

ELT TEACHERS' ACCEPTANCE OF CHATGPT AS A WRITING ASSISTANT IN GENERAL ENGLISH COURSES

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: 15/02/2025	The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence has introduced innovative tools like ChatGPT, which are increasingly supporting English language teachers in teaching languages. Writing skills have become a key area where the potential of ChatGPT can be effectively harnessed. Its ability to assist teachers in delivering structured and systematic writing lessons makes it a valuable asset in modern classrooms. Despite its benefits, concerns about academic honesty, data privacy, feedback accuracy, and reliability affect teacher readiness and the integration of ChatGPT as a writing assistant in general English courses. This paper aimed to explore ELT teachers' acceptance of ChatGPT in teaching writing. This study employed a qualitative research design in which six teachers at College A in Ho Chi Minh City participated in semi-structured interviews. The collected data was analyzed using qualitative thematic analysis to examine their acceptance of ChatGPT. Findings reveal that teachers generally held positive attitudes toward ChatGPT, as they appreciated its ease of use and usefulness, which are two key factors in the Technology Acceptance Model. The study recommends further research on institutional support, professional training, and contextual factors influencing teacher acceptance to enhance the effective integration of ChatGPT in teaching writing.
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SỰ CHẤP NHẬN CỦA GIÁO VIÊN TIẾNG ANH ĐỐI VỚI CHATGPT NHƯ MỘT TRỢ LÝ VIẾT TRONG CÁC KHÓA HỌC TIẾNG ANH TỔNG QUÁT

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THÔNG TIN BÀI BÁO	TÓM TẮT
Ngày nhận bài: 15/02/2025	Sự phát triển nhanh chóng của trí tuệ nhân tạo đã mang đến những công cụ đổi mới như ChatGPT, hỗ trợ giáo viên tiếng Anh trong giảng dạy, đặc biệt là kỹ năng viết. Nhờ khả năng cung cấp nội dung có hệ thống, ChatGPT giúp giáo viên xây dựng bài giảng hiệu quả hơn. Tuy nhiên, bên cạnh lợi ích, vẫn tồn tại lo ngại về tính trung thực học thuật, bảo mật dữ liệu và độ chính xác của phản hồi, ảnh hưởng đến mức độ sẵn sàng ứng dụng công cụ này. Nghiên cứu này nhằm đánh giá mức độ chấp nhận ChatGPT của giáo viên dạy tiếng Anh thông qua phương pháp định tính, với sáu giáo viên tại trường A, Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh tham gia phỏng vấn bán cấu trúc. Dữ liệu được phân tích theo phương pháp phân tích chủ đề, cho thấy giáo viên nhìn chung có thái độ tích cực, đánh giá cao tính tiện lợi và hữu ích của ChatGPT – hai yếu tố quan trọng trong Mô hình Chấp nhận Công nghệ. Nghiên cứu đề xuất tiếp tục khám phá các yếu tố như hỗ trợ từ tổ chức, đào tạo chuyên môn và bối cảnh giảng dạy nhằm tối ưu hóa việc tích hợp ChatGPT vào giảng dạy kỹ năng viết.
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1. Introduction

In recent years, the integration of AI into education has transformed traditional teaching practices, particularly in language instruction [1]. Among AI advancements, ChatGPT (Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer), an advanced generative language model developed by OpenAI, has emerged as a valuable tool in teaching languages, especially in teaching writing skills [2]. Its capabilities in understanding and generating human-like text enable personalized feedback and scaffolded support, which enhances engagement and writing skills [3]. Introduced in November 2022, ChatGPT is an advanced AI-powered chatbot developed by OpenAI. It enables users to interact naturally across various topics without conversational limitations. In education, ChatGPT serves as a valuable tool for instructors by supporting teaching activities, assisting with research information, and keeping up with emerging trends [4]. AI is widely adopted by teachers in teaching practices. Khabib [5] noted that AI-driven technologies have significantly influenced various aspects of education and have recently gained increasing attention in the development of AI-powered digital writing tools. ChatGPT is an AI-driven English writing assistant capable of generating human-like content.

The theoretical foundations of ChatGPT as a writing assistant are rooted in social constructivism, which emphasizes its role in scaffolding writing. Scaffolding, introduced by Wood et al. [6] and aligned with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, provides temporary support to learners, which is gradually reduced as they gain proficiency. This approach enhances learning by reducing anxiety, encouraging collaboration, and fostering communication [7]. ChatGPT mirrors these practices by offering instant feedback, generating model texts, and facilitating reflective discussions. Several scaffolding strategies illustrate ChatGPT's role in writing development. Cognitive scaffolding is seen in its timely, personalized feedback that helps address writing weaknesses [8]. Content scaffolding appears in its model essays, improving grammar, vocabulary, and structure [9]. Meta-cognitive scaffolding is supported through discussions on writing organization and critical thinking [10]. Linguistic scaffolding simplifies terminology and adjusts materials to proficiency levels, enhancing coherence [11]. These strategies align with pedagogical practices, strengthening EFL instruction. ChatGPT also aids grammar accuracy, word choice, and text structure [12], while supporting lesson planning by generating curriculum-aligned content, fostering engagement, and addressing individual needs [13].

To understand how teachers accept ChatGPT, it is essential first to define the term "acceptance." Dillon and Morris [14] describe "acceptance" as users' willingness to use a system, while Schade and Schlag [15] describe "acceptance" as "a prospective judgment of measures to be introduced in the future," which they detail as "the target group will not yet have experienced the new measures." Adell [16] further defines it as "the degree to which an individual intends to use a system and, when available, incorporate the system in his/ her driving", while Proctor et al. [17] view "acceptance" as stakeholders' perception of a system's suitability. Building on these definitions, "technology acceptance" refers explicitly to how users perceive a technology before adopting it, as discussed by Martin et al. [18] and Distler et al. [19], while their actions shape and are shaped by the technology [20]. Davis [21] further defines "technology acceptance" through two key factors: perceived usefulness (how much it enhances performance) and perceived ease of use (how effortless it is to use). In this paper, "teacher acceptance" was defined as educators' willingness to adopt and integrate ChatGPT into their teaching practices, influenced by their perceptions of its usefulness and ease of use. This means that teachers are more likely to accept ChatGPT in teaching writing skills if they find this AI tool beneficial for enhancing student learning and easy to incorporate into their pedagogical practices.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), developed in 1986 and refined in 1989, explains technology adoption through Perceived Usefulness (PU), Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), Attitude towards Using, Intention to Use (IU), and Actual Use. PU reflects the belief that

technology enhances performance, while PEOU refers to its perceived effortlessness. Research indicates PU has a stronger influence on intention than attitude [22], which makes additional TAM constructs unnecessary. Due to the focus of the study on teacher acceptance, the authors adopted a simplified TAM, which uses only PEOU, PU, and IU to analyze ELT teachers' acceptance of ChatGPT as a writing assistant. PU examines the impact of ChatGPT on instruction, PEOU assesses ease of use, and IU reflects teachers' motivation to integrate it.

Studies on teachers' acceptance of ChatGPT highlight key factors such as ease of use, usefulness, and institutional support. Mutammimah et al. [23] and Strzelecki et al. [24] found that intuitive design promotes adoption, while limited digital literacy hinders it. Har [25] and Dehghani & Mashhadi [26] emphasized ChatGPT's role in automating feedback, lesson planning, and student engagement. Imran and Almusharraf [27] noted its ability to reduce workload through grammar correction and model essay generation. Dilzhan [28] highlighted its effectiveness in adaptive instruction by personalizing learning. However, concerns remain regarding academic integrity, AI overreliance, and critical thinking. Alrishan [29] and Nguyen [30] identified lack of training and institutional support as major barriers. These findings suggest that while ChatGPT offers pedagogical benefits, successful adoption requires professional development, clear guidelines, and structured strategies.

In summary, prior research has examined AI acceptance in ELT, particularly regarding ChatGPT, yet gaps remain in understanding teachers' willingness to adopt it in practice. Research on the integration of ChatGPT in Vietnamese ELT contexts remains limited, particularly regarding teachers' perspectives [11]. Most studies focus on student outcomes, with limited attention to teachers' perceptions of ChatGPT in classroom practices. While teachers recognize its benefits, whether positive attitudes lead to actual integration remains unclear due to limited training or institutional constraints. Additionally, quantitative surveys may not fully capture teachers' perspectives. Addressing these gaps, this paper examined ELT teachers' acceptance of ChatGPT as a writing assistant, exploring factors influencing adoption. The research question is: *"How do ELT teachers accept ChatGPT as a writing assistant in general English courses?"*

2. Research method

The study employed a qualitative research design that was grounded in interpretivism [31], focusing on teachers' acceptance of ChatGPT in writing instruction. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, and thematic analysis, which included manual coding, was used to provide nuanced insights into teachers' perceptions [32].

The study was conducted at College A in Ho Chi Minh City, a private institution offering on-campus, in-service, and distance learning. Students used Four Corners [33] as the primary textbook for general English courses. The course included 15 periods per semester, which focused on short essays, formal letters, and reports. Teachers in this research context combined reading and writing, incorporating peer review and guided exercises to enhance grammar, vocabulary, and organization. ChatGPT was integrated as a supplementary tool for generating prompts, providing grammar corrections, and suggesting vocabulary and structural improvements. Teachers supported students to engage with ChatGPT for guided exercises and peer review, which made writing lessons more interactive and efficient while introducing them to AI-based tools.

This paper employed convenience sampling for the qualitative data collection as it is a common qualitative sampling strategy in which "settings, groups, and/or individuals that are conveniently available and willing to participate in the study" are selected [34, p. 286]. The participants, therefore, were selected for the interview based on convenience needed to meet the following criteria: (1) they were English lecturers responsible for teaching writing in general English courses; (2) they had experience using ChatGPT in writing instruction; (3) they were willing to participate in the study. The target population of the current study consisted of 14

English teachers working as visiting and official lecturers, 6 of whom participated in the study. The remaining participants were excluded for lacking experience, availability, or willingness, ensuring the sample included only relevant insights. Among the six interviewed teachers, the majority were male, aged 25 to 42, with teaching experience ranging from 2 to 18 years. Four held MA degrees, while two had BA degrees. Most reported moderate to high technological proficiency, and five had received AI training. Only one lacked AI training, whereas the others incorporated AI techniques into their ChatGPT-assisted teaching.

The study employed qualitative semi-structured interviews to explore their acceptance of ChatGPT in teaching writing. Semi-structured interviews were chosen for their balance of structure and flexibility, enabling in-depth exploration of teachers' perspectives while allowing adjustments based on responses [35]. A total of 14 questions were developed based on the TAM model and adapted from Davis [21] and Al Darayseh [36], focusing on three dimensions: PEOU, PU, and IU. First, the three-question list was designed as a warm-up section to help participants feel relaxed and familiar with the interview process. Following this, the background section included three questions to build trust and gather basic information, while the central section had eleven questions exploring the technology acceptance factors of the TAM model: PEOU, PU, and IU.

Creswell and Poth [37] noted that interviews can be conducted in various formats. This study used 60-minute online interviews via Microsoft Teams for flexibility and convenience. Conducted in Vietnamese with a semi-formal approach, the interviews encouraged detailed responses. Semi-structured questions allowed adjustments for smooth conversations while ensuring systematic data collection [38]. Key points were noted during the sessions. After developing the interview questions, the researchers conducted a pilot phase following Mertens' [39] five-step process: selecting participants, collecting feedback, refining questions, and testing revisions. Two pilot tests were conducted, with a 5-day gap between the tests to allow time for feedback analysis from the participants. Two ELT teachers participated, leading to adjustments such as clarifying "technology integration" and merging repetitive follow-up questions. This iterative approach ensured the final questions were clear, relevant, and streamlined.

Effective data coding is crucial for organization and analysis [40]. While Guest et al. [40] suggested using source ID, data labels, and file names, this study replaced file names with patterns for clarity [41]. Interview records were labeled concisely (e.g., "01_Interview" for Participant 01). Thematic analysis identified predefined and emerging themes [42], using an inductive approach with confirmed, translated, and reviewed transcripts. Following Braun and Clarke [42] five steps, the researcher transcribed, coded using TAM, refined and defined themes, and structured findings into main themes and subthemes, ensuring a comprehensive analysis.

3. Findings and discussion

3.1. Findings

The data from semi-structured interviews revealed that teachers generally had a positive attitude toward adopting ChatGPT as a writing assistant in their teaching practice. The qualitative findings confirmed and provided insights into teachers' acceptance and were grouped into the following two themes: *Perceived ease of use* and *Perceived usefulness*.

3.1.1. Perceived ease of use

Ease of accessibility

Five out of six participants emphasized that ChatGPT's minimal requirements, including an internet connection and an account, made it highly accessible, fostering teacher acceptance. This simplicity allowed educators with varying levels of digital proficiency to use the tool effortlessly. For instance, one teacher noted, "*I see ChatGPT as quite easy to use; just with the internet and an account, I can start right away. This makes it extremely convenient for someone like me to*

access the tool whenever I need it" (T01). Another added, *"It did not require any complicated setup or technical expertise, just logging in and starting with an internet connection was enough"* (T04). These responses illustrate how the ease of accessibility of ChatGPT removes barriers to adoption, ensuring broader engagement, particularly in contexts with differing levels of digital literacy. This highlights the pivotal role of accessibility in successfully integrating AI tools into teaching practices.

User-friendly interface

Most interviewed teachers (4 out of 6) emphasized that ChatGPT's simple layout and intuitive design enhanced user-friendliness. The straightforward interface allowed them to navigate the tool quickly and focus on teaching tasks without struggling to understand its functionality. One teacher stated, *"The layout is so simple and straightforward. I did not have to look for anything; it is all clear, and I knew exactly where to go from the start"* (T01). Another remarked, *"The intuitive design stood out. I did not have to read instructions or watch tutorials; everything was easy to figure out, which saved me a lot of time"* (T05). These insights demonstrate how the design minimized confusion and reduced the learning curve, making the tool accessible to teachers with varying levels of technological experience. ChatGPT encouraged broader adoption by prioritizing simplicity and clarity and ensured its effective integration into teaching practices. This underscores the critical role of user-friendly design in promoting teacher acceptance of AI tools.

3.1.2. Perceived usefulness

Reducing teacher workload in editing

The interviews highlighted the ability of ChatGPT to reduce teachers' workload in editing mechanical aspects like grammar and punctuation, making the writing process more manageable and increasing acceptance. Most participants (5 out of 6) agreed it allowed more focus on higher-order feedback. Teacher 01 shared, *"ChatGPT significantly reduces my workload [...] I no longer spend as much time on grammar or sentence structure."* However, some expressed concerns about oversimplified corrections. Teacher 03 noted, *"It might oversimplify the process, leading to less detailed feedback,"* while Teacher 04 mentioned, *"Corrections might be too general, missing personalized guidance."* While ChatGPT saves time, teachers remain cautious about its impact on feedback quality and personalized learner support.

Increasing teachers' motivation

The interviews revealed that ChatGPT boosted teachers' motivation by reducing repetitive tasks like editing, grading, and lesson planning. This allowed them to focus more on creative and engaging aspects of teaching, increasing their enthusiasm and acceptance of the tool. Teacher 01 noted, *"ChatGPT has made lesson planning much easier, which motivates me to try new methods in my teaching."* Similarly, Teacher 02 shared, *"I feel more motivated to focus on creative lesson development and student engagement,"* while Teacher 04 added, *"I can spend more time designing engaging activities for learners."* By minimizing routine tasks, ChatGPT increased teachers' productivity and renewed their passion for teaching, further reinforcing its usefulness and encouraging broader adoption in education.

Boosting learners' engagement

Five out of six teacher participants noted that ChatGPT positively impacted student engagement. Teachers appreciated how it facilitated creative lesson planning, allowing them to design innovative activities. As Teacher 01 observed, *"The interactive exercises I create using ChatGPT have made learners more interested in participating, as they feel the tasks are more personalized."* Teacher 02 added, *"ChatGPT helps make lessons more interesting, increasing student participation and enthusiasm for learning."* The streamlined grading and creative lesson planning enabled by ChatGPT resulted in more engaging lessons, boosting student motivation and involvement. This direct impact on student learning encouraged teachers to adopt the tool, recognizing its benefits in enhancing the classroom experience.

Improving personalized learning

All participants agreed that ChatGPT significantly enhanced personalized learning by tailoring activities and feedback to diverse student needs. This enabled teacher to provide targeted support for varying proficiency levels, contributing to their acceptance of the tool. Teacher 01 shared, *"ChatGPT helps generate ideas and structures suitable for learners' levels, making the learning process more personalized."* Teacher 02 added, *"ChatGPT allows me to customize writing exercises for different proficiency levels, ensuring each student receives support matching their abilities and interests."* This highlights the role of ChatGPT in addressing individual learning needs and fostering teacher adoption.

*Language development and writing skills**+ Enhancing aspects of language development*

The teacher participants highlighted the high effectiveness of ChatGPT in writing instruction, particularly in enhancing vocabulary and improving grammatical accuracy. This tool encourages contextual language use, enabling students to produce more accurate and meaningful writing aligned with real-life communication. One teacher mentioned, *"ChatGPT introduces my students to new vocabulary [...] and provides synonyms, helping them expand their vocabulary without overwhelming them"* (T01). Another remarked, *"It points out grammatical errors and explains why something is incorrect, which helps students gradually improve their grammar skills"* (T04). A different teacher noted, *"ChatGPT suggests language that fits the topic and tone, making writing feel more natural and aligned with real-world communication"* (T06). These insights show that ChatGPT not only corrects errors but also offers tailored explanations and suggestions, helping students identify weaknesses and foster independent learning. Its ability to align writing with real-world contexts supports the development of practical language skills crucial for academic and professional success.

+ Fostering organizational competence in writing

The interview analysis revealed that teachers use ChatGPT extensively to enhance organizational competence in writing. They highlighted its effectiveness in improving logical sequencing, paragraph structuring, and the overall flow of ideas. ChatGPT provides valuable suggestions for linking ideas and ensuring smooth transitions, helping students produce clearer and more cohesive writing. As one teacher noted, *"ChatGPT has been beneficial in showing my students how to organize their essays more logically, guiding them to present their ideas in a clear and coherent order"* (T02). Another commented, *"It gives tips on connecting ideas smoothly, making their writing flow much better overall"* (T05). However, one participant raised a concern, noting that students need at least an intermediate level of English to benefit from ChatGPT fully. This teacher explained, *"Without that, it is difficult for them to properly assess and select the right recommendations it provides"* (T03). Overall, ChatGPT's support in organizing ideas enhances students' writing, though its effectiveness may depend on their language proficiency.

Instant feedback

All participants agreed that the ability of ChatGPT to provide instant feedback greatly enhanced the efficiency and effectiveness of writing instruction, positively influencing their acceptance of the tool. They highlighted how it enabled quick and detailed feedback on learners' writing, improving quality, consistency, and support for self-correction while accelerating the feedback process. One teacher explained, *"Using ChatGPT provides instant and consistent feedback on vocabulary and grammar, allowing learners to self-correct more effectively"* (T02). Additionally, T03 emphasized how ChatGPT's instant analysis and detailed corrections boosted their confidence in using the tool: *"ChatGPT analyzes writing instantly, highlights errors, and offers specific corrections, making the process more efficient and providing immediate feedback to learners. I feel more confident about everything in my teaching."* However, participants also stressed the necessity of reviewing AI-generated content to ensure accuracy, appropriateness, and

pedagogical alignment before relying on feedback from ChatGPT. While the tool provides rapid and detailed responses, some teachers raised concerns about occasional errors in grammar suggestions or contextually inappropriate word choices. One teacher cautioned, “*ChatGPT is helpful, but I always double-check its feedback before giving it to students. Sometimes, the AI suggests grammatically correct words but do not fit the intended meaning*” (T05). This highlights the importance of teacher oversight in verifying feedback from ChatGPT to maximize its effectiveness in writing instruction.

3.3. Discussion

This study examined how teachers accept ChatGPT as a writing assistant in general English courses. Data from semi-structured interviews showed a generally positive attitude toward its use. Findings revealed both consistencies and differences compared to previous research. Teachers viewed ChatGPT as user-friendly and beneficial, reinforcing prior studies on its ease of use [24]. Perceived usefulness was key to acceptance, with ChatGPT reducing workload through automated grammar correction and model essays [28]. Its adaptability to proficiency levels supported Dilzhan’s [29] findings. Acceptance increased as teachers recognized its benefits, aligning with the TAM model [23], though application varied by teaching context. Unlike previous studies that separated acceptance and actual use, this research explored how teachers’ positive acceptance of ChatGPT evolved during its application in writing instruction. Another key contribution lies in its contextual specificity. Unlike prior research in Western or industrialized settings, this study captures Vietnamese ELT teachers’ perspectives, reflecting unique technological and cultural dynamics. Extending TAM to underrepresented regions highlights commonalities and challenges in AI adoption, such as data privacy and academic honesty, enriching our understanding of AI acceptance in diverse teaching contexts.

4. Conclusion

This study examined ELT teachers’ acceptance of ChatGPT as a writing assistant in general English courses through semi-structured interviews with six participants from College A, Ho Chi Minh City. Findings showed positive acceptance due to ease of use and perceived usefulness, aligning with the TAM model. Teachers valued ChatGPT’s automation of idea generation, grammar review, and feedback, improving efficiency. However, concerns about AI feedback accuracy highlighted the need for clear guidelines and training. This study contributes by focusing on teacher acceptance rather than student outcomes, emphasizing professional development and verification of AI-generated content. While ease of use and usefulness drive adoption, successful implementation requires clear policies, training, and pedagogical alignment. Future research should expand to a more diverse sample, including rural and low-tech environments, and adopt longitudinal and mixed-methods approaches to assess long-term impact. Exploring frameworks beyond TAM, such as socio-cultural and institutional factors, will deepen understanding and support sustainable AI integration in ELT writing instruction.

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