

VIETNAMESE LECTURERS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE USE OF CHATGPT IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to examine Vietnamese university lecturers' perceptions and attitudes toward the use of ChatGPT in English teaching, focusing on their views of its effectiveness, challenges, and ethical concerns. The research employed a mixed-methods approach, combining survey questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with 25 English lecturers working at different universities across Vietnam. The survey explored dimensions such as perceived usefulness, practicality, and reliability of ChatGPT in classroom teaching, while the interviews provided richer insights into lecturers' critical reflections and concerns. The findings indicate that the majority of lecturers expressed positive perceptions, acknowledging ChatGPT's potential to provide immediate feedback, support personalized practice, and generate creative content that can enhance students' writing and learning experiences. At the same time, their attitudes also revealed caution and skepticism. Several participants highlighted the limitations of AI-generated responses, including occasional inaccuracies, lack of contextual appropriateness, and risks of plagiarism or student dependency.

Keywords: Perceptions; Attitudes; ChatGPT; English Teaching; Vietnamese Lecturers.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of artificial intelligence (AI) has transformed education across the world, opening new pathways for innovation in teaching and learning (Baker & Smith, 2019). AI is no longer considered merely a supporting tool but increasingly functions as a driver of pedagogical change, optimizing outcomes through personalized learning, real time feedback, and adaptive content delivery. In this context, the way educators and learners perceive and respond to AI tools becomes critical. Perception is commonly defined as the process of interpreting and evaluating the usefulness, relevance, and appropriateness of a particular tool or innovation, while attitudes reflect the affective stance individuals adopt toward its use, ranging from acceptance to rejection (Ajzen, 2005). As Ajzen (2005) states, "attitudes capture a person's overall evaluation of performing a behavior, whether favorable or unfavorable" (p. 3). Research has shown that even when technologies are technically effective, their adoption and sustainability often depend on whether teachers perceive them as valuable and hold positive attitudes toward their integration (Ertmer et al., 2012; Teo, 2019).

International research has illustrated this point clearly. Kung et al. (2022) demonstrated that students and instructors valued ChatGPT's ability to simplify complex materials and provide immediate feedback, showing how positive perceptions can drive acceptance. At the same time, Kasneci et al. (2023) reported that teachers' attitudes often include caution regarding fairness, bias

in AI outputs, and risks of dependency. Similarly, Strobl et al. (2024) found that while many students enthusiastically adopted ChatGPT as a “writing buddy,” teachers insisted on the continued importance of human guidance, revealing ambivalent attitudes shaped by both optimism and concern. These findings align with earlier work by Georgakopoulou et al. (2020), who warned that “digital writing aids may foster dependency on automated systems, thereby undermining learners’ autonomy” (p. 46).

The Vietnamese context presents both opportunities and challenges. English is a compulsory subject and plays a key role in national education policy, but the dominant approach to teaching remains exam oriented, emphasizing memorization and grammar practice over communicative competence (Hoang, 2010; Nguyen & Le, 2019). This has left many students lacking confidence in real life communication and less motivated to engage actively in language learning. Nguyen and Le (2019) noted that “students often memorize patterns without fully understanding how to use them in authentic contexts” (p. 30). Within this environment, ChatGPT has been perceived as a potentially valuable tool to address these shortcomings by offering interactive practice, stimulating idea generation, and providing instant feedback. Some lecturers view it as a chance to modernize English education and to move away from traditional rote methods.

Nevertheless, lecturers’ attitudes toward ChatGPT remain cautious and sometimes divided. A number of concerns have been raised, including the uneven availability of digital infrastructure across urban and rural schools, limited teacher training in AI literacy, and the possibility of plagiarism or overdependence on machine generated responses (Georgakopoulou et al., 2020; Ertmer et al., 2012). Nguyen (2023) highlighted this gap, noting that “teachers’ perceptions are rarely explored, even though they are central to the adoption of classroom innovations” (p. 15). Yet teachers play a central role in determining how innovations are adopted in classrooms, and their perceptions and attitudes can either facilitate or hinder successful integration. As Wong et al. (2020) argue, “technology integration is rarely about the tool itself but about how users perceive and value it in their own educational setting” (p. 212). Without understanding lecturers’ perspectives, it is difficult to predict whether ChatGPT will become a genuinely useful pedagogical tool or remain an underutilized novelty.

The aim of this study is to investigate how university lecturers in Vietnam perceive and implement the use of ChatGPT in English language teaching, with a particular focus on their attitudes, pedagogical practices, and the challenges they encounter in the integration process. As Ajzen (2005) noted, “attitudes capture a person’s overall evaluation of performing a behavior, whether favorable or unfavorable” (p. 3). Thus, understanding lecturers’ perceptions and attitudes toward ChatGPT is essential for assessing the extent to which this tool can be effectively and responsibly incorporated into language education.

Ultimately, this study aims to provide a balanced understanding of Vietnamese lecturers’ perceptions and attitudes toward ChatGPT, identifying both opportunities and challenges in its pedagogical use. By doing so, it seeks to generate practical, evidence-based recommendations for professional training, institutional policy, and curriculum development that will support the responsible and effective integration of AI into English language education in Vietnam.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

2.1. Participants

The participants in this study include 25 English language lecturers who are currently teaching or have previously taught at various universities in Vietnam and have experience using ChatGPT in

their teaching practices. These lecturers were selected from a range of higher education institutions, such as Thai Nguyen University of Education, Hung Vuong University, Tan Trao University, and Hanoi National University of Education. The inclusion of these lecturers aligns with the core aim of the study to investigate their perceptions, attitudes, and instructional practices related to the integration of ChatGPT into English language teaching. These educators represent a key demographic that directly engages with technological tools and plays a vital role in shaping the effectiveness of AI-enhanced teaching in the context of digital transformation in education.

2.2. Research design

The study adopts a descriptive research design within a mixed-methods framework to examine university lecturers' perceptions, practices, and experiences with ChatGPT in English language teaching. A descriptive design is particularly appropriate when the aim is to present a comprehensive account of current practices and perspectives without manipulating variables (Sandelowski, 2000; Creswell, 2012). In this research, the descriptive orientation allows for an in-depth depiction of how lecturers perceive ChatGPT, how they employ it in lesson planning and classroom interaction, and what challenges or opportunities they encounter in practice. The rationale for adopting this design is further strengthened by its alignment with contemporary theoretical models of technology adoption and pedagogical practice. The survey component draws on constructs identified in the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (Venkatesh et al., 2003), particularly performance expectancy and effort expectancy, which are reflected in lecturers' perceptions of usefulness and ease of use. The interview component engages with perspectives from recent literature on AI in education, which conceptualizes tools like ChatGPT as mediators of teaching and learning processes rather than as replacements for instructors (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019; Kasneci et al., 2023). By linking research questions to these theoretical perspectives, the design ensures consistency between the aims of the study and the methods employed. Quantitative data measure constructs derived from adoption models, while qualitative narratives contextualize and extend these findings by addressing pedagogical, experiential, and ethical dimensions.

2.3. Data collection Instruments

2.3.1. Questionnaire

In this study, a structured questionnaire was developed as the main instrument to collect quantitative data from university lecturers. Its design was guided by established models of technology adoption, particularly the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (Venkatesh et al., 2003), which emphasizes performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and facilitating conditions, as well as studies on teachers' attitudes toward technology integration (Teo, 2011; Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019).

The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part, Demographic Information, gathers background data such as gender, years of teaching experience, qualifications, and prior use of AI tools. This information supports subgroup analysis and contextualizes patterns of response.

The second part is designed to address the three research questions. For Research Question 1 (perceptions), items examine lecturers' awareness, readiness, and knowledge of ChatGPT's features, along with their perceived ease of use and usefulness. For Research Question 2

(practices), items focus on how ChatGPT is applied in teaching activities, including lesson planning, materials development, feedback, and student engagement. For Research Question 3 (attitudes), items measure both positive and negative orientations toward ChatGPT, such as enthusiasm, perceived benefits, concerns about plagiarism, and the need for professional development. Likert-scale statements are complemented by open-ended questions, which provide richer insights into challenges and suggestions for institutional support.

2.3.2. Focus group interviews

To complement the questionnaire data, focus group interviews were conducted to provide qualitative insights into university lecturers' perceptions, practices, and attitudes toward the use of ChatGPT in English language teaching. Focus groups were selected as a data collection method because they allow participants to interact with one another, generate discussion, and build on shared experiences, often producing richer insights than individual interviews (Krueger & Casey, 2015). This approach was particularly valuable for the study, as it created a dialogic space in which lecturers could articulate their experiences, compare viewpoints, and debate both the opportunities and the risks of integrating ChatGPT in their professional practice.

The design of the interview guide was informed by the study's research questions and supported by established theoretical models. In relation to perceptions and practices, the guide included prompts about how ChatGPT was being applied in lesson planning, classroom interaction, assessment, and the development of language skills. With respect to attitudes, the questions explored both positive orientations such as enthusiasm and perceived benefits, and negative concerns including plagiarism, overreliance on AI, and broader ethical challenges. This structure drew on frameworks of technology adoption such as UTAUT (Venkatesh et al., 2003) and findings from research on AI in higher education (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019; Holmes et al., 2022; Kasneci et al., 2023), thereby ensuring that the interview content was both theoretically grounded and empirically relevant.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. University lecturers' perceptions of ChatGPT

Table 1 showed that lecturers held predominantly positive perceptions of ChatGPT, particularly valuing its time-saving capacity, its potential to increase student engagement, and its provision of valuable feedback in writing tasks. At the same time, concerns about accuracy and source reliability, coupled with mixed views on personalization, underscored the need for more straightforward institutional guidelines, pedagogical frameworks, and practice-based training to support sustainable and effective integration of the tool in higher education. The results indicated that lecturers generally had positive perceptions of ChatGPT, particularly appreciating its ability to save time, enhance student engagement, and provide valuable feedback on writing tasks. However, they also expressed concerns about the accuracy and reliability of sources. Additionally, there were mixed opinions regarding the tool's personalization features. This highlighted the need for more straightforward institutional guidelines, pedagogical frameworks, and practical training to support ChatGPT's sustainable and effective integration in higher education.

Table 1. Lecturers' Perceptions of ChatGPT (n = 25)

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Awareness and use of ChatGPT	0	0	0	0	25
2	Understanding of main functions	0	0	7	18	0
3	Awareness of limitations (accuracy, sources)	0	0	12	0	13
4	Saves time in lesson preparation	0	0	0	0	25
5	Personalization of learning tasks	0	0	11	10	4
6	Enhances student engagement	0	0	5	0	20
7	Provides useful feedback on writing	0	0	2	0	23

The data from Table 2 suggest that lecturers' understanding of ChatGPT is still somewhat limited, with knowledge concentrated at a basic level, while their concerns and challenges are much more pronounced. This pattern underscores the urgent need for systematic training in the effective use of ChatGPT, along with clear strategies to address issues related to assessment validity, plagiarism, and research ethics in higher education.

Table 2. Challenges and Concerns of ChatGPT from Lecturers' Perspectives (n = 25)

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I faced difficulties using ChatGPT due to limited digital skills	0	7	3	0	15
2	I am concerned that students may become overly reliant on ChatGPT	0	0	0	25	0
3	I am concerned that using ChatGPT may raise ethical issues (e.g., plagiarism)	0	0	0	0	25
4	I found it difficult to verify the accuracy of ChatGPT's responses	0	0	0	25	0

5	Institutional guidelines on the use of ChatGPT are unclear	0	0	0	2	23
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3.2. Actual use of ChatGPT by university lecturers

Survey results from Table 3 indicated that all participating lecturers (25 out of 25, 100%) had used ChatGPT, suggesting that this tool has become integral to English language teaching practices at the university level. However, the extent and frequency of its use varied significantly across different functions. This variation may reflect differences in the lecturers' awareness of the tool's capabilities, raising questions about whether some were unaware of certain features or, conversely, were aware but did not see them as necessary for their teaching.

To explore these perspectives more closely, we first considered the general frequency of use. Seven out of the 25 lecturers (28%) reported using ChatGPT only "sometimes," while the majority (18 out of 25, 72%) stated they used the tool "frequently" or "very frequently." This indicates that most lecturers have regularly incorporated ChatGPT into their teaching practices rather than using it sporadically or only as an experiment, reaffirming its role in university level pedagogy.

Table 3. Frequency of ChatGPT Use by Function (n = 25)

Function of Use	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently	Rarely
General use	7 (28%)	18 (72%)	–	–
Developing teaching materials	–	16 (64%)	6 (24%)	3 (12%)
Test and exam creation	11 (44%)	14 (56%)	–	–
Translation/vocabulary explanation.	–	10 (40%)	15 (60%)	–
Dialogue/role-play simulation	5 (20%)	11 (44%)	–	9 (36%)

Regarding the function of developing teaching materials, 16 lecturers (64%) reported frequent use, and 6 (24%) reported widespread use, confirming that this is one of the most common and practical applications. Lesson planning is regarded as a crucial stage in teaching, and ChatGPT is considered particularly valuable for quickly generating realistic and adaptable ideas. ChatGPT's responses have been described as helpful for personalizing lesson content when given sufficient information and specific requirements.

Regarding test and exam creation, 14 lecturers (56%) reported frequent use, while 11 (44%) used the tool only occasionally. This cautious approach to applying ChatGPT in assessment contexts aligns with lecturers' earlier concerns about academic integrity and the reliability of AI-generated content.

For translation and vocabulary explanation, 10 lecturers (40%) reported frequent use, while 15 (60%) reported frequent use. This shows that translation functions are utilized more extensively than other areas. ChatGPT is valued for providing rapid responses that save lecturers considerable time on translation tasks. Additionally, it can draw on a wide range of domains, making it particularly useful for specialized courses that require technical or academic terminology.

Regarding dialogue simulation and role-play activities, 11 lecturers (44%) reported frequent use, 5 (20%) reported occasional use, and the remaining 9 (36%) reported rare use. These findings reflect a cautious approach to integrating ChatGPT into live classroom interactions. The majority of participants were senior lecturers with advanced teaching skills, demonstrating a preference for managing real-time teaching situations rather than depending on ChatGPT. This preference was particularly noticeable in contexts involving spontaneous interactions and classroom management. This may clarify why this feature has not been extensively explored.

3.3. Attitudes, trust, and intentions toward ChatGPT integration

3.3.1. Attitudes toward integration

Table 4. Attitudes toward the integration of ChatGPT (n = 25)

Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Interpretation
Q1	Integrating ChatGPT into English language teaching is a positive idea.	23 (92%)	2 (8%)	Lecturers unanimously endorsed the idea, showing strong recognition of ChatGPT as a valuable innovation for higher education.
Q2	I believe ChatGPT can improve students' learning experiences.	19 (76%)	6 (24%)	All lecturers agreed that ChatGPT enhances student learning, particularly through engagement, creativity, and resource provision.
Q3	I feel enthusiastic about using ChatGPT in my teaching.	5 (20%)	20 (80%)	Most lecturers expressed enthusiasm, though the lower proportion of "strongly agree" suggests cautious optimism rather than uncritical acceptance.

Table 4 shows that lecturers held consistently positive attitudes across all three statements, with unanimous or near-unanimous agreement. While enthusiasm and recognition of benefits were evident, the predominance of "agree" over "strongly agree" in Question 3 suggests that lecturers remained cautiously optimistic, acknowledging both the potential and the limitations of ChatGPT in teaching practice.

The findings from Questions 1 - 3 reveal a strong baseline of positive attitudes: lecturers regard ChatGPT as both beneficial and promising for enhancing students' learning outcomes, while also expressing personal excitement about its potential integration into classroom practice. This attitude creates a favorable foundation for broader adoption; however, translating this into actual practice depends on trust, institutional support, and ethical safeguards, which will be discussed in subsequent sections.

3.3.2. Trust in ChatGPT

The survey results for Questions 4, 5, and 6 reflect the extent to which lecturers trust the reliability and usefulness of ChatGPT in the context of English language teaching. Overall, lecturers agreed that ChatGPT offers some pedagogical value; however, they cautioned regarding the tool's accuracy and dependability.

Table 5. Trust in ChatGPT (n = 25)

Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Interpretation
Q4	I trust ChatGPT's responses in teaching contexts.	4 (16%)	16 (64%)	5 (20%)	Lecturers generally found ChatGPT useful, though complete trust was limited.
Q5	I regard ChatGPT as a reliable reference source.	6 (24%)	15 (60%)	4 (16%)	ChatGPT was viewed as a valuable supplementary resource but not a substitute for traditional academic materials.
Q6	I feel confident using ChatGPT in formal teaching activities.	3 (12%)	10 (40%)	12 (48%)	Lecturers showed clear hesitation, recognizing its value for preparation while withholding trust in formal classroom and assessment contexts.

The data from Table 5 indicates that lecturers' trust in ChatGPT was moderate. While most participants acknowledged its value as a reference and preparatory tool, far fewer expressed confidence in applying it to formal teaching and assessment, reflecting ongoing concerns about accuracy and reliability.

Overall, the findings across these three questions reveal that lecturers' trust in ChatGPT ranges from moderate to positive. While they acknowledge the tool's pedagogical value, they stop short of viewing it as a reliable resource for higher education, particularly in research, testing, and assessment.

3.3.3. Behavioral Intention and Influencing Factors

Regarding Behavioral Intention, when questioned about their willingness to integrate ChatGPT into their teaching, 70% of lecturers (18 out of 25) reported that they either "Agree" or "Strongly Agree." In contrast, 30% (7 out of 25) remained neutral. Notably, none of the lecturers expressed disagreement. This finding indicates that most lecturers are inclined to adopt ChatGPT; however, the level of commitment is not absolute, as a portion of the respondents remains cautious.

In the section addressing Trust as an influencing factor, 80% of lecturers (20 out of 25) "Strongly Agreed" that Trust plays a crucial role in shaping their use of ChatGPT, while 20% (5 out of 25)

selected "Agree." No participants were neutral or disagreed, highlighting that Trust is essential for transforming positive attitudes into actual teaching behavior.

Regarding Facilitating Conditions and Policy, when asked about the clarity of institutional policies and organizational support, 70% of lecturers (18 out of 25) selected "Agree," while the remaining 30% (7 out of 25) remained neutral. This result suggests that while lecturers recognize the importance of policy frameworks, the lack of clarity and transparency prevents some from feeling fully confident in applying ChatGPT.

Table 6. Behavioral intention and influencing factors (n = 25)

Dimension	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Interpretation
Behavioral Intention	I intend to integrate ChatGPT into my teaching practice.	–	18 (72%)	7 (28%)	–	Most lecturers expressed positive intentions, though a cautious minority remained neutral.
Trust	Trust is a decisive factor in my use of ChatGPT.	20 (80%)	5 (20%)	–	–	Trust was universally acknowledged as a prerequisite for turning positive attitudes into practice.
Facilitating Conditions	Institutional policies and support influence my integration of ChatGPT.	–	18 (72%)	7 (28%)	–	Lecturers recognized the importance of policy support, though the lack of clarity limited confidence in full adoption.

Table 6 highlights that lecturers are keen on adopting ChatGPT! However, successful implementation relies significantly on building trust and ensuring clear institutional support. This aligns with the TAM/UTAUT framework, where trust and facilitating conditions are key in transforming intentions into lasting actions.

Overall, the data indicate that although lecturers demonstrate a generally positive behavioral intention toward integrating ChatGPT (70%), realizing this intention in practice requires two key conditions: (1) strengthening Trust in the accuracy and reliability of ChatGPT, and (2) ensuring clear institutional frameworks and supportive policies. These findings align with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), which emphasize the mediating roles of Trust and Facilitating Conditions in converting positive attitudes into sustainable adoption behaviors.

3.4. Discussion

The findings shows that lecturers view ChatGPT as a promising tool that can enhance efficiency and enrich teaching practices, yet they remain cautious about its associated risks and limitations. From a TAM/UTAUT perspective, high Performance Expectancy (PU) and Effort Expectancy (PEOU) are evident; however, weak Facilitating Conditions, including unclear policies and a lack of training, pose significant barriers to adoption. This suggests that institutional support and social influence will transform lecturers' positive perceptions into consistent and responsible classroom practices.

Vietnamese university lecturers have actively integrated ChatGPT into their teaching practices, with all 25 participants confirming its use. However, the data revealed that the application of ChatGPT is primarily focused on pre-class preparation activities, while its use during class and for assessments remains limited and cautious.

The results also indicate that Vietnamese university lecturers generally have a positive attitude toward ChatGPT. Most lecturers believe that integrating ChatGPT into teaching represents an innovative approach that can enhance students' learning experiences, increase engagement, and foster creativity in the educational process. Many expressed enthusiasm about the tool's ability to save time in lesson preparation and diversify classroom activities. However, this positive perception is tempered by caution. Some lecturers raised concerns about the potential for students to become overly dependent on ChatGPT, which could undermine their autonomy, critical thinking, and academic integrity. Additionally, the level of trust in the accuracy of ChatGPT's outputs remains limited, especially in formal assessments.

4. CONCLUSION

The results revealed a clear pattern: lecturers recognize tangible value in preparation, where the tool accelerates lesson planning, refines materials, and expands instructional options. Perceived ease of use strengthens positive attitudes in these low-risk contexts, while trust and facilitating conditions determine whether adoption extends into live teaching and assessment.

The discussion situated these patterns within established acceptance frameworks and the context of Vietnamese higher education. Effort expectancy emerged as the strongest driver of attitudes during preparation, while performance benefits were most significant for materials development. The transition from attitude to intention depended on institutional supports that build trust, including clear rules for permissible use, transparent assessment rubrics, and verification routines. Without such support, lecturers remain cautious about real-time orchestration and summative grading, despite generally favorable perceptions.

Practical implications arise from this synthesis. Institutions should provide access to approved tools while implementing policies that mandate the disclosure of AI assistance, protect data, and uphold academic integrity. Professional development must be practice-based and scenario-driven, linking learning objectives to prompt design, sourcing, verification workflows, and vetted classroom examples. For teaching teams, a staged integration process that begins in preparation and progresses to controlled in-class activities can maintain pedagogical oversight while building staff confidence. For students, explicitly cultivating digital capability and integrity norms is essential for ensuring responsible use.

The study also highlighted limit generalization, including modest sample sizes, purposive sampling, and reliance on self-reporting. It proposed directions for future research that extend the scope, adopt longitudinal designs, refine measurement, and link adoption to learning outcomes.

Taken together, this analysis clarifies where current value resides and what must change for the responsible integration of AI in education.

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