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Empowering Saudi EFL Learners Using ChatGPT: An Analysis of Challenges and Educational Opportunities

Mohammad Jamshed ^{1*}, Nasser Alqahtani ², Fatimah Albedah ³, Sameena Banu ⁴

¹ English Department, College of Science & Humanities, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Al-Kharj 16278, Saudi Arabia

² English Department, College of Science and Humanities, Shaqra University, Ad-Dawadimi 11911, Saudi Arabia

³ English Language and Translation Department, College of Science & Theoretical Studies, Saudi Electronic University, Riyadh 11673, Saudi Arabia

⁴ English Department, College of Science & Humanities (Female) Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Al-Kharj 11942, Saudi Arabia

ABSTRACT

The study assessed Saudi students' opinions, obstacles and difficulties, and the educational prospects and opportunities of ChatGPT usage in EFL classrooms. The simple random selection method was utilised to choose 235 respondents from the various stages of undergraduate programs at different colleges of two Saudi universities. A primarily self-designed questionnaire with refined items from earlier studies was sent to other groups for responses. Descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze the data quantitatively. The findings revealed that Saudi students had great excitement about ChatGPT as an important tool for language acquisition and instruction. They viewed it positively as it helped them overcome certain issues they experienced in a conventional mode of instruction. The study also found that ChatGPT usage posed certain obstacles and challenges such as inhibiting innovative and critical thinking, distorting content and quality, failing to replace EFL teachers, and failing to fully understand the social connotations embedded in idioms and phrases. It was revealed that the remarkable technological and digital infrastructure of Saudi Arabia offers substantial

*CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Mohammad Jamshed, English Department, College of Science & Humanities, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Al-Kharj 16278, Saudi Arabia; Email: m.majeed@psau.edu.sa

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pedagogical and educational implications for the ChatGPT integration in Saudi EFL classes. The study suggests the incorporation of more regions and different from different disciplines to add to the study's reliability and validity.

Keywords: Certain Obstacles and Challenges; Inhibiting Innovative and Critical Thinking; Remarkable Technological and Digital Infrastructure; Substantial Pedagogical Consequences

1. Introduction

In today's revolutionized world, technology is defining and dominating almost all aspects of human existence including education. The outbreak of the pandemic introduced us to hitherto unexplored and undiscovered avenues of technology. As a result, technology has brought about unexpected changes in our daily lives. The extraordinary and ongoing improvements in technology have increased the viability, convenience of use, and naturalness of its use while generating fresh opportunities for its use in a variety of situations. The years following the pandemic saw an unprecedented interest in artificial intelligence in education (AIED) due to its potential to transform tasks such as administration, methods of instruction, and student achievement in educational institutions^[1,2]. The exceptional innovations in technology expanded their potential to be utilized across multiple sectors and made their use easier, natural, and uncomplicated. These developments and consistent advancements led to the creation of Chatbots which are based on large language models (LLM) and represent the most significant breakthrough in computerized intelligence-driven interaction between humans and computers for knowledge^[3]. OpenAI, an important AI research institute, presented the Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer (ChatGPT) chatbot on November 30, 2022. ChatGPT, a chatbot, may generate complex speech and convince people. In language classrooms, it might be useful in multiple ways such as instruction and learning, essay writing, evaluations of literature, research conception, computer code generation, and documenting the editing process^[4,5]. It uses a range of advanced machine learning techniques, with a concentration on recurrent neural networks (RNNs) to produce human-like language.

In Saudi Arabia, technology easily gets incorporated into educational institutions due to the advanced digital infrastructure and tech-savvy younger generation which prefers technology-powered instruction to conventional modes of learning and teaching. As a result, we see an increased incorporation of AI power in classrooms for both language acquisition and instruction. Multiple studies have looked at ChatGPT incorporation and usage in the Saudi Arabian higher education system. For example, Alotaibi and Alshehri^[6] examined both the advantages and disadvantages of AI-based assessments in Saudi Arabian higher education. The study identified 55 articles suggesting Saudi higher education was incorporating AI, which could enhance education and speed up 2030 objectives. The findings revealed that AI could solve education's most significant challenges, upgrade education, and expedite Saudi Vision 2030. The study highlighted the significance of instructors understanding technology for implementing AI-based learning in Saudi Arabia's higher education sector. Mihmas^[7] examined the perspectives of 20 educational technology professionals regarding ChatGPT's incorporation into online colleges and universities. The respondents were chosen using theoretical sampling and in-depth interviews documented their opinions. Theme evaluation revealed online higher education's AI-integrated approaches' benefits as well as drawbacks.

1.1. Research Problem Statement

The existing studies often emphasize the perspectives of academic instructors and scholars concerning ChatGPT and often overlook the opinions of EFL learners who constitute important stakeholders^[8]. In addition, insufficient details and inadequate studies are available regarding students' perspectives, acceptance, and utilization of ChatGPT suggesting an important research gap. Therefore,

this study aims to figure out Saudi EFL students' perspectives, challenges and obstacles, and educational prospects and opportunities of ChatGPT in the Saudi education system.

1.2. Research Purpose Statement

ChatGPT's technological innovation skills are well-documented, however, its incorporation in Saudi Arabian contexts from learners' perspectives is not adequately addressed and explored. This is worrisome since ChatGPT's effective utilization and broad acceptance in EFL classrooms require a proper understanding of both perspectives and the way to react and respond to ChatGPT usage for language instruction. Therefore, this study looks at the incorporation of ChatGPT, the problems and challenges it poses, and the pedagogical and educational opportunities from purely learners' perspectives.

2. Literature Review

ChatGPT is being studied for teaching English as a second /foreign language. Multiple studies have examined the significance of ChatGPT for teaching English as a second or foreign language. For example, Al-Raimi et al. ^[9] explored Omani EFL students' opinions and actions about adopting AI innovations to improve their writing skills. The questionnaire was answered by 61 students. The data was analyzed statistically using SPSS (0.26). The study findings revealed that Omani students held favorable attitude toward employing AI-powered tools. The study found that Omani learners of English often translated phrases, sentences, and words and used it also for checking spelling, and grammar. The study offers pedagogical implications as both the learners and instructors can use AI-powered tools. The small sample size and singular collection method restrict the practical significance of the findings. Abdalkader ^[10] analyzed whether particular proposed AI activities could assist prep learners at Outstanding Public Language School to improve their EFL writing skills. Sumakul et al. ^[11] explored teachers' perceptions of incorporating AI in their classrooms EFL classrooms. Four Indonesian EFL instructors who were already incorporating AI into their lessons were interviewed. It was found

that all teachers had favorable perspectives on using AI in their courses. The study offers immense pedagogical opportunities for students to use AI-powered tools to develop their language skills. The study suggests varied data and different situations for future research. Pokrivcakova ^[12] examined Slovakian pre-service EFL instructors' views on AI, its implementation in EFL learning and instruction, and educational instruction. Cross-sectional KAP questionnaire research was carried out in November–December 2022. A pre-tested online questionnaire comprising 19 closed-ended (5-point Likert scale) and one open-ended item was answered by 137 pre-service English language instructors. It was found that the students expressed excitement for utilizing AI in EFL and were excited to learn how it impacted EFL classrooms. The findings offer many implications as can help the language instructors improve future teacher training in AI-based tools. Future studies should address the issue of AI's ethical implications. Zulkarnain and Yunus ^[13] examined how AI used in ESL elementary education affected teachers as educational stakeholders. Using the PRISMA review method and data from Google Scholar and ERIC, 12 articles on AI technology in ESL instruction and education in elementary schools were chosen from 672 sources from 2019 to 2022. It was found that instructors saw AI technology utilization positively because of its variable characteristics and efficiency, despite limitations and multiple obstacles. Mohamed ^[14] explored how 10 Northern Border University EFL faculty members perceived ChatGPT's efficacy in teaching English. The study collected data through in-depth faculty interviews. The result revealed that faculty members were divided in their opinions regarding ChatGPT usage in EFL classrooms. While some appreciated ChatGPT's quick and correct replies to a variety of inquiries, others worried that it may impede students' cognitive and research skills and perpetuate misinformation and prejudices. The study underscores ChatGPT's capability to enhance EFL students' English.

Sharifuddin and Hashim ^[15] examined contemporary AI studies on ESL utilization in schools, challenges, and ramifications globally. ERIC, WOS, and Scopus were utilized for literature reviews. Twenty-five papers were chosen for sampling after employing selection and exclusion

criteria. The study found certain advantages and disadvantages of utilizing AI in ESL instruction besides underlying that AI could enhance ESL instruction in multiple ways. The study has many pedagogical implications as it gives useful AI in ESL program information. It suggests more real-world examinations to determine AI's impact over time. Bok and Cho ^[16] explored Korean undergraduates' views on and experiences with using ChatGPT for paragraph revision in a general English academic writing course. A questionnaire regarding ChatGPT's positive and negative aspects for writing revision and the roles of instructors was answered by 71 students. Data were examined using thematic analysis and descriptive statistical methods. It was found that ChatGPT was popular among students with certain genuine concerns such as insufficient error descriptions, confusing feedback, mismatched responses, diminished authorship, and confusion about learning effectiveness. The study holds implications as it found excitement among students and thus can help them improve their language skills. As the study is mainly concerned with one group of audience, future studies should examine the longitudinal technique to overcome these limitations. Harunasari ^[17] evaluated ChatGPT adoption within undergraduate EFL writing classrooms. For this purpose, a one-time case study was undertaken on fourth-semester English learners in a Creative and Media Writing course at the Jakarta Institute of Foreign Languages. Data were collected using questionnaires and exams. The report recommended explicit usage rules and recording student questions and concerns. It also provides insight into the correct application of ChatGPT and its possible effects on students' writing skills. Cotton et al. ^[18] analyzed ChatGPT's positive and negative aspects in higher education. The study highlights the difficulty of detecting and eliminating academic dishonesty and suggests important ways for institutions to responsibly employ these tools. The study found that AI had advantages and disadvantages. The study suggests ways for educational institutions and colleges to address these challenges by using these tools ethically. Bekou ^[19] studied ChatGPT's benefits as well as drawbacks in assisting Moroccan students learn English. The study utilized a mix of methods, surveying 62 EFL teachers and interviewing

12. It was found that ChatGPT had advantages as well as disadvantages. Advantages include personalized learning, prompt feedback, professional growth, and linguistic resources. Challenges include accuracy, cultural relevance, and technology use. The study has immense educational implications as it promotes informed choices and the use of technology in language acquisition.

Almehmadi ^[20] assessed the application of AI in English instruction, its impacts on basic skills, and its pedagogical implications. The most reliable databases, such as ProQuest, Science Direct, JSTOR, ERIC, and Scopus, identified 284 works published between 2019 and 2023. Thirteen papers satisfied the specified criteria for both inclusion and exclusion and were selected for the final assessment. The study found that writing backing technologies, automated writing assessment and Chatbots could assist EFL learners in listening, speaking, and writing. The study provides useful insights and exciting possibilities for using AI in EFL teaching. Rusmiyanto et al. ^[21] examined how AI helped English language learners improve communication. It analyzed significant literature on AI-based technology in English language acquisition, analyzing AI and its educational applications, and investigating how AI could enhance English language students' listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. It was revealed that AI-enhanced English language learners' communication skills by offering personalised and engaging learning experiences. This study holds notable pedagogical implications as educators and policymakers utilize artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance English language learners' communication. It suggests further research to assess AI's impact over time and integrate it into language learning contexts. Fathi et al. ^[22] evaluated how an artificial intelligence platform affected EFL learners' fluency, consistency, words, syntactic range and accuracy, pronunciation of words, and communication readiness. A total of 33 EFL students received random access to AI, while 32 were placed in in-person groups. While the in-person group used interaction among peers, the AI group used the Andy English Chatbot for participatory speaking. Following the quantitative IELTS speaking skill test and WTC (willingness to communicate) scale data, semi-structured interviews provided qualitative data. Results revealed that AI-assisted interactive speech

activities improved WTC and speaking of EFL students. Additionally, the students enjoyed receiving speaking coaching via AI. The study has educational implications Language instructors might benefit from the technology-mediated language teaching study. The study assessed the writing fluency of 33 students with a checklist, rating rubric, and pre/post exam. Pre- and post-test scores were assessed using T-test and effect size. Learners' writing fluency was analyzed utilizing qualitative analysis. The study revealed that artificial intelligence apps could assist final preparation learners enhance their writing. The study has significant implications as AI instruction engages learners in a stimulating, active classroom, stressing the importance of learning English daily. Future studies might focus on the effective integration of writing fluency with conversation activity. Sharadgah and Sa'di ^[23] examined and evaluated relevant previous studies to offer a thorough current situation overview of artificial intelligence in EFL/ESL training. Data was gathered using a questionnaire and analyzed using qualitative analysis. The results revealed that AI improved English language teaching and learning and that learners and educators shared a moral obligation for AI education. The study suggests studies on the appropriate integration of AI into education. Teng ^[24] examined participants' perspectives and experiences along with the prospective impacts of ChatGPT on writing. After a semester-long composition course, quantitative questionnaire data and qualitative interviews were combined using mixed methods. It was found that AI writing support enhanced collaboration, involvement, inspiration, and self-efficacy. While many participants expressed concern about ChatGPT, qualitative assessments partially corroborated quantitative findings. The study implied that ChatGPT helped students and teachers collaborate responsibly and positively, developing students' writing,

Research Questions

(1) What are Saudi EFL learners' opinions regarding ChatGPT in EFL classes?

(2) What challenges do learners encounter while utilizing ChatGPT in EFL classrooms?

(3) What educational opportunities can ChatGPT integration offer?

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The study utilised a quantitative descriptive method as it contains numerical and statistical data. For data analysis, it is best to use a quantitative method that includes both statistical and numerical parts ^[25].

3.2. Description of Participants

The study comprises undergraduate learners from two Saudi universities. They are at different stages of their undergraduate program. They have been studying English as a mandatory course in their schooling. The participants of the study are native Arabic speakers studying English as a foreign language. A simple random selection procedure was utilised to select 235 students for the study. Among the total respondents, 204 are male and 31 are female. **Table 1** below shows the demographic details of the study participants.

Table 1. Demographic Description.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	204	86.8%
Female	31	13.2%
Level/Year of Study		
Levels 6 to 8	16	6.8%
Levels 4 to 5	36	15.3%
Levels 1 to 3	109	46.4%
Preparatory year	71	30.2%
Parents' profession		
Govt employment	164	69.8%
Private employment	28	11.9%
Business/Self-employment	17	7.2%
No Employment	26	11.1%

3.3. Data Collection Tools

Earlier studies were extensively explored before the construction of the questionnaire. As a result, a question-

naire was developed. While certain elements/items were developed independently, others were taken from earlier studies ^[26,27]. The first part of the questionnaire, which comprises six questions, examines the respondents' demographic profile. The first nine questions in the second portion of the questionnaire deal with Saudi EFL learners' opinions on ChatGPT incorporation in EFL courses. The next five items analyze challenges and difficulties, whereas the last 5 address the educational potential of ChatGPT in Saudi language classes. The respondents were requested to rate their opinions on a Likert scale with five points (5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree).

3.4. Validity

Given the study's participants' lack of proficiency in English, questionnaire items were made available in English as well as Arabic. Two experts who are highly skilled in Arabic as well as English verified the translation. Confirming the questionnaire and all of its elements were carried out using a pilot study. In the final stage, the questionnaire incorporated suggestions from the experts.

3.5. Data Collection Method

A questionnaire was employed to collect data from the study participants. Both the learners and the course instructors were given a link to the questionnaire. To assist the respondents express their opinions more effectively, the Arabic translation was provided to them alongside the English version. They were given directions to carefully read through each section's instructions. The respondents felt at ease speaking about their choices as they received assurances that their responses would be a secret and used solely for education and research purposes.

3.6. Data Interpretation and Analysis Method

We imported the data from a Google Form into an Excel file once we received adequate responses. The data was put into SPSS using the numerical codes given to the responses (5= strongly agree, 4= agree, 3= neutral, 2= disagree, and 1= strongly disagree). The information

collected was methodically arranged and examined using quantitative methods as the questionnaire included only closed-ended questions. Statistical study was done using the most recent SPSS version. The data's means, frequency, and standard deviation were ascertained by the use of descriptive statistics.

Table 2 illustrates the criteria employed to comprehend and assess the extent of perspectives among EFL learners. It comprises three standards or scales. Values from 1.00 to 1.50 are considered as low, 1.51 to 3.00 as moderate, and 3.1 to 4.50 as high.

Table 2. The standard or criteria employed to evaluate the degree or level of perspective.

Mean Square	Level
3.1 – 4.50	High
1.51 – 3.00	Moderate
1.00 – 1.50	Low

4. Result & Findings

The results of **Table 3** revealed that Saudi students had favorable opinions regarding ChatGPT integration in EFL classes. It was additionally found that the integration of ChatGPT posed quite a few problems and difficulties such as the inability to perceive the social context of idioms, human emotions, pronunciation, and listening, as well as hurdles to critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Stifling innovation and critical thinking, distorting substance and quality, failing to substitute EFL teachers, and not understanding idiom and phrase social contexts are all examples of these problems. The results additionally revealed that Saudi Arabia's advanced technical and digital infrastructure offered excellent pedagogical implications for the incorporation of ChatGPT into Saudi English classes. This was largely because the youthful generation in Saudi Arabia has considerable expertise in technology. A powered classroom could therefore help students in addressing their particular needs, helping them in overcoming their problems and obstacles enabling them to become self-sufficient learners, and supporting them to accomplish their learning goals in a way that is more effective and productive. Appendix A contains all the statement.

Table 3. Saudi learners' opinions, challenges, and pedagogical implications of ChatGPT usage in EFL classrooms.

Questions/Items	Overall Means
1. Saudi EFL learners' opinions about ChatGPT usage in EFL classrooms	3.88
2. Challenges and issues of ChatGPT integration in EFL classrooms	3.47
3. The educational implications of ChatGPT usage in EFL classrooms	3.8

The 9 items displayed in **Table 4** represent the results for the three aspects of attitude (affective, cognitive, and behavioural) respectively. The individual mean score for each aspect of the attitude is 3.92, 3.95, and 3.76 respectively. The overall mean score for all the aspects of attitude is 3.88 which is accepted high as per the established criteria. This implies that learners consider ChatGPT to be a crucial part of language learning and instruction. The responses to item no 7 revealed that 74.9% of the respondents said that they enjoyed improving their English proficiency with ChatGPT. While 19.6 were undecided, 5.6% said that they did not enjoy using ChatGPT for learning English. In item no. 8, 77% of the respondents said that they got excited by ChatGPT's usefulness as an instructional tool. 18.7% stayed neutral, and 4.2 opposed the statement. The mean of all three items (7-9) representing the affective aspect of the attitude is 3.92 which is thought of as high. Regarding item no. 9, 49.8% of the respondents said that they felt anxious when they could not make use of ChatGPT tools. 34.5% did not respond, while 15.7% disapproved. The responses to item no. 10 revealed that 62.6% of the respondents said that ChatGPT was an invaluable instrument for efficient learning and teaching.

27.2% stayed neutral, and 10.3% disapproved of the statement. Concerning item no 11, 71.9% of the participants said that ChatGPT was a highly effective tool for improving writing proficiency. 19.6% maintained neutrality, and 8.5% rejected the assertion. The analysis of responses to item no. 12 revealed that an overwhelming majority of 77.5% stated that ChatGPT strengthened their learning experience. While 17.9% chose neutrality, and 4.7% differed. The mean of all three items (10-12) representing the cognitive aspect of the attitude is 3.95 which is considered high. About item no 13, 66.4% of the respondents stated that they would employ ChatGPT for exercising, activity, and examination preparation. 26% were undecided and 7.6% denied that they would employ ChatGPT for academic and exam-related activities. In the next item no. 14, comparatively a lower percentage 45.1% of the respondents said that they would utilize ChatGPT as a substitute teacher. 35.3% stayed neutral, and 19.6% opposed the statement. This shows that students did not find ChatGPT as a substitute for human teachers despite its immense capabilities of addressing students' specific needs and requirements. The responses to the last item 15 of this category revealed that 68.5% of the study respondents said that they would keep using ChatGPT to help them reach their educational and career goals. 23% stayed neutral and 8.6% opposed the opinion. The mean of all three items (13-15) representing behavioural aspect of the attitude is 3.76 which is considered high. The highly positive responses of the learners imply that they hold a positive perspective on ChatGPT's efficiency as an important tool of language instruction in Saudi EFL classrooms. This analysis addressed the first question of the study.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics on undergraduate responses to ChatGPT usage in EFL classroom.

Questions	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Level
7	103(43.8%)	73(31.1%)	46(19.6%)	7(3%)	6(2.6%)	4.1	High
8	101(43%)	80(34%)	44(18.7%)	5(2.1%)	5(2.1%)	4.13	High
9	55(23.4%)	62(26.4%)	81(34.5%)	29(12.3%)	8(3.4%)	3.54	High
10	86(36.6%)	61(26%)	64(27.2%)	14(6%)	10(4.3%)	3.84	High
11	83(35.3%)	86(36.6%)	46(19.6%)	15(6.4%)	5(2.1%)	3.96	High
12	86(36.6%)	96(40.9%)	42(17.9%)	7(3%)	4(1.7%)	4.07	High
13	81(34.5%)	75(31.9%)	61(26%)	13(5.5%)	5(2.1%)	3.91	High
14	59(25.1%)	47(20%)	83(35.3%)	31(13.2%)	15(6.4%)	3.44	Moderate
15	84(35.7%)	77(32.8%)	54(23%)	14(6%)	6(2.6%)	3.93	High

Table 5 represents results for the issues and difficulty of ChatGPT usage in EFL classrooms. The average score for all the items in this category is 3.47 which indicates that a large number of students view certain challenges and difficulty ChatGPT utilization in EFL classrooms. However, students' responses to the item under this category present a bit varied picture. While the first and last items of this category are highly ranked, the middle three items are moderately ranked. The responses to item no 16 revealed that 63.8% of the respondents stated that ChatGPT helped language learners, but it could not serve as a substitute for ELT classroom interactions. While 26.8% stayed neutral, 9.4% thought that ChatGPT could be a substitute for EFL classroom discussions. In item no. 17, 46.4% of the respondents were aware of the limitations of AI-powered applications and said that AI systems like ChatGPT could distort text reducing quality. 32.8%

were undecided, and 20.9% opposed the statement indicating their trust in the capabilities of AI-powered tools. Regarding item no. 18, 43% of the respondents accepted that ChatGPT could hinder learners' creativity and critical thinking. 31.9% preferred neutrality and 25.1% opposed the statement suggesting that ChatGPT did not impede learners' critical and analytical skills. Similarly, the responses to item no 19 revealed that 38.7% of the respondents thought that ChatGPT-generated content could not be detected by plagiarism checkers. Concerning item no. 20, 46.9% of the respondents thought that ChatGPT could not properly understand the social context of specific idioms or phrases. The mean score for all the items (16-20) representing the issues and challenges of ChatGPT usage in EFL classrooms is 3.47 is ranked moderate. This analysis addressed the second question of the study.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of issues and challenges of ChatGPT usage in EFL classroom.

Questions	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Level
16	72(30.6%)	78(33.2%)	63(26.8%)	14(6%)	8(3.4%)	3.81	High
17	50(21.3%)	59(25.1%)	77(32.8%)	38(16.2%)	11(4.7%)	3.42	Moderate
18	44(18.7%)	57(24.3%)	75(31.9%)	43(18.3%)	16(6.8%)	3.29	Moderate
19	40(17%)	51(21.7%)	105(44.7%)	30(12.8%)	9(3.8%)	3.35	Moderate
20	53(22.6%)	57(24.3%)	88(37.4%)	32(13.6%)	5(2.1%)	3.51	High

Table 6 represents the results of learners' responses to the theme of pedagogical implications of ChatGPT usage in EFL classrooms. The average score for all the items in this category is 3.8 which suggests that students highly ranked the usage of ChatGPT. In their opinion, the usage of ChatGPT offered great pedagogical and educational implications of utilising ChatGPT for both language instructions and acquisitions. The responses to item no. 21 revealed that 64.8% of the respondents thought that ChatGPT could provide instant feedback for correction. 30.6% stayed neutral, and 5.6% opposed the opinion. In the next item no. 22, 54.5% of the respondents said that ChatGPT could automatically grade students' written work. While 36.2% stayed neutral and 9.4% did not think that ChatGPT could automatically grade students' writ-

ten assignments. The responses to item no. 23 found that 67.6% of the respondents believed that ChatGPT could cater to the learners' specific requirements. 25.5% expressed no opinion and 6.8% differed from the statement. Similarly, regarding item no. 24, 62.1% of the study participants agreed that ChatGPT rectified grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. 30.6% stayed neutral, and 7.3% completely disagreed with the statement. The learners' responses to item no. 25, the last item of this category, revealed that the respondents believed that ChatGPT could use its huge corpus to offer context-specific responses. The overall mean score is 3.8 indicating ChatGPT offered great pedagogical prospects and opportunities in Saudi EFL contexts. This analysis addressed the third question of the study.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics of the pedagogical implications of ChatGPT usage in EFL classrooms.

Questions	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Level
21	69(29.4%)	81(35.4%)	72(30.6%)	6(2.6%)	7(3%)	3.84	High
22	62(26.4%)	66(28.1%)	85(36.2%)	12(5.1%)	10(4.3%)	3.67	High
23	67(28.5%)	92(39.1%)	60(25.5%)	11(4.7%)	5(2.1%)	3.87	High
24	72(30.6%)	74(31.5%)	72(30.6%)	10(4.3%)	7(3%)	3.74	High
25	70(29.8%)	85(36.2%)	69(29.4%)	5(2.1%)	6(2.6%)	3.88	High

5. Discussion and Analysis

The study examined the opinions, problems challenges, and pedagogical implications of using ChatGPT in EFL classrooms. The responses from the EFL learners revealed that Saudi students held favorable opinions and viewed ChatGPT usage in EFL classrooms as an important means of enhancing their language skills. This finding is corroborated by many studies. For example, Al-Raimi et al. ^[9] found that Omani ELF learners held positive views towards employing AI-powered tools. Similarly, Pokrivcakova ^[12] found that the students expressed excitement for utilizing AI in EFL and were excited to see learn how it impacted EFL classrooms. Even the course instructors were also found to hold positive opinions regarding ChatGPT usage in EFL classrooms. Sumakul et al. ^[11] revealed that teachers had positive perceptions towards the use of AI in their classrooms and agreed that AI could help teachers teach and students learn better. Zulkarnain and Yunus ^[13] found that instructors saw AI technology integration positively because of its dynamic features and efficiency, despite limitations and multiple challenges. However, one study conducted by Adel et al. ^[28] found both advantages and disadvantages of ChatGPT usage emphasizing moral issues and offering strategic insights for AI technology integration. The study also found that ChatGPT incorporation is also draught with certain challenges and problems. The study found that these challenges with ChatGPT included things like inhibiting imagination and critical thought, misrepresenting content and quality, failing to replace EFL teachers, and failing to comprehend the broader implications of phrases and phrases. Many studies confirm these challenges and problems. For example, Kiryakova and Angelova ^[29] expressed certain reservations regarding the risks of unethical usage

which undermined assessment accuracy and impartiality and the learners' proclivity to trust ChatGPT-generated text. Bok and Cho ^[14] found certain concerns such as insufficient error clarifications, confusing feedback, irregular responses, reduced creation, and ambiguity regarding the effectiveness of learning. Multiple studies raised certain reservations regarding design, implementation, academic integrity, and plagiarism ^[15,18] learners' participation, and pedagogical engagement ^[30]. However, one study carried out by Mohamed ^[14] found that ChatGPT had both positive and negative sides which included speedy and accurate responses to questions and its detrimental impact on students' thinking skills and investigative skills and increasing prejudices and misconceptions. The study also found that ChatGPT usage had great pedagogical and educational opportunities as it could help learners in multiple ways. AI-powered classrooms could assist learners' address their specific needs, overcoming their difficulties and obstacles, helping them become self-sufficient learners, and accomplishing their learning goals more efficiently and successfully. This finding of the study is supported by many studies ^[23,24]. Some other studies ^[30-33] also found that ChatGPT could enhance learning through tailored feedback and assistance, enrich teaching methods, and streamline academic research. However, they raised questions about academic integrity, AI-generated material validity, and new evaluation systems. Adel ^[28] revealed that ChatGPT's tailored learning and immediate evaluations enhanced both instructor and student engagement. However, multiple studies ^[2,34] warned that extensive ChatGPT utilization may impede learners' innovative and collaborative learning skills. Therefore, it is obvious that like other technology-powered instructions, ChatGPT has both advantages and disadvantages ^[35].

6. Conclusion

The study investigated Saudi English learners' opinions, problems, and difficulties, and the educational and academic opportunities of ChatGPT usage for language acquisition and instruction. It was found that the study respondents had great excitement and positive perceptions towards ChatGPT as a tool for language instruction and learning. It also revealed that ChatGPT integration affected thinking, problem-solving, emotions, idiom's social context, pronunciation, and listening. Problems included stifling creativity and critical thinking, distorting substance and quality, delaying replacing EFL teachers, and disregarding idiom and phrase social implications. In addition, the results revealed Saudi Arabia's more advanced digital and technological infrastructure enabled ChatGPT an advantageous supplement to English language programs. This was primarily because Saudi Arabia's younger generation had an impressive degree of technological capabilities. Therefore, AI-powered classrooms could assist students to fulfill their specific requirements, overcome obstacles and challenges, growing into self-sufficient learners, and support them in achieving their learning goals more efficiently and fruitfully.

Both the positive impacts of ChatGPT and the challenges encountered by Saudi EFL students powered by artificial intelligence classrooms offer profound implications for the future of classroom instruction and learning. It would be feasible to experiment with a greater population and Arab regions as well to demonstrate their reliability and veracity.

Author Contributions

M.J. conceptualized and authored the article. N.A. analysed the data. F.A. carried out revisions. S.B. revised the text. All writers read and approved the article. Each author contributed equally to the work.

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Institutional Review Board Statement

Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement

All participants offered informed consent before participating in the study. Participants' confidentiality, safety, and voluntary involvement were guaranteed.

Data Availability Statement

The corresponding author could offer the data supporting the findings of the research upon request. Due to moral and privacy issues, the data are not accessible to the public.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they do not have any conflicting interests.

Appendix A

1. I enjoy improving my English proficiency with ChatGPT.	SA	A	N	D	SD
2. I get excited by the potential of ChatGPT as a learning tool.					
3. I feel anxious when I can't make use of ChatGPT tools.					
4. ChatGPT is an invaluable instrument for efficient learning and teaching.					
5. ChatGPT is a highly effective tool for improving writing proficiency.					
6. ChatGPT strengthens the learning experience.					
7. I would use ChatGPT for exercise, activities, and exams.					
8. I would utilize ChatGPT as a substitute teacher.					
9. I would keep using ChatGPT to help me reach my educational goals.					
10. ChatGPT assists language learners but cannot replace ELT classes.					

11. AI systems like ChatGPT can distort text reducing quality.
12. ChatGPT could hinder learners' creativity and critical thinking.
13. The ChatGPT content cannot be detected by plagiarism checkers.
14. ChatGPT fails to understand idioms' social context.
15. ChatGPT can provide instant feedback for correction.
16. ChatGPT can automatically grade students' written work.
17. ChatGPT can cater to the learners' individual specific requirements.
18. ChatGPT rectifies grammar, syntax, and vocabulary.
19. ChatGPT can use its huge corpus to offer context-specific responses.

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