

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF USING CHAT GPT

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Abstract

ChatGPT has been both celebrated for its potential benefits in foreign language study and criticized for risks to academic integrity. However, there is a lack of research investigating the perceptions of Indonesian higher education students regarding its use. This study aims to fill this gap by examining how these students perceive and utilize ChatGPT in their academic endeavors. Data were gathered from 16 participants currently enrolled in a hospitality study program through open-ended questions distributed via Google Forms. The participants provided insights into their use of ChatGPT, specifically for university assignments and language learning. The study found that all participants primarily use ChatGPT to assist with university assignments. For language study, nine students reported finding it particularly useful for learning new vocabulary and appreciated its straightforward explanations, which they found more effective than their teachers' explanations. The findings suggest that ChatGPT is a valuable tool for enhancing language learning and academic support among Indonesian higher education students. More studies are needed to explore how English learners can maximize the benefits of ChatGPT and how educators can incorporate it to promote learner autonomy and enhance the learning experience.

Keywords: *ChatGPT, perceptions, Artificial Intelligence, university*

Introduction

The launch of Artificial Intelligence (AI) platform named ChatGPT (Generative Pre-trained Transformer) in late 2022 has revolutionized education. Despite its benefits in text generation and its ability to assist students in their difficulties, controversies still surround its use, especially in the context of English language education. Some scholars even warn that its impact on academic integrity should be addressed, especially in writing (Sullivan et al., 2023; Teng, 2023). However, Sullivan et al. (2023) also add that educators, schools, and universities have to adapt their 'teaching and assessment' practices while the world is embracing this generative technology. Some scholars and teachers who use ChatGPT in their classrooms mention that this generative AI has improved the English second language learners' ability in vocabulary, listening, speaking, writing, and reading skills (Mabuan, 2024; Mahapatra, 2024; Monika, 2024).

Several scholars have investigated the use of ChatGPT in the higher education context in Indonesia. One study investigates students' perceptions in high school context related to promoting learning autonomy (Agustini, 2023). Another study examines the level of acceptance among higher education institutions through theory of acceptance and use of technology model (Habibi et al., 2023). Additionally, a study conducted by R. Silvano & A. Gui (2024) explores how students perceive its usefulness in an academic setting and how easy it is to use to assist them with academic assignments.

While most studies explore the higher education students' perceptions, their acceptance, and the utilization of ChatGPT through quantitative means, the current study tries to use qualitative approach. Therefore, current study explores the university students' perceptions towards the use of ChatGPT with by addressing these research questions:

RQ (1) How do students perceive the use of ChatGPT in their academic context?

RQ (2) How do students perceive the use of ChatGPT in learning foreign language?

Method

The current study uses a qualitative method with open-ended questions in a survey. The participants of the study were 16 undergraduate students enrolled at a private university

in Jakarta, all of whom were part of a hospitality study program. The participants comprised of 5 male students and 11 female students. The students were not forced to take the survey and the participation in taking the survey was all voluntary.

The questionnaire was divided into two three sections. The first part asked about demographic data, which cover questions about gender, age, campus location, and the batch year. The questions of section two are: (1) Frequency of Using ChatGPT; (2) Main Purpose of Using ChatGPT; (3) Duration of Using ChatGPT in a Single Session; (4) Access Method; and (5) Source of Knowledge about ChatGPT. Meanwhile, the third section focused on how they perceive ChatGPT in their studies. The questions in section three were adapted from Klimova et al. (2024), but translated into Bahasa Indonesia to ease the comprehension.

Section three questions are as follows:

1. When did you first hear about ChatGPT, and what was your first experience using it?
2. Please describe your initial feelings and evaluation when using ChatGPT.
3. How satisfied are you with ChatGPT's performance when you use it?
4. Specifically, what does ChatGPT do well and what does it not do well?
5. In your opinion, what useful things can be done with ChatGPT?
6. Are there any strange or difficult aspects when using ChatGPT? If yes, please describe briefly.
7. Are there any specific situations that made you uncomfortable when using ChatGPT? If yes, please describe briefly.
8. Do you generally like ChatGPT? If yes, why? If not, why not?
9. Are there any specific aspects that you feel are lacking in ChatGPT? If yes, please describe briefly.
10. How can ChatGPT help you and other students in learning foreign languages and other subjects?

Findings and Discussions

Findings

Frequency of Using ChatGPT

As seen in Table 1, the frequency of usage is quite low as only one participant (Participant 16) reported that he uses ChatGPT every day, while the others use it several times a month and a week, while the rest claim that they seldom use ChatGPT.

Table 1. Frequency of ChatGPT Use

Frequency of Use	Numbers of Participants
Several times a month	5
Several times a week	6
Seldom	4
Every day	1
TOTAL	16

Duration of Using ChatGPT in a Single Session

Table 2 shows that the duration of ChatGPT usage sessions among the participants varied. Six participants reported using ChatGPT for less than 15 minutes per session. Seven participants indicated a usage duration of 15 to 30 minutes per session. One participant reported a duration of 30 to 60 minutes, while two participants indicated using ChatGPT for more than 60 minutes per session.

Table 2. Duration of ChatGPT Use

Duration	Numbers of Participants
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< 15 minutes	6
15 - 30 minutes	7
30 - 60 minutes	1
60 minutes >	2
TOTAL	16

Access Method to ChatGPT

Table 3 below indicates that Seven participants accessed ChatGPT using a laptop or PC. An equal number of participants, seven, used a smartphone for access. Additionally, two participants utilized a tablet to access ChatGPT.

Table 3. Access Method to ChatGPT

Mode of Access	Numbers of Participants
Laptop/PC	7
Smartphone	7
Tablet	2
TOTAL	16

Source of Knowledge about ChatGPT

Table 4 shows the data regarding the source of knowledge about ChatGPT acquired by the participants. Among the 16 participants, three reported that they acquired knowledge about ChatGPT through the internet. Another three participants indicated that they became aware of ChatGPT via their campus resources. Social media was the source of information for five participants, while an equal number of participants, five, learned about ChatGPT from friends or family members.

Table 4. Source of Knowledge about ChatGPT

Source of Knowledge about ChatGPT	Numbers of Participants
Internet	3
Campus	3
Social media	5
Friends/Family	5
TOTAL	16

1. When did you first hear about ChatGPT, and what was your first experience using it?

Generally, most participants reported that they first use ChatGPT in 2023 and most of them use it to assist them with the ‘assignments’ or homework, which was mentioned by Participant 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, , 10, 11, 12, and 13. Some participants (Participants 4 and 11) mentioned that they experimented by asking ChatGPT to construct sentences and to explain some definitions when they did their university assignments. The assignments range from ‘business plan’ to essays and scientific papers. One participant mentioned that he even asked ChatGPT to give him ideas about posters to make of an event at the university. Some participants even heard about ChatGPT from their parents and lecturers although most of them first heard about it from social media.

2. Please describe your initial feelings and evaluation when using ChatGPT.

The participants had mostly positive views about ChatGPT. Many found it very helpful, especially for getting information quickly without much searching. One participant said ChatGPT is amazing and very useful for doing university assignments. Another noted that while ChatGPT's answers are usually accurate, it can sometimes misunderstand questions.

Several participants mentioned that ChatGPT is easy to use and gives good quality information. Some were amazed by the technology, though one person said it now feels like a normal tool. Others appreciated how quickly ChatGPT provides information. However, a few participants were not fully satisfied, saying that ChatGPT sometimes didn't meet their expectations or gave incorrect answers. Overall, most participants were happy with ChatGPT and found it helpful for their studies.

3. How satisfied are you with ChatGPT's performance when you use it?

Based on the data, the majority of participants expressed satisfaction with their experience using ChatGPT. Specifically, five participants reported being very satisfied, six participants indicated they were satisfied, and five participants felt neutral about their experience. No participants expressed dissatisfaction. This suggests that ChatGPT is generally well-received among the users, with a significant portion finding it very satisfactory and useful, although some participants remain neutral, indicating room for further improvements or varied individual needs and expectations.

4. Specifically, what does ChatGPT do well and what does it not do well?

Regarding this question, participants have mixed experiences with using ChatGPT. Many participants appreciate its ability to provide comprehensive information and detailed responses, although they mentioned that the information is sometimes outdated unless they opt for a premium subscription. Some participants mentioned that while ChatGPT can generate detailed answers, these responses can occasionally be too similar, lacking specificity in certain contexts, such as comparing SWOT analyses of different hotels. There is a general consensus that while ChatGPT is helpful for quickly accessing information, it sometimes falls short in providing accurate sources or data. Some users have observed that the responses can be difficult to understand without further research, and there is a concern about the validity of the data provided. Additionally, while ChatGPT is praised for its ability to aid in tasks and generate ideas, its responses are sometimes perceived as rigid and repetitive. The platform is also seen as potentially making users reliant on copying and pasting information without proper modification. Overall, while ChatGPT is valued for its speed and breadth of information, participants have identified several areas where its performance could be improved.

5. In your opinion, what useful things can be done with ChatGPT?

Participants reported various useful applications of ChatGPT in their academic and professional lives. ChatGPT is frequently used for completing assignments, providing valuable information, and assisting in learning. It helps in academic contexts by answering questions that users might find difficult to ask others, aiding in brainstorming ideas, giving examples, and offering opinions or suggestions. Many participants noted that ChatGPT is excellent for gathering information and learning to use it effectively, regardless of the language. Some highlighted its usefulness in generating ideas for branding on Instagram, editing texts, and translating languages. It is also considered beneficial for enhancing knowledge and generating ideas for assignments. Additionally, ChatGPT is appreciated for its ability to help structure ideas, create paragraphs or stories, and even serve as a conversational partner for casual interactions. Overall, participants find ChatGPT to be a highly versatile tool that supports a wide range of academic, professional, and personal tasks.

6. Are there any strange or difficult aspects when using ChatGPT? If yes, please describe briefly.

Regarding difficult aspects when using ChatGPT, participants reported several challenges. Some participants found that they needed to type very specific prompt commands to get the desired answers, and sometimes it was difficult to obtain answers that matched their expectations, requiring them to rewrite their questions multiple times. A few participants mentioned the difficulty of identifying sources for the information provided by ChatGPT. Another challenge noted was the need to clarify which specific information was needed when a prompt could have multiple interpretations. Some participants also pointed out that the

language used by ChatGPT can be too formal, which requires more specific questions for clear answers. Additionally, there is a limitation on the number of times an account can access ChatGPT, which was seen as a restriction by some participants. Others found that the answers provided occasionally did not align with their expectations, potentially due to errors in the commands they typed. Overall, while some participants did not encounter any significant issues, the challenges reported include the need for precise prompts, limitations in access, and difficulties in sourcing and interpreting the information provided.

7. Are there any specific situations that made you uncomfortable when using ChatGPT? If yes, please describe briefly.

Participants mostly reported minimal discomfort when using ChatGPT, with many stating that they did not encounter any uncomfortable situations. However, three participants mentioned that they experience a little discomfort. One participant felt uncomfortable using ChatGPT in public spaces where it might be noticeable to others. Another participant experienced discomfort when ChatGPT provided an answer that they could not verify with information found on Google. Additionally, one participant noted occasional frustration due to slow response times from ChatGPT. Overall, while most participants did not experience significant discomfort, the few challenges mentioned involved concerns about using ChatGPT in public, discrepancies between ChatGPT's answers and other sources, and response delays.

8. Do you generally like ChatGPT? If yes, why? If not, why not?

In general, 15 participants indicated that they liked using ChatGPT because it significantly eased the completion of their university assignments by providing quick and easy access to information. Some participants appreciated ChatGPT for its ability to help them organize and develop ideas quickly. Others enjoyed using ChatGPT because it offered detailed information and supported multiple languages, enhancing their learning experience. A few participants found ChatGPT to be fun and felt it acted like a helpful companion. Additionally, several participants noted that ChatGPT expedited their tasks and provided useful ideas. While most responses were positive, one participant had a neutral view, and another expressed mixed feelings, acknowledging ChatGPT's usefulness while also noting concerns about its potential misuse. Overall, the majority of participants found ChatGPT to be a valuable and beneficial tool for their academic needs.

9. Are there any specific aspects that you feel are lacking in ChatGPT? If yes, please describe briefly.

Participants identified several areas where they felt ChatGPT could be improved. A recurring theme was the lack of specificity in its answers, which often required users to ask follow-up questions to get the detailed information they needed. Two participants mentioned that ChatGPT tends to give general responses and can repeat phrases, which can be frustrating. Two others pointed out that the sources of the information provided by ChatGPT are not always clear, making it difficult to verify the accuracy of the answers. Additionally, one participant noted the limitations in vocabulary usage, suggesting a need for more diverse and precise language. Despite these issues, several participants indicated that they had no significant complaints and were generally satisfied with ChatGPT's performance. Overall, while the tool is highly valued, there is room for improvement in providing more specific, varied, and source-transparent responses.

10. How can ChatGPT help you and other students in learning foreign languages and other subjects?

Participants in this study highlighted various ways in which they utilize ChatGPT to aid their foreign language learning endeavours. They noted that while ChatGPT's information is generally sufficient yet limited, it proves particularly valuable for non-sensitive topics such as foreign languages and academic subjects. Participants expressed appreciation for its role in generating ideas, analysing issues, and providing explanations that facilitate learning processes. Moreover, ChatGPT was credited for its ability to introduce new vocabulary and offer translations, which participants found helpful in their language acquisition efforts.

Specifically, one participant found ChatGPT's straightforward explanations beneficial for learning French, suggesting it eased comprehension compared to other tools. Participants also noted ChatGPT's superiority over traditional tools like Google Translate in expanding vocabulary and providing extensive information and reference sources. Overall, these findings underscore ChatGPT's significant contribution to language learning by enhancing comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and academic support.

Discussions

How students perceive the use of ChatGPT in their academic context

Based on the results gathered from the open-ended questionnaire above, the university students perceived ChatGPT as a positive tool to assist them with their university assignments. Most participants, who primarily access ChatGPT through their laptops and smartphones, appreciate its generative ability to draft sentences and explain concepts, which helps them better understand their assignments. However, the participants of the study mentioned that ChatGPT sometimes provides inaccurate responses, and some even noted that the sources of information are not always clear. This is consistent with the findings of Tossell et al. (2024) who reported that participants experienced concerns regarding the tool's 'poor accuracy' and 'limited feedback' in essay writing assignments with the help of ChatGPT.

In contrast, Farhi et al. (2023) explored ChatGPT usage among UAE students, revealing it as a revolutionary technology that significantly influences student perceptions, concerns, and ethical considerations. The study, encompassing 388 students from two universities in Al Ain city, highlighted ChatGPT's positive impact on learning while raising concerns about its ethical use and integrity in education.

Moreover, Ngo (2023) examined students' perceptions of ChatGPT, emphasizing its benefits in providing personalized tutoring, feedback, and information across various subjects. Barriers identified included challenges in assessing source reliability, accurate citation, and linguistic nuances such as idiomatic expressions. These findings resonate with the current study's exploration of students' favorable opinions of ChatGPT's application in learning contexts.

To address these concerns, some potential solutions can be implemented. These include verifying ChatGPT's responses with reliable sources, using ChatGPT as a reference source or a consultant tool, providing guidelines for its use, and promoting academic integrity to ensure ethical uses of ChatGPT in an academic context. Implementing these solutions can help mitigate the issues associated with ChatGPT's limitations and enhance its utility in educational settings.

How students perceive the use of ChatGPT in learning foreign language

This study finds that the participants of the study highlighted ChatGPT's ability in foreign language learning through new vocabulary acquisition. Some participants even pointed out that the explanation of their French language concepts given by ChatGPT was more straightforward compared to that of given by the teacher in class. Additionally, some others mentioned that ChatGPT's power lies on the variation of language it can use, so the students do not need to always use English when giving prompt to ChatGPT. Lastly, several participants mentioned that they preferred ChatGPT over other freely available translation tool such as Google Translate.

However, the participants have not explored more potentials of ChatGPT beyond translations or vocabulary learning. Teachers and lecturers need to foster it in class through various activities such as in advanced public speaking and even advanced listening and speaking classes (Kostka & Toncelli, 2023).

Moreover, lecturers or foreign language instructors could explore the endless possibilities of ChatGPT in creating authentic texts, dialogues, and reading passages that enhance more meaningful exercises for students to learn (Baskara & Mukarto, 2023). Additionally, educators can try to incorporate more theories such as Communicative

Language Teaching, and Task-Based Learning, to promote more engagement and learner's autonomy during learning process (Hatmanto & Sari, 2023).

Conclusion

In conclusion, university students tend to perceive ChatGPT positively as it assists them to complete their assignments and help with foreign language acquisition. Many participants highlighted ChatGPT's ability to quickly provide information, assist in generating ideas, and in the completion of assignments. The tool is praised for its ease of use and capacity to support users in their native language, Bahasa Indonesia, making it a useful resource for different types of academic needs. However, several participants pointed out areas where ChatGPT falls short, such as the need for more specific answers, clear sourcing of information, and occasional repetition of phrases. These limitations suggest that while ChatGPT is a valuable tool, there is potential for improvement to better meet users' needs.

Participants also mentioned that they experienced little discomfort when using ChatGPT. Nevertheless, some still noted specific situations, such as feeling embarrassed when using the tool in public or encountering differences between ChatGPT's answers and other sources. Some others also mentioned how ChatGPT requires its users to carefully craft the prompt, so it meets the specific needs of the users. Despite these minor challenges, the overall user experience was positive. Most participants indicated that they liked ChatGPT because it facilitated quicker and easier access to information and helped them structure their ideas. However, concerns about the specificity and accuracy of the responses highlight areas for future development.

Future research should explore the use of ChatGPT with a larger and more diverse group of participants in higher education contexts, particularly in English language classes. This would provide a broader understanding of its effectiveness and potential areas for improvement. By examining a wider range of experiences and perceptions, researchers can better assess the tool's impact on academic integrity, language learning, and overall student satisfaction. Expanding the scope of study will contribute to the development of more effective improvements to ChatGPT, which ultimately benefits a larger segment of the academic community, both students and teachers alike.

Moreover, it is crucial for students to be guided and advised regarding the potentials and limitations of ChatGPT. Teachers and lecturers should emphasize the importance of critical thinking and the verification of information. They should also highlight the potential for misuse which may jeopardize academic integrity. Students should understand that over-reliance on ChatGPT for assignments or using it to bypass assignments or other academic objectives are deemed fatal and unethical. By providing clear guidelines and support, educators can help students maximize the benefits of ChatGPT while mitigating its risks.

Overall, this study indicates that while ChatGPT is a highly useful and appreciated tool for university students, addressing its limitations could significantly enhance its effectiveness and reliability. Future iterations of ChatGPT should focus on improving the specificity of responses, ensuring the accuracy and clarity of sourced information, and expanding the diversity of language used to better serve the academic community.

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