovska-Stojchevska (2024) concluded that ChatGPT has the potential to completely transform teaching, learning, and evaluation in the educational system. ChatGPT offers students not only personalized and immediate feedback but also an opportunity for language practice, meeting individual learners' needs. With these abilities, this chatbot makes the classroom environment more engaging and interesting compared to traditional methods (Rudolph et al., 2023; Shen et al., 2023). According to Gilson et al. (2023) and Pavlik (2023), ChatGPT can respond with good coherence due to the ability to understand the meaning and contextual factors of the prompts.

Additionally, ChatGPT is considered a supportive tool for learning to write although there are some concerns about it. Hidayat and Sujarwati (2024) find that students have a positive perception of the use of ChatGPT in their writing. It can be a personal guide for learners whether they are studying at school or at home (Song and Song, 2023). However, accurate prompts may be necessary for the users to ensure better writing results (Özçelik and Ekşi, 2024). All in all, employing ChatGPT to improve writing skills is a relatively new approach that warrants further research.

In some previous studies, the researchers have examined ChatGPT's effects on EFL learners' writing skill development. ChatGPT offers a variety of potential advantages in research writing. Baskara (2023) states that ChatGPT is a tool that promotes individual learning, as it provides learners with personalized feedback and suggestions on grammar and lexical sources based on their writing proficiency. It also fosters learners' passion for writing through smart interaction and immediate feedback. ChatGPT gives learners recommendations on databases where they can search for relevant sources of information, articles, and research papers. Learners, therefore, may save a great deal of time and effort in collecting useful information. Besides, ChatGPT allows learners to organize their ideas better by providing structures for different kinds of academic writing (Koos & Wachsmann, 2023).

ChatGPT offers many benefits, but it also has problems. Despite its speed, ChatGPT sometimes produces erroneous results (Day, 2023; Gordijn & Have, 2023; Hügler, 2023; Sallam, 2023; Tlili et al., 2023; Wen & Wang, 2023). Nearly all of the students are confused by ChatGPT's responses since they think the data is untrustworthy and irrelevant to their writing assignment (Nguyen et al., 2025). Hügler and Day (2023) admit that learners sometimes can not find ChatGPT-generated references and citations on official websites. In addition, overreliance on ChatGPT when learning research writing may restrict critical thinking and academic performance (Sok & Heng, 2024; Firat, 2023; Rasul et al., 2023). Barrot (2023) affirms that incorrect training may cause students to overuse ChatGPT, reducing critical thinking. Thus, ChatGPT should be integrated into the curriculum (Minh, 2024) and used just to refine their outline (Barrot, 2023). Learners also struggle with integrity, including cheating and plagiarism when using ChatGPT (Sok & Heng, 2024). According to Botez (2023, para. 3, as cited in Singh, 2023, p. 207), the platform efficiently conducts student research with vast amounts of data affecting academic honesty, especially at universities. ChatGPT offers structured, well-organized, and creative writing, but Bibi and Atta (2024) warn that it carries the potential risks of biased, deceptive, and inauthentic information. Shalevska and Kostadinovska-Stojchevska (2024) indicate that higher education plagiarism problems may be a case of normalizing dishonesty and unethical behavior. Sok and Heng (2024) further assert that plagiarism can cause learning disparities and academic misconduct, ultimately undermining teaching and learning quality.

Previous studies have examined ChatGPT's effects on writing and teachers' perceptions of it. Meanwhile, there have been a few studies exploring students' perspectives on using ChatGPT in scientific writing, especially focusing on its critical analysis and academic integrity. This aligns with the suggestions of Nguyen (2023) and Sok and Heng (2024), as students represent a major user group of this tool. However, not all students receive comprehensive guidance on how to use ChatGPT effectively and ethically in research writing. For this reason, critical thinking and academic integrity remain two of their main concerns. The purpose of this study is to investigate how master's students view ChatGPT's advantages and disadvantages when it comes to research writing, as well as its implications for critical thinking and academic integrity.

Literature Review

Benefits and drawbacks of ChatGPT on writing

The research of Tseng and Lin (2024) aimed to investigate the merits of ChatGPT on learning writing. A qualitative method was used to gather descriptive data from 15 non-native English-major juniors and seniors at a private university. The researcher analyzed students' written works with the application of the TPACK framework and the ADDIE model. The findings showed the positive influences of ChatGPT on the quality of students' academic writing. Besides, by using this chatbot, students can get exposed to a more interesting and interactive learning environment. Therefore, students can engage better in writing courses.

Mahapatra (2024) examined the influences of implementing ChatGPT on learning writing and students' perceptions of this application. The research was conducted at a private university in India, where 134 science-major freshmen participated. The data were gathered using a mixed-method approach, including the quantitative results from three writing tests and the qualitative results from focus group discussions. This study found that ChatGPT enhances students' writing skills in terms of grammar, idea generation, and connection. Besides, students remained enthusiastic about this application. Although a minor concern, ChatGPT has been criticized for imposing a pattern on writing and hindering creativity in content organization.

Similar to the aim of the current research, Mubaroq et al. (2024) discussed the benefits and drawbacks of ChatGPT on university-level writing skills. Instead of gathering information directly from participants, the researchers conducted a qualitative study by reviewing the literature. A large amount of research exploring the advantages and disadvantages of ChatGPT was collected from both online and offline sources, evaluated, and briefly summarized to give the findings. The results revealed that using ChatGPT in writing is advantageous to students at higher schools as it helps students outline and brainstorm ideas effectively, as well as translate and generate language. However, this chatbot also has some drawbacks, the most important of which is that it fails to provide accurate and in-depth responses. Furthermore, excessive use of ChatGPT may lead to overdependence and decrease students' creativity.

Building on this, Teng (2023) explored the challenges of ChatGPT in academic writing. The participants of this research were four writers, three reviewers, and two editors from the International Journal of TESOL Studies (IJTS). All of them were asked to take part in a participant-oriented evaluation and interview to share their opinion on ChatGPT integration in learning writing. The results highlighted some drawbacks of using ChatGPT, including inaccurate information, wrong citations, and unreliable research articles despite potential merits. Additionally, ChatGPT may provide overly general ideas and information and affect the quality of students' writing papers.

The research of Wahyuddin et al. (2023) examined the integration of ChatGPT in academic writing. The participants were 13 second-year students at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Muhammadiyah University of Parepare. Using a quantitative approach, the researchers obtained data through observation, questionnaires, and documentation. The research showed that ChatGPT allows students to enhance their writing skills as this chatbot provides them with ideas, structures, and writing styles. Moreover, students also have the chance to foster creativity in writing.

The prior studies presented above provided researchers with a more extensive view of the advantages and disadvantages of ChatGPT in the process of using it for academic purposes. However, embedded in the general findings were two important aspects of the research writing process that were not examined more closely, namely, critical thinking and plagiarism. These

factors were not only significantly influenced by ChatGPT in the academic context, but were also directly or indirectly related to the thinking process of researchers, as well as partly or fully affecting the validity of their research articles. Therefore, the following related studies provided more nuanced perspectives on these two dimensions in a variety of research contexts with diverse participants.

Effects of ChatGPT on critical thinking

Tran and Tran (2023) explored the role of ChatGPT in enhancing critical thinking in language learning. The study used a qualitative methodology, including semi-structured interviews with 3 language teachers and 8 language students to measure how ChatGPT enhances learners' critical thinking. Their results indicated that ChatGPT plays a significant role in boosting critical thinking skills, leading to the development of their analytical abilities, problem-solving skills, and creativity. The study encouraged learners and educators to utilize ChatGPT to learn languages. However, the researcher assumed that ethical and social aspects should be considered when using ChatGPT for studying.

Suriano et al. (2024) researched the use of ChatGPT for promoting critical thinking skills in education, also focusing on students' attitudes and trust in ChatGPT. The researchers used a quantitative method involving 241 Italian university students from diverse educational backgrounds. Self-report questionnaires and performance tests were conducted and analyzed with SPSS software. The findings showed that students had a positive attitude towards ChatGPT, which was a beneficial resource for developing their critical thinking skills. However, overdependence should be avoided by increasing in-depth comprehension among learners. In this case, teachers may play a significant role in instructing students using ChatGPT effectively and responsibly.

Avsheniuk et al. (2024) conducted a qualitative study to explore the impacts of ChatGPT on critical thinking skills in three Chinese language classrooms. Thirty-eight second-language learners and native Chinese speakers from Chinese classes and a Chinese Academic Writing class participated in the study. The data were collected directly in two Chinese classes. The learners answered questions in a document. In the Academic writing class, the researcher collected ten assignment worksheets. The study revealed that language proficiency levels lead to different results in learners' critical thinking when they use ChatGPT to write. This research highlighted the role of designing lectures to improve critical thinking skills by using ChatGPT.

Shanto et al. (2024) conducted the study to propose a conceptual framework leveraging ChatGPT to enhance learners' critical thinking aptitude. 20 undergraduate students participated in this empirical research and answered an open-ended question based on their opinions and by using ChatGPT. In addition, the researchers used a Likert scale for the survey questions to measure students' perspectives on using AI assistants for writing. The findings showed that using ChatGPT helped them enhance their creativity so that they could have more in-depth analysis. Overall, the study stated that critical thinking can be fostered when the students use ChatGPT carefully and follow the necessary guidelines.

Xue (2024) explored the use of ChatGPT by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students to scaffold critical thinking-oriented writing. The study, using a mixed-method approach, involved 60 Chinese English-majored learners. The researchers collected data through argumentative writing tests and semi-structured interviews. The participants were required to do a pre-test based on their writing ability and a post-test with the support of ChatGPT. The results showed that the students' critical thinking improved when using ChatGPT for writing. The authors also

indicated the aspects including comprehension of critical thinking, model discourse, feedback, AI engagement, and logic that ChatGPT influenced EFL learners' critical thinking in writing.

Issues regarding plagiarism in using ChatGPT for academic writing

Yan (2023) examined L2 students' behaviors and perceptions of the impact of ChatGPT on their writing skills. This study was conducted in the context of a week-long ChatGPT implementation in L2 writing in the classroom, involving 116 undergraduate EFL majors. During that time, the data were collected by using a multi-method qualitative approach. Specifically, the researchers observed students' learning behaviors during ChatGPT usage through their daily submission of learning diaries. Furthermore, responses from in-depth interviews with random students were collected, recorded, and transcribed for analysis. Findings showed that the majority of students grasped the basic skills of ChatGPT in creating texts on certain topics. They also recognized the strengths of ChatGPT but were somewhat concerned about the potential for educational inequality and violations of academic integrity. This leads to the suggestion of a broader definition of plagiarism, enabling the monitoring and prevention of plagiarism's new forms associated with ChatGPT.

Khalaf's (2024) study examined the relationship between students' attitudes towards plagiarism and "aigiarism", defined as AI-assisted plagiarism with noticeable intervention from ChatGPT. Regarding this, the researcher also predicted the future trend of using aigiarism, as well as analyzed the factors that influence students' positive attitudes towards plagiarism and aigiarism. To achieve the above objectives, the study was conducted at Sultan Qaboos University with 131 participants (35 males, 96 females) majoring in science and humanities. Data were collected through responses to two online questionnaires: Attitudes Toward Aigiarism Questionnaire (ATAQ) and Attitudes Toward Plagiarism Questionnaire (ATPQ). The results showed that the correlation between students' attitudes towards plagiarism was demonstrated, specifically through the increased tendency of students to use aigiarism in academic contexts regardless of gender, academic performance, or field of study.

Karkoulia et al. (2024) explored students' and lecturers' perspectives on academic integrity in the context of ChatGPT being increasingly used in academic fields. To help clarify the above-mentioned purpose, the researchers used a qualitative approach to conduct face-to-face interviews at universities in Lebanon, involving 20 students and 20 lecturers. The diverse responses from the interviews informed the study's conclusions, which showed that both students and lecturers were generally aware of the potential benefits of ChatGPT, as well as its threat to academic integrity. Specifically, students recognized that there was a risk of plagiarism detection during the use of ChatGPT and actively mitigated it by rephrasing AI-generated work with other AI tools. Therefore, instructors highlighted the importance of proper paraphrasing and citing sources to prevent plagiarism while engaging with ChatGPT. They also suggested training programs to educate teachers and students on ethical and responsible AI usage.

Bringula's (2023) study explored the perspective of academics (e.g., scholars, teachers, educators, and researchers) on the use of ChatGPT in research writing. Text mining analytics, a quantitative research tool, was used to select 86 peer- and non-peer-reviewed research papers on "using ChatGPT in research writing" from Scopus and Google Scholar. The search process was conducted using specific keywords and criteria. The results showed that academics are primarily concerned about plagiarism, implying that the use of ChatGPT in research writing has made plagiarism easier. Therefore, researchers should critically evaluate ChatGPT's generated content while using it as a brainstorming tool to develop comprehensive research papers and maintain academic integrity.

Yazid and Dzulfikri (2024) explored the potential limitations and ethical issues of ChatGPT as a writing support tool. The study was conducted at the University of Indonesia, involving 30 students from Islamic high schools and universities with various grade levels. The qualitative data was acquired through in-depth interviews with students to gain insights into ChatGPT in writing. Data analysis revealed ChatGPT's concerns into five themes: understanding, reliance, feedback, writing style, and plagiarism—the last and most essential. In particular, the results showed that using ChatGPT may raise the risk of accidental plagiarism because students use ChatGPT-provided content without double-checking, highlighting the importance of maintaining a boundary between leveraging AI support and academic integrity.

Although previous studies investigated the prevalent benefits and challenges of using ChatGPT in writing (Teng, 2023; Wahyuddin et al., 2023; Tseng and Lin, 2024; Mahapatra, 2024; Mubaroq et al., 2024), the positive influences of this chatbot on learners' critical thinking along with the supportive guidances (Tran and Tran, 2023; Suriano et al., 2024; Avsheniuk et al., 2024; Shanto et al., 2024; Xue, 2024) as well as emerging issues related to plagiarism in the context of AI shaping education (Yan, 2023; Khalaf, 2024; Karkoulian et al., 2024; Bringula, 2023; Yazid & Dzulfikri, 2024), some issues are still up for debate. In particular, Mubaroq et al. (2024) claimed ChatGPT has detrimental effects on students' creativity, but Teng (2023) and Wahyuddin et al. (2023) argue that it serves as a tool to foster critical thinking by promoting interactive discussions in which students actively engage in seeking more ideas or opinions related to the essay material. Besides, most of the previous studies focused on the importance of lecturers and training in the use of ChatGPT to enhance critical thinking and avoid plagiarism, but they did not explore students' perspectives. All of these issues lead to one big gap in this study: none of the previous researchers explored the master's students' perceptions of using ChatGPT in research writing at a university in Vietnam.

Research Questions

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the survey sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the perceived benefits and challenges of using ChatGPT in learning research writing from the perspective of English-major master's students?
2. In what ways do students believe ChatGPT affects their critical thinking in research writing?
3. How do students perceive plagiarism when using ChatGPT in research writing?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

This research was conducted at the Faculty of Foreign Languages of the Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City (IUH), which is one of the top-notch universities in Vietnam. IUH is one of the universities that has obtained ASEAN University Network AUN-QA accreditations for 24 learning programs. IUH employs highly qualified lecturers and staff, specialized training services across various fields, a large number of modern facilities, and a dynamic environment that attracts thousands of students from all over the country. The Faculty of Foreign Languages (FFL) was established in 2005 under the direction of IUH. There are over 3000 students with varied English proficiency levels studying at the FFL-IUH. For this research, the participants were 29 English-major master students who experienced ChatGPT in a Research Writing course. The ages of participants were varied, ranging from 20 to 49, but they engaged in the

same training programme and received equal guidance from lecturers. They worked in different fields, but all of them desired to be deeply specialized in English Linguistics. Therefore, the participants had sufficient essential elements to provide quality answers, ensuring the validity and reliability of our study.

Design of the Study

Overall, this study used a mixed-method approach with an explanatory sequential design to comprehensively examine the views of IUH English major master's students on the use of ChatGPT in research writing. The mixed-method approach includes qualitative and quantitative methods. Specifically, the design allowed the researchers to identify common threads of opinion formed by student responses through quantitative data in the first phase of the study. In the second phase, the researchers analyzed and extracted the underlying causes of such formation through qualitative data collected from interviews with randomly selected students. By collecting two types of data for the study, the researchers could measure the causal perspectives for students' responses when using ChatGPT in research writing. These perspectives were related to perceived impacts, effects on critical thinking and the risk of academic plagiarism.

To explore students' perceptions of ChatGPT, a mixed-methods approach was employed to provide both breadth and depth of understanding. Surveys were used to gather quantitative data from a larger group of students, allowing for the identification of general trends related to the perceived benefits and challenges of using ChatGPT. In addition, interviews allowed for more detailed exploration of students' thoughts and feelings, particularly about how ChatGPT affects their critical thinking and how they perceive plagiarism when using it. The combination of these methods offered a more complete picture of the issue. SPSS was used to analyze survey data statistically, helping to identify patterns, frequencies, and relationships in student responses. These methods provided complementary insights that supported a more well-rounded answer to the research questions.

To ensure the results are reliable and trustworthy, a comprehensive approach was adopted for data collection. Questionnaires were distributed remotely by means of Google Forms, providing convenience for all participants. Furthermore, the privacy of the participants was strictly maintained as the forms did not require any personal information, thus safeguarding their anonymity. Participants were also encouraged to provide any difficulties or problems encountered in the course of carrying out the survey process, and problems were solved quickly through online support. Finally, answers collected were systematically recorded, securely archived, and thoroughly analyzed to ensure the accuracy and validity of research outcomes.

Data collection & analysis

Procedure of data collection

The questionnaires were designed on Google Forms with questions such as multiple choice, checkbox grid, checkbox, short answer, and linear scale. Afterward, researchers sent the online form to all MA learners in the Research Writing course from October 29, 2024 to November 5, 2024. After receiving 29 responses, researchers randomly selected 10 students for interviews. The interview consisted of 3 questions emphasizing the issues related to critical thinking and plagiarism when using ChatGPT to do research writing. Each student spent about 7 minutes being interviewed and their responses were recorded. To ensure accuracy, interview recordings were securely kept and transcribed immediately after finishing the interview.

Data analysis

Quantitative Data Analysis (Phase One)

An online questionnaire was used to collect data using a 5-point Likert scale in the first phase of the study. With responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), the researchers used SPSS 2.0 to measure students' views on the role of ChatGPT in research writing, its impact on critical thinking, and their concerns about plagiarism. Additionally, the researchers applied inferential analysis to examine the statistical significance of the correlations between the variables mentioned in the survey.

Qualitative Data Analysis (Phase Two)

In the second phase of the research, thematic analysis was applied to interpret responses from semi-structured interviews, contextualizing the collected qualitative data. Through careful review and manual classification of each interview transcript, researchers successfully identified recurring themes. This qualitative data was then compared and combined with the quantitative data to provide the researchers with a comprehensive view of the overall trends expressed in participants' responses and individual experiences.

Results/Findings

Theme 1: Perceived benefits and drawbacks of using ChatGPT in learning research writing from the perspective of English-major master's students (Research question 1)

Figure 1.

The students' frequency of using ChatGPT for their research writing

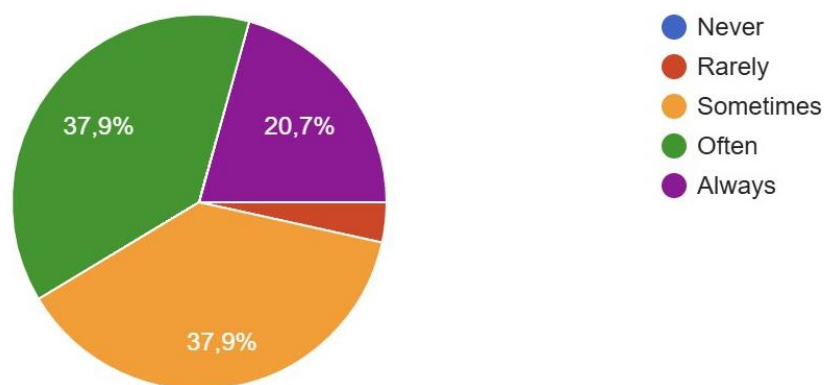
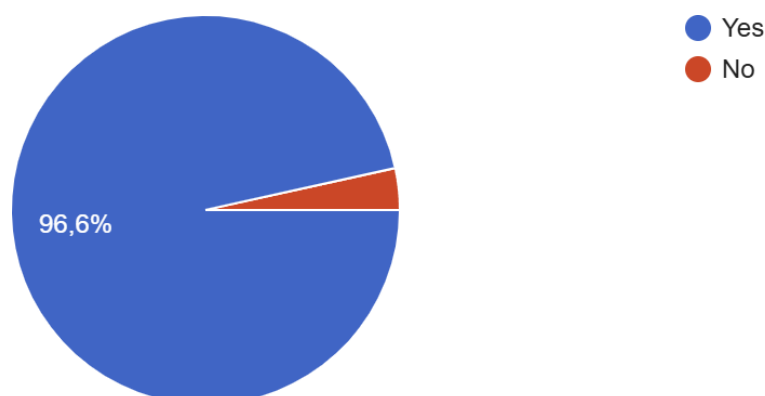
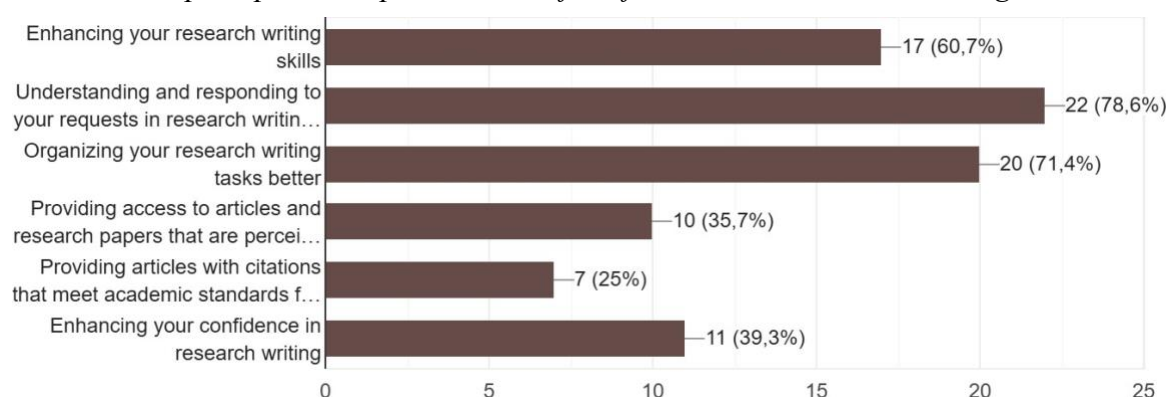


Fig. 1 shows how often master's students use ChatGPT in research writing. As can be seen from the chart, two options, 'Often' and 'Sometimes,' account for the highest percentage of using ChatGPT's frequency, which is 37,9% for each one. The number of students who always use this chatbot was lower, at 20,7 %. In contrast, students who rarely integrate ChatGPT into their research writing tasks accounted for a negligible percentage. To conclude, all master students use ChatGPT for their research writing works and a large number of them use it frequently.

*Figure 2.**The students' opinion on whether ChatGPT has benefits*

The fig. 2 provided shows whether participants think ChatGPT has benefits in research writing. 96,6% of students responded “Yes” while the proportion of “No” accounted for less than 4%. This reveals that most of the users of ChatGPT benefit from its functions.

*Figure 3.**The students' perceptions on potential benefits of ChatGPT in research writing*

The provided Fig 3 illustrates the perceived potential benefits of ChatGPT in research writing. As can be seen from Figure 4.3, approximately 79% of students thought that ChatGPT enables them to understand and respond to research-related prompts in research writing, followed by the benefit of better organizing their research writing tasks, with nearly 71%. Additionally, around 61% of master's students hold the opinion that ChatGPT fosters their research writing skills. Two other options, including providing access for articles and research papers that are relevant to their research topics and enhancing their confidence in research writing were approximately 36% and 39%, respectively. Providing articles with citations that meet students' academic standards for accuracy and relevance, however, had the lowest percentage, merely 25%. Based on the data above, it can be summarized that students gained various benefits from integrating ChatGPT into their research writing.

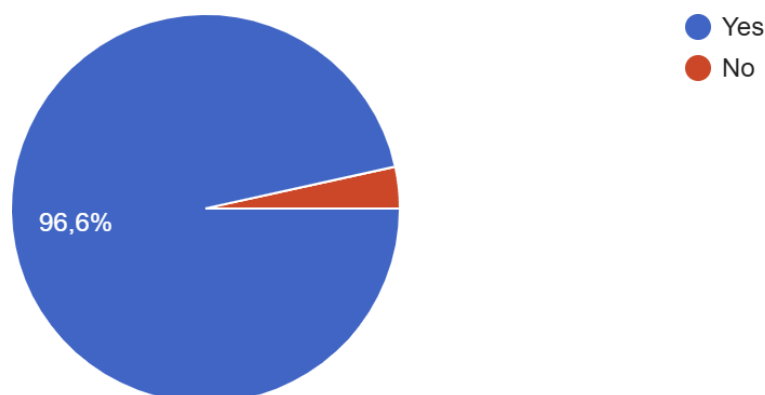
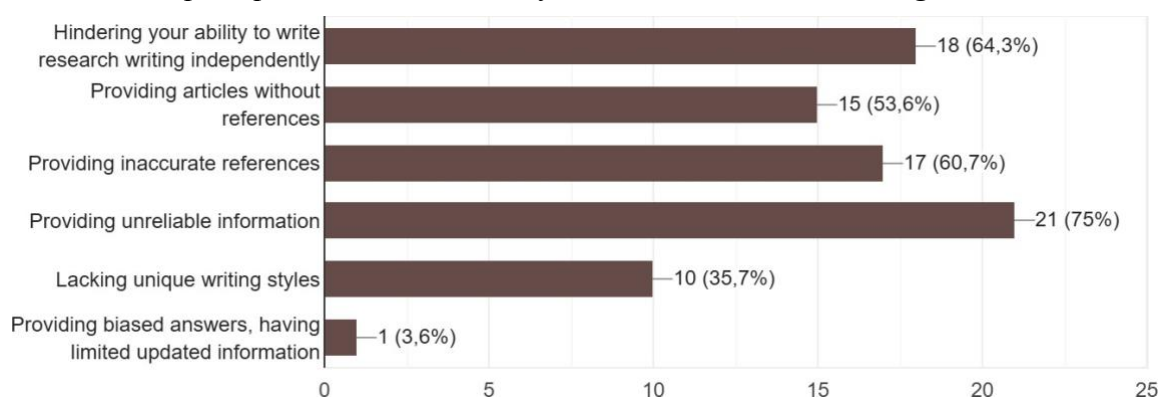
*Figure 4.**The students' opinion on whether ChatGPT has drawbacks*

Fig. 4 gives information about whether master students think that ChatGPT has some drawbacks. The selection “Yes” takes up nearly 97%, which is the major trend, whereas only 4% of participants opted for “No”. This data implied that despite many benefits, there were several drawbacks of ChatGPT in research writing that should be taken into consideration.


*Figure 5.**The students' perceptions on drawbacks of ChatGPT in research writing*

The fig. 5 illustrates the perceived demerits of ChatGPT in research writing. To begin with, 75 % of master's students claimed that the most prevalent problem of ChatGPT was providing unreliable information. Besides, over 64% of them thought that using ChatGPT hindered their ability to write research papers independently. The proportion of students reporting inaccurate references was nearly 61%, followed by 54% who reported that ChatGPT provided articles without references. Around 36% of students cited the lack of unique writing styles as a drawback of ChatGPT. However, the least common concern was biased answers and outdated information, with only 3.6%. In brief, a large number of master students think that unreliable information is the biggest obstacle to ChatGPT, but biased and outdated answers are not the problem.

Theme 2: Effects of ChatGPT on critical thinking in using ChatGPT in learning research writing from the perspective of English-major master's students (Research question 2)

Table 1.

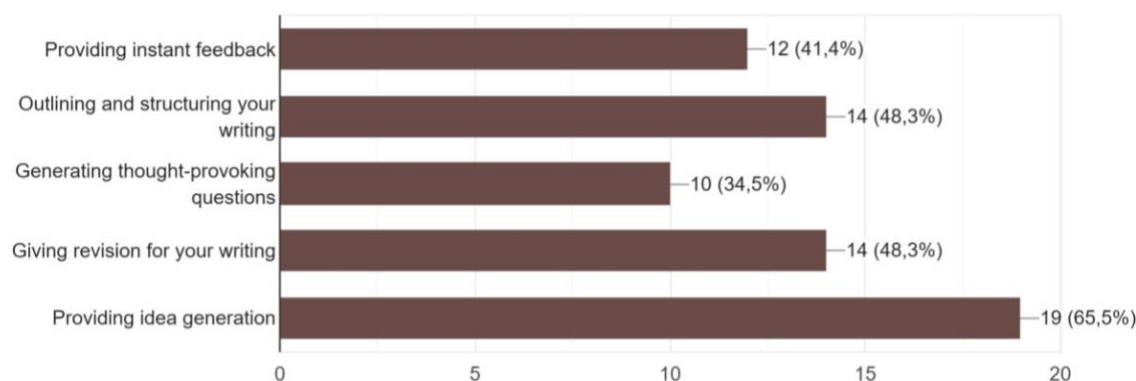
Critical thinking improvement when using ChatGPT

NUM	QUESTION IS USED FOR SURVEY	Rating percentage (%)					Mean
		Strongly disagree				Strongly agree	
	Critical thinking improvement						
6	Do you believe that using ChatGPT has improved your critical thinking skills?	3.4	6.9	51.7	37.9	0.0	3.24

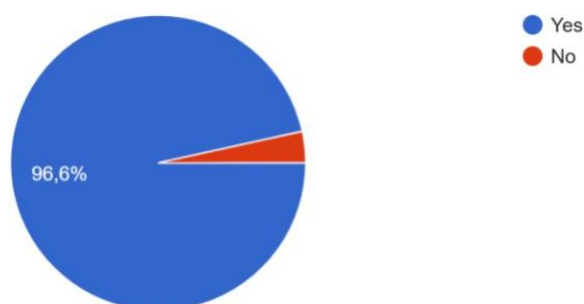
The survey results from English-major master's students at IUH reveal a mixed perspective on the impact of ChatGPT on critical thinking skills. While 51.7% of respondents remained neutral, indicating uncertainty on the tool's effectiveness, 37.9% agreed that using ChatGPT had positively impacted their critical thinking. Only 3.4% of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, and no one strongly agreed, as shown by the 0.0% in that category. The average score of 3.24 indicates that most students have a somewhat positive or neutral view of how ChatGPT impacts their critical thinking skills. All in all, although there are some positive opinions, the predominant neutral stance suggests that learners may not see a strong or consistent link between the use of ChatGPT and improvement in critical thinking, indicating the need for further investigation into what could affect this perception.

Figure 6.

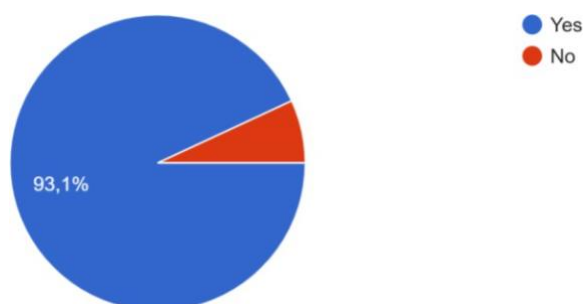
ChatGPT supports critical thinking in research writing



The fig. 6 highlights various ways respondents believe ChatGPT could support critical thinking in research writing. The majority of respondents (65.5%) selected "Generating ideas", indicating ChatGPT was a significant source of inspiration for generating new ideas. "Outline and structuring your writing" and "Providing revisions for writing" were also popular choices, each selected by 48.3% of respondents, which means that this tool can help them to organize thoughts and refine drafts. "Providing instant feedback" was chosen by 41.4% of respondents, while "Generating thought-provoking questions" was the least selected option, with 34.5% of users. The results show that ChatGPT can be a valuable tool for idea generation and structuring while the roles in challenging their thinking with thought-provoking questions are relatively less emphasized.

*Figure 7.**Reliance on ChatGPT could hinder critical thinking skills*


Based on the fig.7, it is evident that most of the respondents (96.6%) believe that relying on ChatGPT could hinder their critical thinking skills, with 28 out of 29 participants choosing "Yes". Meanwhile, only one respondent (3.4%) disagreed with this viewpoint. This strong agreement points to a common belief that using ChatGPT excessively may negatively impact individuals' ability to think critically on their own. The findings suggest that users are generally concerned about the possible drawbacks of over-relying on ChatGPT, especially when it comes to critical thinking ability.

*Figure 8.**ChatGPT's responses led to rethink*

The fig. 8 shows that nearly all of the respondents (93.1%) have been able to change their opinions or beliefs due to one of the responses given by ChatGPT. This high percentage suggests that ChatGPT has an influence on users' thought processes, promoting reflection and possibly broadening perspectives. Meanwhile, only 6.9% of respondents indicated that their attitudes remained unchanged after using ChatGPT. These results suggest that ChatGPT helps learners explore different points of view and deepens their understanding of various topics.

Table 2.

Users' satisfaction level after using ChatGPT

NUM	QUESTION IS USED FOR SURVEY	Rating percentage (%)					Mean
		Very dissatisfy ing				Very satisfying	
Critical thinking skills - After using ChatGPT							
10	How would you rate your overall critical thinking skills after using ChatGPT for writing?	3.4	10.3	41.4	41.4	3.4	3.31

The Table 2 shows a mixed response regarding satisfaction with critical thinking skills after using ChatGPT for research writing. A significant number of respondents took a neutral stance (41.1%) which was equal to the figure for feeling satisfied (41.1%) of the users with their critical thinking skills after ChatGPT usage. Meanwhile, a small minority indicated dissatisfaction, with 10.3% finding the skills "unsatisfactory" and 3.4% selecting "very dissatisfying." However, only 3.4% of respondents rated their skills as "very satisfactory". The mean score of 3.31 suggests that, on the whole, students felt somewhat satisfied with ChatGPT's influence on their critical thinking skills, though the improvement was not overwhelmingly strong for most. These results suggest that while some learners feel positive about their critical thinking after using ChatGPT for research writing, a large portion remains neutral, indicating that the tool's impact on critical thinking may be seen as limited or unclear by many users.

Interview question 1: How effectively do you think ChatGPT promotes critical thinking in your writing?

"ChatGPT can harm my critical thinking" (Student 10, interview extract)

"... helpful in promoting my critical thinking, getting deeper insight" (Student 7, interview extract)

"...offer alternative viewpoints of scenarios" (Student 2, interview extract)

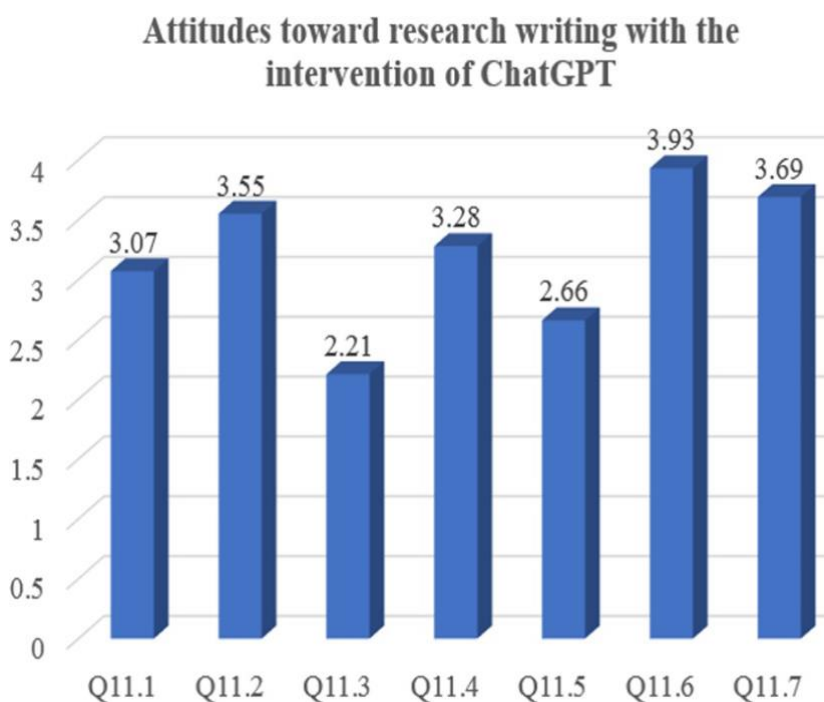
"...depends on the percentage of people who trust ChatGPT" (Student 9, interview extract)

Some participants felt that relying on ChatGPT might hinder their critical thinking. Meanwhile, several respondents said that ChatGPT can support their critical thinking by offering diverse perspectives and providing deeper insights. Additionally, this tool can help users to evaluate different viewpoints and deepen their understanding of complex topics. However, one learner believed that the effectiveness of using ChatGPT depends on the level of trust users place and how it is utilized. This implies that although ChatGPT can be beneficial in making decisions, its effectiveness depends more on its incorporation in the writing stage.

Theme 3: Issues regarding plagiarism in using ChatGPT for academic writing from the perspective of English-major master's students (Research question 3)

Figure 9.



Comparison of mean values of Table 4.3



The fig. 9 show the mean value of the students' attitudes toward research writing with the intervention of ChatGPT. The most noticeable finding is that most master's-level students are highly aware of the risk of unintentional plagiarism the unintentional plagiarism risk by its checking software (Q11.6) with the highest mean value of 3.93 (68.90% agree and strongly agree). This awareness is further demonstrated by the fact that students responded negatively to the statement that ChatGPT products can bypass the plagiarism detection system (Q11.3), with the lowest mean value of 2.21 (over 50% strongly disagree and disagree), and expressed a neutral attitude, showed limited agreement (mean value = 3.28), about the statement that they tried to "circumvent" the checking system by rephrasing the content of ChatGPT (Q11.4). In addition, students' top priority when using ChatGPT is to ensure that academic integrity is preserved in research articles (Q11.7) with the second-highest mean value of 3.69 (over 70% strongly agree and agree). This priority is once again proven in the fact that students do not overestimate ChatGPT's capabilities of ChatGPT if it lacks proper copyright authorization (Q11.5) with the second lowest mean value of 2.66. These above results determined that although the majority (mean value = 3.55) of master's level students used ChatGPT to find supporting information for research purposes (Q11.2), becoming increasingly popular among research colleagues (Q11.1, mean value = 3.07), they had a fairly clear understanding of the principles related to academic integrity and plagiarism of using ChatGPT in writing a research paper.

Table 3.

Percentage and Mean value of attitudes toward research writing with the intervention of ChatGPT

NUM	QUESTIONS ARE USED FOR SURVEY	Rating percentage (%)					Mean
		Strongly disagree				Strongly agree	
11. Attitudes toward research writing with the intervention of ChatGPT		 —————> 					
1	I use ChatGPT in my research because I see my friends doing the same.	13.8	17.2	24.1	37.9	6.9	3.07
2	I mostly use ChatGPT to get facts and supporting information for my research.	3.4	10.3	17.2	65.5	3.4	3.55
3	I usually use ChatGPT since its output cannot be checked by plagiarism detection software.	41.4	17.2	24.1	13.8	3.4	2.21
4	Using ChatGPT doesn't seem wrong to me because I will rephrase what it says.	6.9	6.9	41.4	41.4	3.4	3.28
5	I find ChatGPT fascinating and useful even without copyright authorization.	10.3	27.6	48.3	13.8	0	2.66
6	My concern about unintended plagiarism led me to double-check all ChatGPT content.	0	0	31.0	44.8	24.1	3.93
7	While using ChatGPT, I still preserve academic integrity in my research work.	3.4	3.4	20.7	65.5	6.9	3.69

Interview question 2: How do you avoid plagiarism when incorporating information generated by ChatGPT into your research writing?

When interviewed about ways to prevent plagiarism, most students said they would try to minimize ChatGPT's dependence on their research. For instance, three respondents (Students 1, 2, 3) stated that they would only use the content provided by ChatGPT as a trigger for their brainstorming to “ensure that academic integrity still exists in our writing” (Student 1, interview extract). The other four respondents (Students 6, 7, 8, 9) chose to minimize their reliance by paraphrasing the content provided by ChatGPT, trying to inject their personality into the content, and providing as detailed citations as possible to avoid being flagged for plagiarism:

“ChatGPT provides me with well-structured but somewhat mechanical sentences. So I use it for reference, and I rewrite the idea according to my idea to avoid plagiarism” (Student 6, interview extract);

“I think that after I read the information that ChatGPT gave me, I understood it in my own way, and then I typed what I understood from this information into ChatGPT again. This means that I can avoid plagiarism” (Student 7, interview extract);

“I select the information, paraphrase it to make it unique, and verify it” (Student 8, interview extract);

“I think that I will use my own words or paraphrase the reference. I just use ChatGPT for references, so I also give clear citations to avoid plagiarism” (Student 9, interview extract).

Regarding how to avoid unintentional plagiarism, another respondent (Student 4) also had the idea that he/she would observe ChatGPT's writing style to “consider using a similar structure and start writing my own to ensure that I can learn the grammar from ChatGPT and make sure my own writing is not marked as plagiarism” (Student 4, interview extract). In the same trend of paraphrasing the content, the other two respondents (Students 5, 10) differed in their next approach. Specifically, they use third-party intervention (other AI software) to either “make it more coherently related to my topic” (Student 5, interview excerpt) or “verify clarity before submitting my work” (Student 10, interview excerpt).

In short, although there were clear differences in the students' second solution steps using ChatGPT as a brainstorming tool, personalizing content, demonstrating varied writing approaches, and incorporating another AI as a third-party intervention), the researchers found that most students mastered the important first step in avoiding plagiarism when using ChatGPT in writing research: paraphrasing the content.

Interview question 3: Do you believe that ChatGPT has the potential to become a helpful tool instead of a plagiarism threat? Explain your reasons.

During the interviews, the researchers collected a wide range of responses from the students. First, all four responses (Student 2, 4, 9, 10) acknowledged the potential usefulness of ChatGPT in supporting information searching, synthesis, and instant feedback, a time-consuming and laborious process for individuals who have written or are writing scientific research papers:

“information generated by ChatGPT supports you, and the function that I like in ChatGPT is its ability to provide feedback on grammatical structures and errors, patterns of sentences” (Student 2, interview excerpt);

“I agree that ChatGPT is very useful” (Student 4, interview excerpt);

“I think it will be a helpful tool for research writing” (Student 9, interview excerpt);

“If I have a topic and I don't know what to write, and I don't have any ideas, I can use ChatGPT to suggest some ideas. And based on that idea, I will find the relevant references. It can be helpful in that way” (Student 10, interview excerpt)

However, another response (Student 7) stated that constantly exploiting ChatGPT information without proper verification, modification, or citation will make it more difficult than ever to limit plagiarism risks: “I don't think it is a helpful tool because it integrates information from various sources from many sources, from the web sources. So I think that this is a threat for people who write academic writing” (Student 7, interview excerpt). Noticeably, the majority of the remaining responses (Students 1, 3, 5, 6, 8) argued that “helpful tool” and “plagiarism threat” are both aspects of the dual nature of ChatGPT. One of them will be expressed more in the writing's content depending on the writer's usage:

“I think ChatGPT is useful, because the accusations of “plagiarism threat” about ChatGPT are ultimately just the incorrect usage of the majority of users, if we can comply with some rules related to the copyright category of the information compiled by ChatGPT, which has no official announcement at this time, then there is no reason for us to deny the conveniences it brings” (Student 1, interview excerpt);

“I think it has the potential for both of these statements to come true” (Student 3, interview excerpt);

“ChatGPT can become a helpful tool or a plagiarism threat. It depends on the way we use it...So I think it's a helpful tool, but the way you use it can turn it into either a threat or a useful aid.” (Student 5, interview excerpt)

“I mentioned before, we need to use it intelligently to support our writing instead of relying too much on the Information provided” (Student 6, interview excerpt)

“The plagiarism when using Chat GPT depends on the writer” (Student 8, interview excerpt).

Therefore, this group of respondents emphasized that instead of trying to choose one aspect and ignore the other, they should acknowledge the existence of both to establish responsible and ethical principles of using ChatGPT, based on the mindset of “set clear boundaries of personal identity and exploit the usefulness that this software brings” (Student 3, interview excerpt).

From the above results, the authors discovered some key findings on the three themes during the analysis process. First, the study found that master's students were selectively aware of the specific functions and limitations of ChatGPT during each stage of the research writing process. To explain this, the authors looked at the contrasting results of the two potential benefits of ChatGPT in Figure 4.3, which were “understanding and responding well to research prompts” (79%) and “providing relevant articles with citations” (25%). This difference in the number of levels of agreement suggested that although the majority of students found ChatGPT useful in the early stages of the writing process, such as prompt understanding and information seeking, it was impossible to completely utilize the provided information for later important stages, such as drafting arguments without checking. This certainty was again explained by the most commonly agreed-upon drawback in Figure 4.5, which was “providing unreliable information” (75%). These findings implied that teachers should not have ignored early signs of students' limited ChatGPT recognition skills but promoted their development through “prompt-verify-apply” activities. As the name suggested, ChatGPT was allowed to be used in the early stages to find information. Then, students were required to assess the academic validity of that information to form independent ideas, reinforcing the importance of human judgment in AI-assisted writing.

Second, the findings suggested that the majority of students were not fully convinced of the supposed ‘positive’ effects of ChatGPT on their critical thinking development. This was demonstrated by the data in Table 4.1, which showed that while 37.9% of students agreed that ChatGPT positively impacted their critical thinking, a larger proportion (51.7%) remained neutral, and it was worth noting that no one strongly agreed. The researchers thus found that this ambiguity in students’ positions might have come from a conflict between two streams of opinion. Specifically, 96.6% (Figure 4.7) of students said ChatGPT hindered critical thinking with concerns about overreliance, but 91.3% (Figure 4.8) of students said it helped them rethink their ideas, which could have been seen as a potential benefit of ChatGPT. However, the researchers wondered whether students actually “rethought” or, in some cases, quickly accepted ChatGPT’s ‘gift’ without actively questioning it? If the answer was in favor of the second option, then the student's critical thinking process missed out on the mental struggles necessary to strengthen their deep analytical and reasoning abilities. It was this lack that turned the entire thinking process into a substitute for AI thinking rather than a development and deepening of students’ ideas. To counter this, teachers should have implemented critical analysis activities to enhance students’ thinking processes in response to ChatGPT’s alternative perspectives on

their assumptions, maintaining their role as idea creators and knowledge builders rather than passive information consumers.

The researchers found that this third key finding was formed from two core observations. The first core observation was the strong commitment from the majority of master's students to maintain academic ethics and fair collaboration when using AI assistance, as evidenced by their high awareness of unintentional plagiarism risk when using ChatGPT without explicit checking (68, 90% agreed and strongly agreed, Table 4.3, Q11.6). It also demonstrated that the top priority in their research papers was academic integrity (over 70% agreed and strongly agreed, Table 4.3, Q11.7), strongly refuting the notion that most of them believed naively that ChatGPT could magically fool plagiarism detection systems (only 3.4% strongly agreed, mean value 2.21, Table 4.3, Q11.3) with information that lacked proper citations but 'looked academic' (no one strongly agreed, mean value 2.66, Table 4.3, Q11.5). Another notable observation was the connection between the students' neutral responses about ChatGPT's roles in research writing and the variety of self-devised methods they used to prevent plagiarism. Specifically, the students' ambivalence was a testament to their mature recognition of ChatGPT's dual nature based on how it was used, either as a dedicated research assistant or as a full-time ghostwriter. Furthermore, their uncertainty was also due to the lack of formal guidance and citation standards for AI-assisted writing. This left them with no choice but to build ethical boundaries themselves through personal precautions such as using ChatGPT only for brainstorming, rewriting ChatGPT-provided content in their own words, or interpreting it with the assistance of other AI tools. Since these preventions could not completely avoid plagiarism, teachers urgently needed to provide clear and specific guidance on the ethical use of ChatGPT through lectures and workshops on academic integrity in the age of AI.

Discussion

Benefits and drawbacks of ChatGPT on writing

The current results showed that ChatGPT is considered to bring a wide range of benefits to students, which aligns with the findings of Tseng and Lin (2024), Mahapatra (2024), Mubaroq et al. (2024) and Wahyuddin et al. (2023). Specifically, previous studies such as Mubaroq et al. (2024) and Wahyuddin et al. (2023) confirmed that chatbot has the ability to provide them ideas and help them organize their writing. However, there are differences between our findings and those of others, which distinguish the current study. First of all, our research explored several perceived benefits of ChatGPT in the context of research writing, including providing relevant articles and research papers with citations. Moreover, students thought that integrating ChatGPT allowed them to foster their confidence and writing skills.

However, despite the aforementioned benefits, our findings also indicated that there are some challenges associated with using ChatGPT in research writing. Similar to Mahapatra's (2024), Mubaroq et al.'s (2024) and Teng's (2023) results, our study confirmed that ChatGPT may provide unreliable information and citations, as well as make students become dependent on it. Additionally, our finding is supported by other disadvantages of ChatGPT in relevant research writing. First, many students claimed that providing and researching papers without references, leading to confusion and the risk of plagiarism. Besides, some of them thought that ChatGPT reduces the uniqueness in their writing styles. Finally, a small number of students confirmed that one of ChatGPT's drawbacks is the biased information it provides.

Effects of ChatGPT on Critical Thinking in Research Writing

The findings indicate that the students regard ChatGPT more positively as a tool aimed at idea generation and organizing research writing, however, its role in fostering deeper critical thinking remains ambiguous. This observation is consistent with previous studies presented in chapter two, e.g. Xue (2024) and Tran and Tran (2023) who reported that ChatGPT enhances some elements of critical thinking, like organizational structure and evaluative comments but does not extend automatic analysis of content as high as it could be if utilized optimally. Similarly, Shanto et al. (2024) argued that the tool can enhance creativity and problem-solving when paired with appropriate instructional guidance, a factor not emphasized in the survey results.

While ChatGPT offers valuable support for organizing writing and generating ideas, its impact on fostering deep critical thinking remains limited. Students may not naturally engage in complex analytical tasks such as evaluation, synthesis, or reflection without deliberate instructional scaffolding. The concern about over-reliance on ChatGPT, also reflected in the current findings, reinforces Barrot's (2023) assertion that excessive dependence on AI tools may restrict students' independent reasoning and critical engagement. This highlights the need for balanced use, as previously recommended by Suriano et al. (2024), who emphasized teachers' roles in providing strategies to integrate ChatGPT effectively without diminishing students' cognitive autonomy.

In summary, the study shows that ChatGPT can be valuable for supporting certain cognitive tasks but should be used with caution to ensure it enhances rather than replaces critical thinking.

Issues regarding plagiarism in using ChatGPT for academic writing

From the survey's findings and the interview responses, the researchers found that the majority of students were aware of the plagiarism risks associated with organizing research writing using ChatGPT. First, it shows their growth in ethical thinking and their not seeing AI as a shortcut to cheating. Academically, this result strongly supported the views of Yan (2023) and Yazid and Dzulfikri (2024), who emphasized students' awareness of accidental plagiarism and their efforts to maintain academic integrity in their writing, contradicting Khalaf's (2024) insight into students' increasing tendency to plagiarize. Second, most students expressed skepticism about ChatGPT's ability to bypass plagiarism-detection systems and actively offered suggestions for proper citations, demonstrating their realistic understanding of its limitations. They also expressed a tendency to rewrite ChatGPT-provided content, supporting the view of Karkoulian et al. (2024) on students' attempts to collaborate with other AI software in paraphrasing content to limit plagiarism. Third, the use of ChatGPT in the learning context was a growing phenomenon that students perceived as difficult to avoid. Therefore, establishing guidelines for using ChatGPT as a trigger for the brainstorming process and maintaining the writer's individuality in the article supported the perspective of Bringula (2023), who suggested that ChatGPT should only be used for its original function: to support students in finding information related to the topic. Regarding the significance of the study, the researchers concluded that students' attitudes towards ChatGPT when it came to plagiarism threat showed that while ChatGPT was useful, adherence to copyright rules is essential. For that reason, students actively devised specific plagiarism prevention strategies, such as personalizing the content written by ChatGPT or observing how the software interpreted the problem to learn grammar and apply similar sentence structures to present their ideas. However, all their prevention methods often rely on personal experience rather than formal guidance. Therefore, universities should implement AI literacy programs to equip them with specific skills such as learning through AI models without mimicking, ethical decision-making in AI use, and

responsible attribution of AI assistance to effectively integrate AI tools like ChatGPT into their writing while maintaining academic integrity.

Conclusion

Research shows that master's students have positive but careful views on ChatGPT when writing research papers, highlighting its benefits and challenges in a balanced way. Many acknowledged its usefulness in understanding requirements, organizing ideas, and improving writing skills in general. However, they were also concerned about some issues such as misinformation, inaccurate references, and decreased independence. These concerns extended to critical thinking, as overreliance on ChatGPT sometimes led them to rethink their ideas, affecting their unique critical thinking ability. As a result, most students double-check ChatGPT-generated content to minimize dependence on this chatbot as well as maintaining academic integrity.

Limitations

Although the study provided a good understanding of the application of ChatGPT in research writing among master's degree students, there are also some limitations that should be pointed out. First, there was a relatively small to medium sample size due to the participants being only English-major master's students studying in one context. Furthermore, the study was mainly concerned about the benefits, the challenges and the role of critical thinking in the usage of ChatGPT but did not consider the effect it has on students' academic performance or their writing quality more deeply in the long run.

Recommendations

For educators

This study has indeed provided educators with nuanced insights into students' perceptions of various themes related to the use of ChatGPT in today's academic context, including selective utilization (Theme 1), conscious ambivalence (Theme 2), and ethical awareness (Theme 3). This serves as a call to action for them to develop student training courses that not only focus on basic ChatGPT instruction but also expand to broader perspectives, such as identifying ChatGPT's appropriate role in the thinking process, aligning its use to avoid accidentally 'shorten' student's efforts, and guiding learners to set their limits on the extent of ChatGPT's usage in different academic situations. By focusing on these angles, teachers can better support their students in developing more suitable academic competencies in the AI era.

For further studies

In light of the aforementioned limitations, future researchers are expected to conduct the same study on a larger scale in different academic contexts. Researchers should examine undergraduates' perspectives, including those of both English-major and non-major students, on using ChatGPT. Besides, they should explore the effects of ChatGPT on students' quality of writing by using a longitudinal design. This helps students and teachers believe in the positive impacts that ChatGPT brings by concrete statistics, encouraging them to actively integrate this chatbot in writing. Finally, the teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding plagiarism issues can be examined in further studies.

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Biodata

Truong Thi An An is a postgraduate student at the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City. She is passionate about integrating AI tools into English teaching to enhance students' language proficiency both inside and outside the classroom, aiming to help them improve their skills more effectively through innovative methods.

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Nguyen Vo Huong Quynh is studying for a Master's degree at the Faculty of Foreign Languages of the Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City. She is keen on exploring methods that allow young learners to enhance their English competency easily and effectively in the context of technological advancements. Her research focus is to integrate AI tools into teaching English, making significant contributions to the development of education.

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