

Using Generative AI Tool ChatGPT in Language Teaching from University Language Teachers' Perspective

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ABSTRACT: Since the advent of ChatGPT as a powerful generative AI tool, there has been a significant impact on education and academia. This platform, with its ability to generate content and provide detailed responses, has opened up a new field of research and applications in teaching in general and in language teaching in particular. ChatGPT offers educators useful tools to generate teaching materials, suggest teaching ideas and create assessments. Using the descriptive qualitative method, this research employed the instrument of interview with 21 teachers of different foreign languages at a university in Vietnam. The findings showed multiple utilities provided by various applications of ChatGPT in language teaching from the teaching of the four macro-language skills to the teaching of translation and interpreting as well as vocabulary, grammar. The research then put forward a number of implications for effective use of ChatGPT for improved educational quality in the 4.0 era.

KEYWORDS: ChatGPT; generative AI tool; language teaching; language teachers' perspective.

1. INTRODUCTION

The emergence of ChatGPT as a powerful generative AI tool has sparked intense interest in language education. ChatGPT is regarded as a tool capable of providing rich, adaptive linguistic input, feedback, and task support.

ChatGPT, using new technologies for machine learning and automatic responses, is an automated question-answering application based on Reinforcement Learning from Human Feedback (RLHF) which is an AI training technique that uses human input to teach models to align with human preferences and values.

ChatGPT is a generative AI tool that is both an AI-based chatbot capable of automatically generating natural language responses and interacting with users through voice and text, and a high-level, pre-trained, large-scale language model. It possesses powerful natural language processing capabilities. What makes ChatGPT special is that it can learn human language expressions, understand and generate relatively complex natural language, handling various large-scale data interaction experiences and thus enabling high-quality conversations with users in a very short time. For this reason, it is considered one of the most advanced language models presently available, capable of automatically learning and processing large amounts of data and equipped with excellent features such as automatic chat, question answering, automatically answering questions and generating corresponding answers.

In the field of language education, ChatGPT can generate teaching materials for teachers, provide test questions, relevant information and assistance, and act as a dialogue partner. It can also participate in lesson planning and research, giving teachers an initial plan, offering general and routine content, and effectively helping them design lesson plans at ease. It, therefore, can improve teaching effectiveness and save teachers' time and efforts. In other words, it can be regarded as a relatively comprehensive and sufficient auxiliary teaching tool.

This study aims to investigate how ChatGPT can be used for language teaching purpose from university language teachers' perspective.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent research has mapped out how ChatGPT is used to support language teaching and learning and pointed to pedagogical potential and its limitations. Xiao and Zhi (2023) conducted an exploratory study of EFL students' use of ChatGPT for writing assistance. Their qualitative findings showed that learners rely on the tool to generate ideas, reformulate sentences, and check grammar and vocabulary. Learners generally perceived ChatGPT as helpful for improving clarity and accuracy, but also expressed concerns about overreliance and the risk of accepting AI-generated text without critical thinking. In short, ChatGPT can scaffold learners' writing performance, yet may weaken learners' independent language production if not mediated by the teacher.

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Balci (2024), in a systematic review on the role of ChatGPT in EFL learning and teaching, reported that most studies so far focus on writing support, vocabulary development, and teacher material preparation. They held that ChatGPT tends to enhance learner engagement and perceived self-efficacy, while allowing teachers to save time on routine tasks such as exercise creation and initial feedback. However, the authors highlight risks of inaccuracies, hallucinated information, and ethical issues around plagiarism and academic integrity. They, therefore, came to a conclusion that ChatGPT is most beneficial when integrated into carefully designed tasks that require EFL teachers and learners to critically evaluate and revise AI output, rather than simply accept it uncritically.

ChatGPT's impact on feedback processes has been another matter of concern. Recent work on metalinguistic explanation compares traditional teacher feedback with AI-generated feedback on EFL writing. Almutlaq and Alsaleh (2025) and Tran (2025) suggested that ChatGPT can provide rapid, detailed metalinguistic commentary that helps learners notice grammatical and lexical problems. Yet, teacher feedback still outperforms AI feedback in terms of contextualisation, prioritisation of problems to address, and affective and motivational support (Sarica and Deneme, 2025; Xiaoyi, 2025). This line of research converges on the idea of a complementary model: teachers orchestrate and refine feedback, while ChatGPT offers additional, low-stakes practice and explanation rather than a replacement for human judgment.

Beyond writing, researchers have explored ChatGPT as a tool for literature and content-based instruction. Zhang (2024) and Ekizer (2025) reported on the integration of AI tools including ChatGPT in English literature classes. They stated that generative AI can assist students in summarising complex texts, exploring alternative interpretations, and rehearsing academic discussion. Still, they warn that AI-generated analyses may appear authoritative even superficial or inaccurate, and therefore, explicit training in AI literacy and critical reading is required.

Overall, recent research regards ChatGPT as a powerful but double-edged tool in language teaching. Its strengths lie in rapid content generation, personalised scaffolding, and support for learner autonomy and teacher productivity. Its weaknesses comprise potential overdependence, threats to academic integrity, and the occasional inaccuracy of its output. The studies are in agreement that ChatGPT should be used as a pedagogical partner rather than a replacement teacher.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This section describes the research design, participants, instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis, and ethical considerations adopted in this study.

3.1 Research Design

The study employed a qualitative descriptive design, which is appropriate for exploring teachers' perspective regarding the use of ChatGPT in language teaching. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative approaches are suitable for examining how individuals interpret their experiences, and Denzin and Lincoln (2018) held that qualitative inquiry allows for rich, context-dependent accounts of social phenomena.

3.2 Participants and Research Setting

The research data was collected from 21 participants, being foreign language teachers at a university Vietnam. With their teaching experience ranging from 3 to 25 years, they were teachers of English ($n = 9$) accounting for nearly 43%, and the rest are teachers of other foreign languages, namely Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish and Russian, making up around 57%. A majority of participants were female ($n = 15$, approximately 71%).

A purposive sampling strategy was used to select teachers who (1) teach foreign languages at the tertiary level, (2) have at least 3 years of teaching experience, and (3) have prior use of ChatGPT in their teaching. This sampling approach is commonly used in qualitative studies to recruit participants who can provide rich, relevant insights (Palinkas et al., 2015).

3.3 Research Instruments

The primary data collection instrument was a **semi-structured interview**, comprising **10 open-ended questions** focusing on:

- how ChatGPT was used in language teaching
- benefits and challenges of ChatGPT in language teaching
- precautions regarding the use of ChatGPT

Interview was used as data collection instrument in this research since it can provide in-depth, detailed insights into participants' beliefs, experiences, and attitudes (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2018, Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). Participants being interviewed can express their perspectives in their own words, hence providing rich, qualitative data (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection followed several steps:

- **Permission and Consent:** Approval was obtained from participants prior to the interviews.
- **Conducting the Interviews:** Interviews were conducted face-to-face or online, depending on participants' availability. Each interview lasted around 20 minutes.

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- **Recording and Data Management:** With participants' consent, all interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim.
- **Organization of Data:** Transcripts were coded and categorized systematically.

3.5 Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using thematic analysis, following the six-step procedure proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006):

1. Familiarization with data
2. Generating initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing the report

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were strictly observed. Participants were informed about the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights and that the data collected were used only for research purposes. Participation was entirely voluntary, and participants could withdraw at any time without consequence. Confidentiality was protected by assigning pseudonyms and removing identifiable information.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. ChatGPT with generating teaching materials

The generative AI tool ChatGPT can help language teachers generate teaching materials. Teachers can use ChatGPT to search for teaching materials like books, articles, or the latest documents aligned with the content of teaching. ChatGPT can also provide teachers with various explanatory materials aligned with their teaching content. For example, teachers can input prompts to request ChatGPT to generate dialogues related to the topic of shopping, covering scenarios such as "asking for prices, bargaining, asking about changing room, etc. ChatGPT makes it possible for teachers to compile reference materials, which helps to diversify the teaching materials apart from frequently used textbooks.

ChatGPT can enable teachers to generate texts of varied topics, length, and levels of complexity and difficulty depending on students' different levels of language proficiency. With the help of ChatGPT, language teachers can also produce multiple versions on the same topic, either simplified, standard or advanced. These texts can then be converted into speech in case language teachers need materials for their listening lessons. ChatGPT also allows language teachers to design materials for teaching other skills like writing and speaking with prompts and sample writing and speaking products without much time and efforts required. For example, ChatGPT allows language teachers to generate dialogues in different contexts (at the airport, at a job interview, in a shopping mall, etc). Or teachers can give prompt like "Write a 250-word B1-level story about a student on his first day at the university", then use this as a writing sample for students to learn from or turn this into reading comprehension tasks (True/False questions, multiple choice questions, summary completion, etc) or create follow-up vocabulary and grammar tasks based on the text. The tool truly offers language teachers immense autonomy in designing teaching materials for multi-use purpose.

Using ChatGPT, language teachers can input image information with text and obtain the desired results in a short time. ChatGPT can correctly interpret the meaning behind the images provided by the teacher, enabling teachers to use images to find the information or content they require. For example, a teacher can first take a screenshot of a historical site like the pyramid or the Great Wall and then ask the AI tool about the meaning of the input image information. ChatGPT will then provide the teacher with numerous details based on the input image. This is extremely beneficial for language teachers to expand their knowledge and enrich their teaching materials, which in turn improves the quality of their teaching. And for teachers teaching languages like Italia, Spanish or Portuguese who may not have as many teaching materials as those teaching English or Chinese, Chat GPT is truly a great partner.

For those who teach translation and interpreting, ChatGPT can also serve as a useful tool as it allows teachers to design translation materials of different levels of difficulty and about various topics from education, environment, economics and commerce to culture, politics, etc in different languages. These materials can be converted from text to speech to help with the teaching of interpreting as well. In other words, with the assistance of ChatGPT, language teachers can produce diverse language materials for translation and interpreting practice without relying on authentic materials, which may not be easy to collect in some cases.

4.2. ChatGPT with lesson delivery

Language teachers can also resort to ChatGPT for help with their lesson planning with some simple prompts in a very quick manner. To brainstorm lesson ideas, language teachers can use ChatGPT to quickly generate options for activities, themes, and texts. For instance, a teacher teaching Spanish can ask ChatGPT to design a lesson plan about Machu Picchu to teach students of B1 level of Spanish in a lesson about a historical site in South America. The teacher can either provide materials he/she has about the topic or ask the tool to find and organize the appropriate materials that fits the teaching objectives and lesson duration. The teacher

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then can pick the best outline and proactively modify timing, level of difficulty, or skills focus of the lesson to be delivered. Methods of teaching and follow-up practice requirements can also be suggested by ChatGPT so as to help teachers achieve the lesson goals. The teacher then can ask for a structured lesson plan including objectives, stages, and procedures and can also add constraints such as class size (large or small-sized), available resources (no projector, only blackboard and chalk) and context (exam preparation, CLIL, ESP, etc).

ChatGPT is also resourceful to help language teachers with their designing PowerPoint slides for effective lesson delivery with many different titles, layouts, images, illustrations, sound effects to offer. These features help to enhance the listener-attention effects of the lessons delivered, considerably improving the teaching quality.

4.3. ChatGPT with designing exercises and tests

Language teachers can use ChatGPT to draft rubrics for varied tasks, checklists for students to use for self- or peer-assessment in case of conducting groupwork/pairwork, and model feedback comments.

ChatGPT can also help language teachers to generate practice questions and test questions. In replacement of the time-consuming and laborious process of manually writing test items, teachers can use ChatGPT to generate various questions for assessing their students or giving their students practice exercises, reviewing what they have been taught.

What is more, Chat GPT can help diversify question formats, including multiple choice questions, fill-in-the-blank questions, matching questions, true/false questions, summary questions, and other combinations of formats. This can make the language more diverse and enable teachers to assess students' varied question-handling skills.

ChatGPT can also generate questions of progressively increasing difficulty levels, allowing the assessment of students' different levels of language proficiency, which would be a hard task for those teachers who are in charge of language classes with multi-level students.

For those language teachers who wish to assess students according to the Bloom Taxonomy, ChatGPT enables them to design test items which target different stages of perception such as the memory stage, the comprehension stage or the application stage.

Using the same texts in the textbook used in the class, language teachers can use ChatGPT to design additional questions related to the content taught apart from the questions already attached to the texts in the textbook. This allows language teachers to check their students' understanding the teaching materials in an innovative manner.

5. CONSIDERATIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF USING CHATGPT IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

5.1. Considerations

As previous studies have shown, ChatGPT should be used as a pedagogical partner rather than a replacement teacher. The use of ChatGPT should be coupled with critical evaluation, reflection, active language use, and guided by clear ethical and assessment frameworks.

When teachers write prompts in ChatGPT, it is crucial to ensure the context clearly and provide as many details as possible since the more detailed the description, the more accurate and comprehensive ChatGPT's the answer will be. To write effective prompts, language teachers should clearly state the specific goal and avoid vague language.

When design exercises and test questions, language teachers should use ChatGPT to design tasks that require learners to think, evaluate, and transform AI output. The assessment practices should evolve to value process, reflection, and interaction. Teachers should explicitly address AI literacy, critical use, and ethical issues.

Applying these principles will help language teachers effectively leverage the potential of ChatGPT for effective applying the tool to enhance language education. Only then is ChatGPT not a threat to language teaching but a catalyst for rethinking how we design, mediate, and assess language learning in the AI era.

5.2. Limitations

While ChatGPT can offer numerous insights and benefits to language teaching, it has limitations in handling complex contexts and understanding teachers' intent, resulting in generated content failing to meet teachers' expectations.

There is a risk that ChatGPT may have a certain degree of inaccuracy and unreliability in answering questions as well as providing information since it can generate incorrect or inaccurate information, which is in agreement with what previous research has pointed out. Language teachers, therefore, should be cautious and carefully check the accuracy of the answers provided by ChatGPT when using it as a supplementary teaching tool.

6. CONCLUSION

ChatGPT is an advanced technological tool that can equip teachers with a wealth of content, opening up many new possibilities for the field of language education. Using ChatGPT as a teaching aid, teachers should be aware of its limitations. ChatGPT should only be considered as an auxiliary teaching tool helping teachers with their language teaching practices rather than a replacement or a tool to definitely rely on.

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To better capitalize on the opportunities presented by generative artificial intelligence technologies and their products like ChatGPT, language teachers should invest their time and efforts in working out how to leverage intelligent technologies to innovate educational models, create a more flexible, open and adaptable digital education environment in an attempt to achieve the transformative goals of precise teaching, personalized learning, scientific assessment, and differentiated class management.

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