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Exploring Student Insights on ChatGPT as a Resource for Learning English and Its Influence on Learner Independence

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ABSTRACT

ChatGPT has enormous capabilities in generating human-like text responses. Moreover, many higher education students use it to complete their language-related tasks. Despite numerous studies about the effectiveness of ChatGPT in English language education, there remains a notable gap in understanding how EFL students perceive this generative chatbot and its implications for self-regulated learning. This research addresses this gap by examining EFL students' perceptions of ChatGPT as a tool for English language learning and its perceived impact on learner autonomy. A mixed methods approach was used for the current study by administering a survey questionnaire among EFL students (N = 190) and conducting semi-structured interviews with selected students (N = 18) at University X. The data collected from the questionnaire were analysed using SPSS, while the qualitative data from semi-structured interviews were presented using coding and thematic analysis. The findings of this study reveal that students have positive perceptions of using ChatGPT to enhance English language learning and learner autonomy. Most participants appreciated the flexibility and convenience of the tool. The findings of this study have implications for educators and researchers in making informed decisions about revisiting instructional approaches, designing language curricula, and planning professional development activities.

Keywords: ChatGPT; EFL Learners; Learner Autonomy; Proficiency Levels; Student Perspectives

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ARTICLE INFO

Received: 12 November 2024 | Revised: 26 January 2025 | Accepted: 27 January 2025 | Published Online: 20 February 2025
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i2.7955>

CITATION

Al Zakwani, M., P.M., B., 2025. Exploring Student Insights on ChatGPT as a Resource for Learning English and Its Influence on Learner Independence. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*. 7(2): 813–824. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i2.7955>

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1. Introduction

The recent developments in Natural Language Processing (NLP) have led to the development of Large Language Models (LLMs) capable of generating vast amounts of human-like texts. The series of Generative Pre-trained Transformers (GPT) developed by OpenAI has attracted the attention of millions of users across the globe, and the latest version of ChatGPT has marked an important milestone in the field of artificial intelligence. The development of generative chatbots has revolutionised many industries, including education and e-learning, marketing and advertising, communication, healthcare, research, and data analysis^[1].

The use of AI tools in education has become a topic of interest among researchers^[2]. Technology integration into English language education is of utmost importance in meeting the learning demands of digital natives and fostering learner autonomy. In this digital era, learners strongly prefer technological tools over traditional classroom activities^[3]. By incorporating advanced language models like ChatGPT into educational settings, educators can tap into the digital natives' inherent comfort with technology and provide engaging and interactive learning experiences^[4]. This integration allows students to explore information independently, seek instant clarification, and receive personalised feedback, enhancing their autonomy and promoting self-directed learning.

The features and functions of various AI tools constantly change, and ChatGPT is one of the most advanced large language models (LLMs) powered by artificial intelligence. ChatGPT can instantly produce large amounts of new content in response to the prompts given by a user. It is specifically designed to generate human-like responses by engaging in conversations, answering questions, and providing explanations, suggestions and recommendations according to the users' demands^[5]. It can provide information, answer questions, engage in conversation, and assist users with various tasks such as translation, content creation and many other applications.

This paper examines how EFL students value ChatGPT in their language learning process and perceive its effectiveness in enhancing self-directed learning. The researchers used a mixed-methods approach for the current study, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected participants to gain better insight into

the participants' experiences and perceptions of ChatGPT and to validate the results of the survey questionnaire. The data collected from the survey questionnaire were analysed using SPSS to identify the trends and better understand the findings. The results of the interviews were systematically analysed, highlighting key patterns and insights.

Although there have been a lot of studies for the past two years about the affordances and challenges of using ChatGPT in English language education, there is a dearth of research on EFL student perspectives regarding the effectiveness of this new learning tool and its perceived impact on learner autonomy. Therefore, the current study attempts to fill this research gap by addressing the following research questions:

1. How do students perceive the effectiveness of ChatGPT as a tool for English language learning?
2. What are the perceived effects of using ChatGPT on learner autonomy in language learning?
3. To what extent are learners satisfied with their experience using ChatGPT as a tool for English language learning?
4. How do EFL students' perspectives on ChatGPT vary across different proficiency levels?

2. Literature Review

Generative chatbots have attracted the attention of teachers and learners because of their unique capacity to produce large amounts of coherent texts within seconds. Teachers' intentions to use artificial intelligence applications are mainly influenced by the expected performance, habits, and enjoyment of these tools^[6]. The emergence of ChatGPT has created both excitement and concern in the academic community^[7, 8]. The unlimited capacity of ChatGPT to generate human-like text in response to the prompts given by users has made it an excellent tool for language learning and teaching^[9, 10]. ChatGPT's capability to tackle complex academic tasks marks a radical change in conventional educational practices^[5].

2.1. Theoretical Framework

When considering the acceptance of technology in language education, learners consider various factors such as the perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use^[11]. Most

learners look for user-friendly interfaces and platforms that can be easily integrated into their learning routines. ChatGPT offers various opportunities for students for reading comprehension, writing practice, grammar and syntax correction, conversation practice and pronunciation guidance to make the language learning experience personalised and engaging. ChatGPT's unique ability to generate interactive and conversational responses makes it an effective tool for language learning^[12-14]. Learners can engage in discussions with ChatGPT on issues related to their academic problems or assignments.

2.2. Student Perspectives

Recent studies indicate that EFL learners have positive perceptions of ChatGPT because of their convenience, easy accessibility and instant feedback^[15-17]. "In the words of Harunasari, 'The integration of ChatGPT in Creative and Media Writing classes has proven effective in assisting EFL students in generating ideas, planning short stories, and correcting grammar and spelling'^[18]." "Črček and Patekar^[19] surveyed 201 university students in Croatia and found that most students believed it ethical to use ChatGPT to generate ideas for their writing assignments, summarise, paraphrase and proofread the text." Although many Indonesian students use ChatGPT in academic writing classes, it has not positively impacted the quality of writing assignments in all indicators^[20].

2.3. Affordances

AI technologies have the potential to reshape higher education^[21]. AI tools can provide learners with engaging and personalised language learning experiences^[22]. Artificial intelligence has the potential to open a new era of innovation in pedagogy^[23]. ChatGPT has the potential to enhance the quality of teaching and learning^[24]. The effective integration of ChatGPT into education can support personalised and adapted learning^[25]. In addition to academic texts, ChatGPT can generate a wide range of creative writings such as novels, stories, plays, and poems^[26]. Most students appreciate the features of ChatGPT due to its human-like interface and instance responses, although they have some reservations about the accuracy of some responses^[27]. The capabilities of ChatGPT are not limited to generating text; instead, it can

interact with users and respond to their queries, making it a valuable tool for teaching and learning^[28].

"Binu^[29] states that with the advent of AI, language learning has become more personalised, interactive, and efficient." AI-powered chatbots have the potential to provide tailored responses and instant feedback and support learner autonomy^[30]. Some of the latest AL tools have the capacity to identify learners' behaviour patterns^[31]. ChatGPT follows an iterative method that allows users to craft prompts in different ways until they get customised responses in the desired format suitable for any proficiency level, making it very attractive to English language users. However, whether the exponential use of this sophisticated tool contributes to language acquisition is a matter of debate in academia.

2.4. Learner Autonomy

Technology can significantly contribute to the learner autonomy of EFL learners^[32]. With the emergence of various digital resources, learners now have greater control over their learning process and can tailor their learning experiences according to their preferences and learning needs^[33]. Digital language learning platforms such as Duolingo and Rosetta Stone provide interactive activities, personalised feedback, and progress tracking, allowing learners to set their own learning goals and pace^[34]. Mobile apps and language learning websites offer many resources that empower learners to independently explore and engage with the target language^[35]. Technology-mediated communication tools like video conferencing and social media platforms enable learners to connect with native speakers and participate in language exchange activities, fostering authentic language use and cultural understanding^[36]. Overall, modern technology facilitates English language learning and enhances learner autonomy. When language learners are more autonomous, they are more likely to achieve proficiency in the target language^[37].

2.5. Challenges

ChatGPT does not have actual knowledge of anything, although it can analyse large amounts of textual data, identify similar patterns and generate immediate responses. Hence, it has limitations in comprehending abstract ideas and identifying specific contexts, leading to misleading responses.

Hong^[38] states that academic administrators and teachers fear using ChatGPT can adversely affect learners’ critical thinking skills and writing abilities. Some educators have expressed concerns about the misuse of generative chatbots and its impact on academic integrity^[39]. ChatGPT has the potential to generate original text that can avoid detection by existing plagiarism software or academic experts, posing a threat to academic integrity^[40, 41]. The rapid development of ChatGPT is causing trouble in various academic disciplines^[42]. The misuse of ChatGPT raises concerns about copyright issues, fairness and academic integrity^[43]. The potential limitations of ChatGPT include limited contextual understanding, vulnerability to social engineering, inaccurate information and biased responses^[44]. The responses generated by ChatGPT are not always accurate because of training data limitations, lack of real-time information about the content, ambiguity in the input given by users and failure to understand the actual context. AI-generated texts lack depth of content and sometimes give made-up references^[28]. A major problem with the responses generated by ChatGPT is the absence of proper citations for the sources, which can lead to plagiarism^[24]. The content of the texts generated by ChatGPT is sometimes biased or inappropriate^[45]. Integrating AI tools into education should uphold ethical and inclusive standards to enhance teaching and learning experiences^[46]. Academic institutions should issue guidelines to ensure the responsible use of AI tools^[47].

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

For the current study, the researchers employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate the perspectives of EFL students on using ChatGPT as a resource for English language learning and its perceived impact on learner autonomy. The mixed methods approach combines quantitative

data from questionnaires and qualitative data from semi-structured interviews, allowing a comprehensive understanding of the complex language learning phenomenon^[48]. A mixed-methods approach triangulates findings by combining qualitative and quantitative research methods to provide a more comprehensive understanding of a research question. Integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches enables researchers to triangulate findings, validate results, and provide a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the research topic^[49]. By administering a survey questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale to measure participants’ levels of agreement with various statements, ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree.” and conducting semi-structured interviews with selected participants, the researchers could ensure that the findings are statistically significant and contextually relevant.

3.2. Participants

The participants in this study consisted of 190 EFL students at the Preparatory Studies Centre of the University X in the Spring Semester of the academic year 2023-24. The target population was selected based on students’ familiarity with the AI tool ChatGPT. Although there were around 2000 students registered for English language courses in four Levels (Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, & Level 4 corresponding to the CEFR equivalents A1, A2, B1 and B2) at the Preparatory Studies Centre, only those who have had some familiarity with ChatGPT were encouraged to respond to the survey questionnaire. The participants were undergraduate students aged between 18 and 21, with varying levels of English proficiency.

Table 1 presents the demographics of the survey respondents and their proficiency levels. It includes the number and percentages of male and female respondents and the frequency and valid percentages for each proficiency level. As can be seen, most participants are from Level 3 and Level 4.

Table 1. Participant demographics and proficiency levels.

		Male	Female	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Level 1	7	3	10	5.3	5.3	5.3
	Level 2	13	17	30	15.8	15.8	21.1
	Level 3	42	48	90	47.4	47.4	68.4
	Level 4	35	25	60	31.6	31.6	100.0
	Total	97	93	190	100.0	100.0	

Table 2 shows the participants’ experience with ChatGPT in terms of their frequency of use. 190 EFL students familiar with the use of ChatGPT responded to the survey

questionnaire. 55.3% of participants reported using ChatGPT rarely, followed by occasional use (20.5%), frequent use (13.7%), and relatively frequent use (10.5%).

Table 2. Participants’ experience with ChatGPT.

		Frequency of Use			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Rarely	105	55.3	55.3	55.3
	Occasionally	39	20.5	20.5	75.8
	Frequently	26	13.7	13.7	89.5
	Quite frequently	20	10.5	10.5	100.0
	Total	190	100.0	100.0	

3.3. Instruments and Materials

A survey questionnaire was created on Microsoft Forms and administered among 190 EFL students at the Preparatory Studies Centre of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences – Al Mussanah to investigate learners’ perceptions of the effectiveness of using ChatGPT for English language learning and its perceived impact on learner autonomy. A survey questionnaire is a widely used research tool due to its accuracy and consistency^[50]. In empirical studies, a questionnaire helps the researchers obtain the validation of data^[51]. Semi-structured interviews help understand multiple viewpoints as they provide rich and detailed information from multiple perspectives^[52]. Participation in the survey questionnaire and semi-structured interview was voluntary. The questionnaire contained three parts to measure the following constructs: the effectiveness of ChatGPT for English language learning, its perceived impact on learner autonomy, and learners’ overall satisfaction with the tool. Three open-ended questions were also included to gather additional information about learners’ perspectives. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 18 participants to gather in-depth qualitative data, exploring their experiences, challenges, and benefits associated with the use of ChatGPT. The data collected from the survey questionnaire are presented in descriptive statistics, and learners’ responses from open-ended questions and semi-structured interviews are thematised.

3.4. Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

The data collection and analysis procedures include the administration of a survey questionnaire on Microsoft Teams

Forms and semi-structured interviews with selected participants. The researchers used purposive sampling techniques to select participants for the semi-structured interview. The quantitative data from the surveys were analysed using SPSS to identify trends and patterns. The qualitative data from the interviews were thematised, allowing for an in-depth exploration of participants’ insights and experiences related to using ChatGPT in their learning processes.

4. Findings

RQ 1: How do students perceive the effectiveness of ChatGPT as a tool for English language learning?

The findings of this study indicate that students generally perceive ChatGPT as an effective tool for enhancing their English language skills. The results are summarised below, with mean scores and standard deviations for each statement related to the effectiveness of ChatGPT.

These mean ratings in **Table 3** suggest that students perceive ChatGPT to have a positive influence on their writing proficiency (mean = 3.78), reading skills and comprehension (mean = 3.63), vocabulary expansion (mean = 3.68), and grammar improvement (mean = 3.61). However, students expressed a slightly lower belief in ChatGPT’s usefulness for providing feedback on language skills (mean = 2.71). The mean average of 3.49 suggests a moderate level of agreement with the influence of ChatGPT on language skills. These findings highlight the potential of ChatGPT in enhancing students’ language skills while suggesting the need for further development in providing effective feedback.

Table 3. Effectiveness of ChatGPT as a tool for English language learning.

No	Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
1.	Using ChatGPT has enhanced my writing proficiency in English.	3.78	1.061
2.	ChatGPT has improved my English listening skills.	3.54	1.194
3.	I don't believe ChatGPT provides useful feedback on language skills.	2.71	1.255
4.	ChatGPT has improved my reading skills and comprehension.	3.63	1.183
5.	ChatGPT has increased my confidence in speaking English.	3.49	1.194
6.	ChatGPT has assisted in expanding my vocabulary.	3.68	1.120
7.	ChatGPT has helped me improve my grammar	3.61	1.176
Mean Average = 3.49			

RQ2: What are the perceived effects of using ChatGPT on learner autonomy in language learning?

This study explored the perceived effects of using ChatGPT on learner autonomy in English language learning. Using ChatGPT in language learning is perceived by ESL students as very effective in enhancing learner independence

as it offers personalised assistance and encourages students to explore language concepts independently. By analysing students' responses, it is evident that ChatGPT positively impacts learner autonomy to a moderate extent. Participants reported a significant increase in their sense of independence and self-reliance, as given in the **Table 4** below:

Table 4. Perceived impact on learner autonomy.

No	Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
8.	Using ChatGPT has increased my sense of independence and self-reliance in learning English.	3.52	1.198
9.	ChatGPT has empowered me to actively engage with English language content and activities outside of the classroom.	3.33	1.208
10.	ChatGPT has provided me with opportunities to personalise my learning experience in English.	3.38	1.193
11.	ChatGPT has allowed me to take control of my learning and set my learning goals in English.	3.34	1.197
12.	Using ChatGPT has not reduced my reliance on the teacher to clarify language-related issues in the English classroom.	2.54	1.267
Mean Average = 3.22			

Table 4 illustrates EFL students' perceptions regarding the impact of using ChatGPT on learner autonomy. The participants reported a positive view of ChatGPT's effect on self-reliance in learning English (mean = 3.52), opportunities to engage in learning activities outside the classroom (mean = 3.33), personalised learning experience (mean = 3.38), and goal setting (mean = 3.34). However, almost half of the respondents believe that using ChatGPT has not reduced their dependence on classroom instructors for language advice.

RQ3: To what extent are learners satisfied with their experience using ChatGPT as a tool for English language learning?

The study sought to provide insights into ChatGPT's impact on learners' experiences by evaluating various aspects of the tool's effectiveness and engagement. The results presented in **Table 5** indicate a high level of satisfaction among participants with the use of ChatGPT.

Table 5. Student satisfaction with ChatGPT.

No	Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
13.	ChatGPT has effectively addressed my specific language learning needs and challenges.	3.65	1.158
14.	ChatGPT has helped me improve my English language proficiency.	3.59	1.113
15.	ChatGPT has made my English language learning experience more engaging and enjoyable.	3.54	1.144
16.	Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of responses and assistance provided by ChatGPT.	3.66	1.129
Mean Average = 3.61			

Table 5 shows the participants' level of satisfaction using ChatGPT. The mean average across all statements (3.61) indicates an overall positive reaction towards using ChatGPT for English language learning. The standard deviations of the four statements, ranging from 1.113 to 1.158, suggest a relatively moderate level of agreement among participants.

RQ 4: How do EFL students' perspectives on ChatGPT vary

across different proficiency levels?

By analysing the effectiveness of ChatGPT, learner autonomy, and student satisfaction among various proficiency groups, the study sought to identify trends and differences in students' experiences. The findings in **Table 6** reveal notable differences in perspectives based on proficiency levels, which are summarised below.

Table 6. Student perceptions of ChatGPT across different proficiency levels.

Student Level		Effectiveness of ChatGPT	Learner Autonomy	Student Satisfaction
Level 1	Mean	3.7143	3.5400	3.9750
	N	10	10	10
	Std. Deviation	0.76783	0.66030	1.07011
Level 2	Mean	3.8524	3.3000	3.5167
	N	30	30	30
	Std. Deviation	0.66424	0.51394	0.92832
Level 3	Mean	3.5413	3.2800	3.6528
	N	90	90	90
	Std. Deviation	0.72733	0.70107	1.06178
Level 4	Mean	3.1929	3.0400	3.5250
	N	60	60	60
	Std. Deviation	0.91750	0.78959	1.02169
Total	Mean	3.4895	3.2211	3.6079
	N	190	190	190
	Std. Deviation	0.81268	0.71119	1.02718

As shown in **Table 6**, the results indicate slight variations in student perceptions of the effectiveness of ChatGPT in English language learning, its contribution to learner autonomy, and their overall satisfaction with its use across different proficiency levels. Students in Level 2 generally reported higher effectiveness ratings than other levels, while Level 4 students expressed lower effectiveness perceptions. Level 1 students reported higher learner autonomy and satisfaction, whereas Level 2 students reported the lowest satisfaction. These variations may be attributed to differences in language proficiency, expectations, and prior experiences with language learning technologies.

Qualitative Data

The qualitative data obtained from the questionnaire survey's three open-ended questions and semi-structured interviews with 18 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students have been organised into two main categories: af-

fordances and limitations. These categories are presented in **Table 5**. The participants' responses and corresponding identification codes (e.g., S1 for Student 1) are listed in column 1. In contrast, column 2 includes the participants' verbatim quotes, indicated by italicisation and double quotation marks.

The qualitative data derived from semi-structured interviews with 18 EFL students are presented in **Table 7**. Learners' remarks about using ChatGPT in English language learning are broadly classified into two themes: affordances and challenges. Most participants appreciated the convenience and ease of use of ChatGPT. They also highlighted other positive features, such as immediate responses, the suitability of the tool for digital natives, and the unlimited capacity of ChatGPT to make language learning more enjoyable and engaging. However, learners also reported some challenges when using ChatGPT, such as the difficulty and complexity of responses, lack of clarity, and the absence of voice responses.

Table 7. Qualitative Data Analysis – Main themes and Respondents’ Verbatim Quotes.

Theme 1: Affordances	
S1	<i>“I like ChatGPT because I can use it anytime, anywhere. It is very easy to use.”</i>
S2	<i>“ChatGPT is really very fast. I get immediate results.”</i>
S3	<i>“I can ask any questions to ChatGPT. I don’t worry about making mistakes.”</i>
S4	<i>“ChatGPT is good for modern students because they like technology more than traditional learning”</i>
S5	<i>“ChatGPT is more enjoyable than classroom activities. It makes learning fun. Classroom learning is boring.”</i>
S6	<i>“ChatGPT corrects my grammar and spelling mistakes. It is better than a teacher.”</i>
Theme 2: Challenges	
S7	<i>“I sometimes don’t understand ChatGPT’s response. It is not simple English.”</i>
S8	<i>“I don’t like ChatGPT because it does not give me specific answers.”</i>
S9	<i>“ChatGPT is not good for speaking. It does not give any voice response.”</i>

5. Discussion

The results of the current research corroborate the views of^[30, 31, 33, 34] that highlight the importance of technology integration in promoting learner autonomy. Most participants reported that the convenience of using ChatGPT and instant responses enhance independent learning. In addition, the personalised feedback generated by ChatGPT was stated as a key factor in promoting motivation and learner engagement, which supports the findings of^[23] that integrating generative chatbots like ChatGPT into education can support personalised and adapted learning. While^[36] reported that academic administrators and teachers were concerned that ChatGPT could negatively impact EFL learners’ writing and critical thinking skills, the current data shows contrasting views. The participant students perceived ChatGPT as an excellent writing assistant, especially in the pre-writing stage for generating ideas and organising the content.

The findings also align with Fred Davis’s theoretical framework of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Stephen Krashen’s theory of the Affective Filter Hypothesis. Davis’s theory posits that the two factors determining learners’ acceptance of a digital tool are perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEU). In the current study context, EFL students’ positive responses to ChatGPT’s usefulness and convenience support the idea that most students appreciate the tool. In addition, the findings support Stephen Krashen’s affective filter hypothesis, which claims that language learning is affected by factors such as motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence. The theory suggests that a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere can lower negative emotions and improve language learning. Learners using ChatGPT freely express themselves without anxiety

or fear of making mistakes, leading to a supportive language learning environment.

This study offers valuable insights into ChatGPT’s potential to enhance language acquisition. The participant students’ positive responses reflect the tool’s ability to foster learner autonomy through personalised and self-directed learning experiences. The main reasons for their responses are the flexibility and convenience of the tool, facilitating personalised learning experiences and easy access for practising conversations at their convenience. They believe that ChatGPT allows them to set their own pace, choose the topics they want to focus on and receive immediate feedback on their language use, empowering them to take more ownership of their learning process and tailor it to their individual needs and interests. Furthermore, students find that ChatGPT can provide a low-pressure environment for practising language skills, allowing them to experiment with new vocabulary, grammar structures, or conversational strategies without fear of judgment. ChatGPT enables students to build confidence, motivation, and independence in their language learning journey by offering personalised language learning support on-demand. Overall, students perceive ChatGPT as a valuable tool for fostering learner autonomy and enhancing their language proficiency in a self-directed and engaging manner.

6. Implications

The implications of these findings suggest that EFL curricula should integrate AI tools like ChatGPT to foster differentiated instruction and independent learning. By harnessing the transformative potential of AI-powered chatbots, educators can empower learners to meet the linguistic de-

mands of the 21st century. Moreover, the study's insights have broader relevance beyond the EFL context. As AI technology evolves, understanding how learners perceive and engage with these tools can inform the design and implementation of personalised learning experiences across various educational domains. By embracing the disruptive potential of AI, we can revolutionise how students learn and grow, ultimately shaping a more empowered and autonomous generation of lifelong learners.

The results of the study also indicate the limitations of ChatGPT as an AI tool for supporting language learning. Although it can generate responses instantly using large amounts of textual data and identifying similar patterns, it does not have deep knowledge of anything. As a result, users sometimes do not receive the expected answers; instead, they get some generic responses. Besides, since the chatbot has a knowledge cut-off date, it cannot respond to prompts inquiring about events after the last training update. Another drawback of the chatbot is that it lacks human capacities such as empathy, creativity, and critical thinking skills.

Overall, students perceive ChatGPT as a valuable tool for fostering learner autonomy and enhancing their language proficiency through independent learning. It contributes to the existing understanding that values ChatGPT as an effective tool for personalised learning and instant feedback and has implications for technology-integrated EFL curricula that foster differentiated instruction and lifelong independent learning.

7. Limitations

While the outcome of the current study contributes significantly to the field of English language education, providing new directions for technology integration, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of the research. First, the convenience sampling method for data collection may limit the generalizability of the findings to the broader EFL student population. Another limitation is that the study did not consider the perspectives of ELF lecturers and other stakeholders, as it focused solely on student perspectives. Lastly, the field of study was limited to one higher education institution; hence, the findings may lack universal application.

8. Recommendations

In light of the findings, the researchers propose the following recommendations for the effective integration of AI tools into English language education. First, learners' AI literary skills must be strengthened to draw the best out of generative chatbots. They should be trained to craft prompts to get the desired results. As the integration of AI has become the need of the hour, both students and teachers should strengthen their digital skills to make the teaching-learning process more productive.

This study also recommends further research involving a wide range of student communities, comparing the strengths and weaknesses of various AI tools and the perspectives of educators and researchers on integrating artificial intelligence into the English language curriculum. Moreover, as the accuracy of the responses generated by ChatGPT depends on various factors, such as the quality of the training data, the model's understanding of the input, and the limitations of the model's knowledge, the users need to evaluate the information critically and verify its accuracy with reliable sources. Finally, the developers of this generative chatbot should improve its functions, ensure the accuracy of responses, and consult policymakers, pedagogical experts, and classroom practitioners to accommodate their valuable insights to improve the functions of the tool to make it more effective for language learning.

9. Conclusion

In summary, the outcomes of the current research reflect both affordances and challenges associated with EFL learners' use of ChatGPT. While acknowledging the limitations of ChatGPT, most participants favour integrating AI tools with language education. They believe the interactive and adaptive learning experiences and personalised learning materials match their unique learning styles and preferences. The automated feedback, ease of use, and non-judgmental nature of ChatGPT addresses learners' specific needs and enhances learner autonomy. Moreover, students found that ChatGPT enhanced a low-pressure environment for practising language skills, enabling them to build confidence, motivation, and independence in their language learning journey.

Understanding student perspectives on using ChatGPT for English language learning can help educators and researchers gain valuable insights into the drastic changes in EFL students' learning styles and preferences to make informed decisions about revisiting instructional approaches, planning teachers' professional development activities and re-designing language curricula with a futuristic vision.

Author Contributions

Both authors contributed equally to this study, sharing responsibility for all aspects of the research process. Their collaborative efforts encompassed formulating the research question, data collection and analysis, and drafting and revising the manuscript. They have both read and approved the final version of the manuscript for publication.

Funding

This study received financial support from the Internal Research Fund of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Al Musannah (UTASA-IRF-2024-01).

Institutional Review Board Statement

This study obtained ethical clearance from the Research and Consultancy Department of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Al Musannah. The research was conducted in accordance with ethical standards to ensure the protection of the rights and welfare of all participants.

Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement

The data that supports the findings of this study are available from the author upon reasonable request.

Acknowledgements

The Researchers would like to express their sincere gratitude to the administration of the University of Technol-

ogy and Applied Sciences, Al Musannah, for their support and resources that made this study possible. We also extend our heartfelt thanks to the participating students, whose insights and contributions were invaluable to our research.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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