Empowering Language Learners’ Critical Thinking: Evaluating ChatGPT’s Role in English Course Implementation

Nataliia Avsheniuk
Foreign Systems of Pedagogical and Adult Education Department
Ivan Ziaziun Institute of Pedagogical and Adult Education of the NAES of Ukraine, Kyiv, Ukraine

Olena Lutsenko
Department of Foreign Languages for Natural Sciences Faculties
Educational and Scientific Institute of Philology
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine

Tetiana Svyrydiuk
Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Economics,
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine

Nataliia Seminikhyna
Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Economics,
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine
Corresponding Author: nseminikhyna@gmail.com

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Abstract
This study investigates the influence of ChatGPT on critical thinking and English language learning within Ukrainian university English departments. Utilizing qualitative and quantitative methods, it involved 31 students and three language instructors in surveys and ChatGPT-assisted project-based activities. The significance of this study lies in its potential to guide the integration of AI tools in educational contexts, particularly in language learning. By examining the benefits and challenges of using ChatGPT, the study provides insights into how AI can support or hinder language learning and critical thinking. This is particularly relevant in the context of rapidly evolving educational technologies and the increasing use of AI in academic settings. In the spring semester of 2023, a research study was carried out involving students participating in a project-based activity using ChatGPT. The study comprised two main phases: initial survey, project completion, and evaluation. Quantitatively, it was found that 62% of students use ChatGPT weekly, underlining its role in their language studies. The results showed varied perspectives on its efficacy, especially in critical thinking, English skills development, and ethical considerations. Ethical and pedagogical issues were also significant, including concerns about the authenticity of AI responses, plagiarism risks, and AI dependency. Nevertheless, the potential advantages of ChatGPT, such as immediate language support and the promotion of learner independence, were acknowledged by students. The research concludes by recommending a careful integration of AI in language education.

Keywords: AI tools, ChatGPT’s role, critical thinking, English Course implementation, higher education

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Introduction

Definitions of Artificial Intelligence (AI) are complex and evolving (Long & Magerko, 2020; Holmes & Tuomi, 2023). A practical definition comes from UNESCO, describing AI as systems capable of intelligent behaviour-like data processing, including reasoning, learning, and planning (UNESCO, 2023). Despite concerns about AI like ChatGPT supplanting teachers (Hié, 2023), it is being incorporated into education to enhance rather than replace human roles, emphasizing the need for "human-in-the-loop" (Stening, 2023, para. 3). Furthermore, the US Department of Education's Office of Educational Technology (2023) advises maintaining a human-centred approach to AI in education, affirming teachers' vital role as critical decision-makers in instruction (p. 54). Sims (2023) also advocates for considering AI as an adjunct to enhance teaching rather than replacing human educators, which could facilitate its effective incorporation into classroom settings. ChatGPT's role as a conversational agent can aid teaching and boost students' understanding of AI (UNESCO, 2023). With the growing integration of AI in various sectors (Schroeder, 2023), it is crucial for education systems to foster students' critical engagement with AI and technological proficiency (Abramson, 2023), thereby underscoring the importance of acquainting students with AI tools like ChatGPT for real-world relevance.

In recent years, rapid advancements in AI have brought significant changes, particularly in education. Among the forefront of these advancements is ChatGPT, a sophisticated language model developed by OpenAI. Known for its ability to produce indistinguishable text from human writing and answer complex queries, ChatGPT has significantly impacted language education, especially in Ukraine, and promises to drive further innovation in AI technology. As the future unfolds, the potential applications and implications of ChatGPT and similar large language models offer exciting prospects for enhancing human interaction with technology and improving various aspects of life. ChatGPT is an interactive language model that uses sophisticated deep-learning strategies to create human-like responses and actively participate in user discussions. As Johnson and Lee (2020) note, the advantages of integrating AI technologies, like ChatGPT, into language teaching settings are substantial, particularly in helping learners enhance their language acquisition and communication skills. Meniado emphasizes the significant role of ChatGPT in enhancing English language instruction. It shows that ChatGPT is beneficial in supporting teachers in designing tailored lesson plans, facilitating language learning in various settings, creating personalized educational resources, assessing language proficiency, and providing immediate, personalized feedback (Meniado, 2023).

While many Ukrainian universities are navigating the shift from emergency remote instruction to enhanced digital learning, they now face a new challenge: the emergence of the artificial intelligence tool Chat GPT, which can compose complete essays and structured academic works in mere minutes. The significance of this study lies in its potential to guide the integration of AI tools in educational contexts, particularly in language learning. By examining the benefits and challenges of using ChatGPT, the study provides insights into how AI can support or hinder language learning and critical thinking. This is particularly relevant in the context of rapidly evolving educational technologies and the increasing use of AI in academic settings. Considering the benefits and risks of using Chat GPT in English language acquisition, the study focuses on the following primary research questions:

1. How do AI tools like ChatGPT influence students' critical thinking development in language learning environments?
2. What are the participants' perceptions of integrating AI tools like ChatGPT in language education?

The study's findings aim to provide educators with insights into the possible advantages and implications of integrating ChatGPT into curriculums. This would ultimately foster students' critical thinking, development of English language skills, effective information analysis, and informed decision-making skills.

**Literature Review**

ChatGPT, a form of AI technology, has recently gained considerable attention in the context of language education. ChatGPT enables language learners to engage in lively, interactive dialogues that simulate real-world communication scenarios. Studies suggest that ChatGPT enhances language fluency by providing personalized and contextual language practice. The model's instant feedback and realistic conversation simulations improve learners' writing and speaking skills (Ho et al., 2020). ChatGPT supports learner independence by allowing them to hone their language abilities at their own pace and in their own way. The tailored support and adaptability of ChatGPT facilitate self-guided learning, as emphasized by Gilson et al. (2023). Through engaging interactions with ChatGPT, learners can improve their language skills in a manner that is both focused on the learner and interactive (Yang & Kyun, 2022). ChatGPT is a beneficial tool for enhancing English language skills among Jordanian university students (Omar et al., 2024).

"We should be thinking about the world we are preparing our students to enter and what habits of thinking we want to instill in them so they can successfully represent the discipline of psychology,” states Oppenheimer. “That means figuring out how to incorporate novel technology they will be using in the real world into classroom exercises.” (Oppenheimer, 2023).

Incorporating advanced AI technologies such as ChatGPT into language instruction opens up a whole new world of possibilities for learners (Pang, 2022). These remarkable tools can build customized and adaptable language learning environments that cater to the unique requirements of each learner (Grassini, 2023). With its natural language processing capabilities, AI can comprehend and analyze learners' linguistic output, offering tailored feedback that aids them on their personalized journey towards language mastery. This innovative approach fosters a more individualized and practical language learning experience (Hwang et al., 2023). Moreover, implementing AI technologies is crucial in promoting social interaction and advancing language skills. These technologies allow learners to engage in simulated conversations that mimic real-life situations, allowing for cooperative learning.

A notable example is ChatGPT, which allows individuals to practice their language abilities in lifelike scenarios, facilitating peer interaction and the practical application of language in various settings (Adamopoulou & Moussiades, 2020; Ahmadi, 2018). It is of utmost importance to maintain ethical standards in AI-assisted language learning. When we bring AI into educational environments, we also bring a host of ethical and societal concerns that must be carefully examined and conscientiously managed (Ahmadi, 2018; Hinze et al., 2022; Ray, 2023; Sagin Simsek, 2008).

Educators engage students in discussions about the limitations and biases of AI and its responsible implementation (Chaudhry et al., 2022). By nurturing informed decision-making regarding AI, learners can enhance their critical thinking and decision-making abilities. Language education is revolutionized by AI tools like ChatGPT, which offer personalized, adaptable, and captivating learning experiences that mirror real-life language usage and promote collaborative learning (Abdelghani et al., 2022). However, integrating AI into education must acknowledge the
significance of addressing social and ethical concerns, including AI's fair and responsible utilization. In this regard, educators play a vital role in initiating critical discussions and helping students grasp the limitations and ethical considerations associated with AI, empowering them to utilize AI in a responsible manner (Alshater, 2023; Cotton et al., 2023; Kostka & Toncelli, 2023).

Higher education acknowledges the significance of critical thinking as an essential outcome, serving as a means of inquiry and a valuable asset in personal and public domains. Scholars and educators agree that critical thinking encompasses various elements, such as reasoning, inference, critical judgments, and creative thinking. According to Facione (2013), critical thinking is a deliberate assessment that involves interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, grounded in evidence and context. Ongoing discussions aim to refine further the specific skills, attitudes, and dimensions associated with critical thinking, focusing on evaluating students' reasoning abilities (Facione, 2013). Recognizing the role of ChatGPT in enhancing learners' critical thinking, media literacy, and digital navigation skills is essential for developing effective teaching strategies in the digital age (Pang, 2022; Sallam, 2023; Susnjak, 2022; Trang, 2021; Young, 2003).

Methods

The research study incorporated qualitative and quantitative approaches, engaging 31 students and three language instructors through surveys and project-based activities facilitated by ChatGPT. The data collected from these participants were then analyzed using the Statistical Package JASP and content analysis techniques. To gather the necessary information, a questionnaire was developed based on an extensive review of relevant literature. This questionnaire encompassed three distinct areas and featured a series of questions within each section. Additionally, the results that were obtained were subjected to qualitative examination. The reliability of the coding process was assessed using the Miles - Huberman formula during the content analysis phase (Miles-Huberman, 2002). In addition to these methods, the authors employed observation, literature analysis, and questionnaire administration as additional research tools.

Participants

This research was conducted across three faculties in one Ukrainian university, where English language courses are offered to first and second-year students. The sampled group was comprised of 31 students and three English language instructors who were targeted for the survey. Data were collected over the spring semester from March to June 2023. The 34 forms and the accompanying comments samples formed the data set for subsequent analysis.

The survey was conducted in English, and no translation was necessary. Participants were chosen using purposive sampling, selecting individuals with previous experience utilizing ChatGPT for language learning. This approach was aimed at collecting detailed and relevant data.

Research Instruments

The research instrument in this study is a Google Forms questionnaire designed to investigate the impact of ChatGPT on English for Specific Purposes (ESP) learning. The form's interface is intuitive and easily accessible, making it ideal for online surveys. Respondents accessed the form via a shared link. The data collection and analysis features of Google Forms allowed for the automatic compilation of responses into a spreadsheet, facilitating both basic and
advanced analysis. Google questionnaire was divided into three dimensions: enhancement of critical thinking skills through ChatGPT, challenges and opportunities of integrating ChatGPT into ESP learning pedagogy, and ethical issues related to using ChatGPT in English language learning. Quantitative data and multiple-choice questions were analyzed using statistical methods to identify patterns and correlations. Qualitative data from open-ended responses underwent thematic analysis to draw out significant themes and detailed insights, offering a comprehensive understanding of ChatGPT's role in ESP learning.

Research Procedures

The study comprised two main phases: initial survey, project completion, and evaluation. In the initial survey phase, conducted at the start of the projects, students completed surveys to capture their initial attitudes and expectations about using AI tools like ChatGPT for their projects. The project completion and evaluation phase involved students writing their final essays and then undertaking a review and evaluation process. This critical phase focused on assessing the AI-generated content and gathered students' experiences and reflections on their learning journey with AI. This approach allowed the study to capture a comprehensive view of the student's experience with AI tools — from their initial expectations to their practical experiences and final evaluations of the AI-assisted learning process.

Findings

Quantitative Findings

This section offers comprehensive insights into the findings of the quantitative study. It addresses each research objective while organizing the data collected from the questionnaire. The subsections below present a detailed analysis of the participants' responses and experiences.

Frequency of ChatGPT Usage

The participants' responses regarding their frequency of ChatGPT usage for language learning illustrate that ChatGPT usage among students and instructors varies. Some use it daily, while others employ it weekly or monthly. This diversity in usage patterns offers valuable insights into the role of ChatGPT in enhancing critical thinking skills across different levels of engagement. According to the responses, 62% of students use ChatGPT weekly for ESP task completion.

English Language Activities and Critical Thinking Skills

Table one summarizes participants' responses concerning how they utilize ChatGPT for language learning and its impact on their critical thinking skills.

Table 1. ChatGPT for language learning and its impact on their critical thinking skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Conversational practice and grammar checking</th>
<th>Conversational practice and vocabulary expansion</th>
<th>Writing assistance grammar checking</th>
<th>Writing assistance grammar checking</th>
<th>Reading assistance, and language translation</th>
<th>Reading assistance improved my analytical skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The participants' responses indicate a generally positive trend in the impact of various ChatGPT-assisted activities on different cognitive and learning skills. The impact on problem-solving abilities is moderately positive, with a mean of 6.636. However, there is some variability in responses (standard deviation of 1.113), and the scores range from four to eight, suggesting that experiences varied among participants.

Conversational practice and vocabulary expansion have a notably high positive impact on decision-making skills, with a mean score of 7.941. The responses are relatively consistent (standard deviation of 0.736), and the range is tightly clustered between seven and nine, indicating that most participants experienced significant benefits in this area. Writing assistance and grammar checking impact reasoning proficiency, which is moderate (mean of 6.353) and relatively consistent among participants (standard deviation of 0.646). The range of scores five to eight indicates some variation in the level of impact. Writing assistance and grammar checking positively impacted cognitive flexibility, with a mean of 7.147. There is moderate response variability (standard deviation of 0.892), and the range of six to nine suggests that most participants found it beneficial. Reading assistance and language translation positively impact creativity in learning, with a mean of 7.294. The responses are consistent (standard deviation of 0.719), and the range of six to nine indicates primarily positive participant experiences. Reading activity shows a high positive impact on analytical skills, with a mean of 7.636. The responses vary more widely in this area (standard deviation of 1.141), but the range of six to nine suggests generally favourable outcomes. The trend across these activities indicates that ChatGPT-assisted learning positively influences cognitive and language-related skills. The most significant impacts are seen in decision-making and analytical skills, with relatively high mean scores and consistent positive feedback.

While there is some variability in how students experience these activities, the general trend points to the beneficial role of ChatGPT in enhancing specific cognitive skills related to language learning. Participants reported enhancements in their critical thinking skills, including improved problem-solving abilities, enhanced analytical thinking, increased creativity, and greater cognitive flexibility.

**Challenges and Opportunities of Integrating ChatGPT into Language Learning Pedagogy**

Table two summarizes participants' challenges while integrating ChatGPT into language learning pedagogy.

**Table 2. Challenges participants encountered while integrating ChatGPT into language learning pedagogy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I have difficulties in ensuring the accuracy of responses</th>
<th>I am concerned about the potential loss of human interaction</th>
<th>I feel difficulties with balancing ChatGPT with traditional teaching methods</th>
<th>I have challenges in monitoring and assessing ChatGPT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>7.212</td>
<td>8.529</td>
<td>6.559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>1.364</td>
<td>0.961</td>
<td>0.746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>4.000</td>
<td>7.000</td>
<td>5.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The student's and instructors' responses in this study reveal various experiences and concerns related to using ChatGPT in integrating ChatGPT into language learning pedagogy. They express a moderately high level of difficulty in ensuring the accuracy of ChatGPT's responses, with a mean score of 7.212 and a standard deviation of 1.364, indicating notable variation in their experiences. The scores ranged from four to nine, highlighting the diversity in how participants perceived the reliability of ChatGPT. There is a high level of concern among participants about the potential loss of human interaction due to the integration of ChatGPT, as evidenced by a mean score of 8.529 and a standard deviation of 0.961. This concern is consistent among the participants, with scores ranging from seven to ten, suggesting that most view the loss of human interaction as a significant issue. Balancing ChatGPT with traditional teaching methods poses moderate difficulty, reflected in a mean score of 6.559 and a standard deviation of 0.746. The range of scores from five to eight shows a narrower spectrum of experiences in this aspect compared to others. Monitoring and assessing ChatGPT's use in educational settings is another challenge for participants. They report a relatively high level of difficulty, with a mean of 7.588 and a standard deviation of 1.351, pointing to significant variability in their experiences. The range of scores from six to ten indicates various experiences and perceptions regarding this challenge.

**Opportunities**

Table three presents the opportunities participants identified in integrating ChatGPT into language learning pedagogy.

| Table 3. Opportunities of integrating ChatGPT into language learning pedagogy |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                                               | Accessibility to language resources | Learner autonomy | Problem-based learning | Instant language assistance | Diversification of teaching and learning methods |
| Valid                                          | 33               | 34              | 34               | 34               | 32               |
| Missing                                        | 4                | 3               | 3                | 3                | 3                |
| Mean                                           | 7.212            | 8.529           | 6.912            | 7.588            | 7.500            |
| Std. Deviation                                 | 1.364            | 0.961           | 1.357            | 1.351            | 1.244            |
| Minimum                                        | 4.000            | 7.000           | 5.000            | 6.000            | 5.000            |
| Maximum                                        | 9.000            | 10.000          | 10.000           | 10.000           | 10.000           |

The study's findings reveal that integrating ChatGPT in language learning pedagogy has several benefits. Participants reported increased accessibility to language resources, with a mean score of 7.212 and a standard deviation of 1.364, indicating a positive reception, albeit with differing opinions. The scores ranged from four to nine, showing diverse experiences among participants. Learner autonomy is significantly promoted through ChatGPT, as reflected in a high mean score of 8.529 and a standard deviation of 0.961. This suggests a strong agreement among participants, with scores ranging from seven to ten. The tool also supports problem-based learning, with a mean score of 6.912 and a standard deviation 1.357. While participants generally find ChatGPT beneficial for this purpose, the broader range in scores five to ten indicates varied levels of effectiveness. Providing instant language assistance is another crucial benefit, receiving a mean score of 7.588 and a standard deviation of 1.351. This reflects a positive impact, though with notable differences in participant experience scores ranging from six to ten. The study also found that ChatGPT helps diversify teaching and learning methods, with a mean score of 7.500 and a
standard deviation of 1.244. This indicates a generally favourable view, with a range of scores from five to ten, suggesting diverse perceptions of its effectiveness in enriching teaching methods.  

Ethical Issues Related to the Use of ChatGPT in Language Learning

Table four outlines participants' ethical concerns regarding using ChatGPT in language learning.

Table 4. Ethical concerns raised by participants regarding the use of ChatGPT in language learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Uncertainty about the source of ChatGPT responses</th>
<th>Ethical issues surrounding AI-generated content</th>
<th>Concerns about ChatGPT replacing human teachers</th>
<th>Issues related to responsible AI use in education</th>
<th>Plagiarism concerns with AI-generated language content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>7.212</td>
<td>8.412</td>
<td>8.059</td>
<td>7.882</td>
<td>7.765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>1.364</td>
<td>1.048</td>
<td>1.825</td>
<td>1.409</td>
<td>1.103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>4.000</td>
<td>7.000</td>
<td>5.000</td>
<td>6.000</td>
<td>6.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>9.000</td>
<td>10.000</td>
<td>10.000</td>
<td>10.000</td>
<td>10.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study uncovers substantial ethical concerns among participants about using ChatGPT in educational settings, covering a range of issues. There's a moderately high level of uncertainty about the source of ChatGPT's responses, with a mean score of 7.212 and a noticeable variation in views among the 33 respondents. This uncertainty reflects diverse opinions about the reliability of the information provided by ChatGPT.

Ethical issues surrounding AI-generated content are a significant concern, as indicated by a high mean score of 8.412 from 34 responses, suggesting a general agreement on the importance of this issue. Concerns about ChatGPT potentially replacing human teachers also emerged as a prominent issue. The responses, with a mean of 8.059 and a wide range of opinions, highlight a broad spectrum of perspectives.

Responsible AI use in education is another area of concern, with a substantial mean score of 7.882. This suggests an intense apprehension among the 34 respondents about how AI is utilized in educational contexts. Lastly, plagiarism concerns with AI-generated language content are notably high, with a mean of 7.765. This reflects a widespread worry among the participants about the originality and authenticity of AI-generated content.

Qualitative Findings

The obtained results were qualitatively studied. Five themes emerged in examining student feedback on ChatGPT’s role in language learning: improvement in English language skills, critical thinking skills, challenges, opportunities, and ethical concerns. The themes, codes, and comments that were obtained are presented in Table five. Participants reported self-sourced information and concerns that reliance on ChatGPT might diminish fundamental writing skills. Conversely, students recognize ChatGPT as an efficient and creative tool but emphasize that it cannot replace human judgment and effort. While ChatGPT can enhance learning by providing basic information, more profound research and understanding still require the instructor's role and critical thinking, underscoring the tool's role as a supplementary aid rather than a standalone solution.
Table 5. Participants’ feedback on the use of ChatGPT after completing the project in the ESP course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in English language skills</td>
<td>Improvement in English language skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary enhancement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grammar improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking skills</td>
<td>Conversational practice and vocabulary expansion improved my decision-making skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing assistance, and grammar checking increased my proficiency in reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing assistance grammar checking enhanced my cognitive flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading assistance, and language translation increased my creativity in learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>Concerns about the potential loss of human interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities</td>
<td>Difficulties with balancing ChatGPT with traditional teaching methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical concerns</td>
<td>ChatGPT promotes learner autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concerns about ChatGPT replacing human teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plagiarism concerns with AI-generated language content</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The qualitative analysis of the study on using ChatGPT in English language learning revealed several themes and corresponding codes. For the theme of improvement in English language skills, codes included enhancements in reading comprehension, vocabulary, and grammar. Students reported advancements in these areas, indicating the effectiveness of ChatGPT in augmenting specific language competencies. Various aspects of critical thinking skills were highlighted. Students noted that activities like conversational practice and vocabulary expansion with ChatGPT improved their decision-making abilities.

Furthermore, writing assistance and grammar checking through ChatGPT were credited with increasing proficiency in reasoning and enhancing cognitive flexibility. Additionally, the use of reading assistance and language translation tools boosted creativity in learning, suggesting that ChatGPT can positively impact diverse areas of critical thinking. However, the study also uncovered challenges. Concerns were raised about the potential loss of human interaction in language learning when relying heavily on AI tools like ChatGPT. There were also difficulties in balancing the use of ChatGPT with traditional teaching methods, indicating the need for a more integrated approach in educational settings. In the theme opportunities, ChatGPT was recognized for its role in promoting learner autonomy, giving students more control over their learning process and enabling them to learn at their own pace and according to their individual needs. Ethical concerns were also prominent in the findings. There was apprehension about ChatGPT potentially replacing human teachers, which raised questions about the future role of educators in AI-integrated learning environments. Additionally, plagiarism issues with AI-generated language content were a significant worry, highlighting the need for ethical guidelines and integrity in AI-assisted education.

**Discussion**

The study indicates that ChatGPT positively influences critical thinking development in language learning. Participants reported improved critical thinking skills, including problem-solving abilities, analytical thinking, increased creativity, and cognitive flexibility. These findings align with the theoretical framework Facione (2013) proposed regarding enhancing critical
thinking skills. The ability of AI to process natural language and provide personalized feedback, as noted in Hwang et al.’s (2023) perspective, facilitates a more individualized and efficient language learning experience. Participants perceive the integration of ChatGPT in language education as a multifaceted tool offering both challenges and opportunities. They recognize the potential of ChatGPT in enhancing language learning, citing benefits like enhanced resource accessibility, learner autonomy, and support in problem-based learning. However, concerns were raised about the accuracy and reliability of AI-generated responses, ethical issues, and the potential loss of human interaction in the learning process. This reflects the viewpoints of Alshater (2023) and Cotton et al. (2023), emphasizing the need for balanced and responsible AI use in education.

The quantitative results show diverse usage patterns of ChatGPT among participants, with 62% using it weekly for language-related activities, highlighting its substantial impact on their study habits. The participants' responses indicate a generally positive trend in the impact of various ChatGPT-assisted activities on different cognitive and learning skills.

The study indicates that although ChatGPT is helpful in language learning activities such as conversational practice, grammar correction, and writing support, its effectiveness in improving critical thinking skills remains a topic of discussion. The trend across these English learning activities indicates that ChatGPT-assisted learning positively influences cognitive and language-related skills. The most significant impacts are seen in decision-making and analytical skills, with relatively high mean scores and consistent positive feedback. While there is some variability in how participants experience these activities, the general trend points to the beneficial role of ChatGPT in enhancing specific cognitive skills related to language learning. These tools simulate real-world language use and encourage collaborative learning, potentially transforming the landscape of language learning (Abdelghani et al., 2022). Pang (2022) and Grassini (2023) highlight the potential of integrating AI technologies such as ChatGPT into language instruction, emphasizing creating customized and adaptable learning environments tailored to individual student needs. The findings from participants' responses in this study align with these researchers' viewpoints, supporting the idea that such AI tools can effectively enhance language learning experiences.

The participants in the study reported improvements in their critical thinking skills, encompassing enhanced problem-solving abilities, analytical thinking, increased creativity, and greater cognitive flexibility. This aligns with Facione's (2013) assertion about the significance of honing specific skills, attitudes, and dimensions associated with critical thinking, particularly assessing these skills based on the quality of student reasoning. Furthermore, the ability of AI to comprehend and process natural language, interpret learners' language outputs, and offer personalized feedback is in line with Hwang et al.'s (2023) perspective. This AI capability facilitates a more individualized and efficient language learning experience, as confirmed by the supportive responses of the surveyed students and language instructors (Songsiriengchait et al., 2023).

The study's findings resonate with the views of researchers like Alshater (2023) and Cotton et al. (2023), emphasizing the potential of ChatGPT in educational settings while highlighting the need to navigate its ethical and practical challenges. These challenges encompass the accuracy and reliability of AI-generated responses, ethical concerns regarding AI content, the possibility of AI supplanting human educators, the importance of responsible AI use in education, and the risk of plagiarism with AI-generated materials. The varied responses from participants underscore the spectrum of concerns and opinions on these ethical matters.
In line with the perspectives of these researchers, the study underscores the pivotal role of teachers in fostering critical discussions about the limitations and ethical aspects of AI, thereby guiding students towards responsible and informed use of AI technologies in education. This approach aligns with the broader academic dialogue on integrating AI in learning environments, advocating for a balanced and conscientious application of these advanced tools in educational contexts.

The findings concerning challenges reveal that while participants encounter moderate to significant difficulties in ensuring the accuracy of ChatGPT responses and balancing its use with traditional teaching methods, their most vital concerns lie in the potential loss of human interaction and the challenges in monitoring and assessing ChatGPT's use. Language serves as a medium for human connection, with relationships between students and teachers being a central component of effective language learning (Lee et al., 2009; Farrell, 2015). The variability in responses, especially in the accuracy and monitoring, highlights participants' diverse experiences and perceptions in adapting AI tools in educational contexts. However, integrating AI into education must address social and ethical issues, including equitable and responsible use of AI (Alshater, 2023; Cotton et al., 2023; Dwivedi et al., 2023). These learning aspects contribute significantly to language skills development and are integral to students' social-emotional well-being (Shapiro et al., 2023).

The findings about the opportunities highlight the multifaceted benefits of integrating ChatGPT into language learning pedagogy, including enhanced resource accessibility, learner autonomy, problem-based learning support, instant assistance, and diversification of teaching methods. However, the variability in scores across these areas also points to differing levels of impact and individual experiences among participants. Teachers must involve students in conversations regarding AI's constraints, inherent biases, and its responsible application (Chaudhry et al., 2022). While participants recognize the limitations of ChatGPT, they also acknowledge its potential as a learning tool. Its ability to provide instant language assistance and promote learner autonomy presents significant opportunities for language learning enhancement.

Conclusion

The study on using ChatGPT in English language learning reveals both the benefits and challenges of incorporating AI tools in education. Many students use ChatGPT, indicating its increasing influence on their learning process. Participants noted positive impacts on cognitive skills like decision-making and analytical thinking. However, the study also highlights several ethical and practical concerns, such as the accuracy of AI-generated responses, the ethical implications of content, and the risk of AI replacing human educators. These concerns point to the need for teachers to play a crucial role in guiding students on the responsible use of AI tools and addressing their limitations. A significant concern is the potential loss of human interaction in language learning, emphasizing the importance of using AI to complement rather than replace human elements. The responses about the accuracy and monitoring of ChatGPT's outputs varied, reflecting diverse experiences with AI in educational settings. Despite these challenges, ChatGPT offers substantial opportunities in language learning, including instant language assistance, enhancing learner autonomy, supporting problem-based learning, and diversifying teaching methods. Educators must carefully navigate its limitations and biases, fostering critical discussions about its use. In conclusion, while ChatGPT has notable advantages in language learning, its integration requires careful consideration of ethical, practical, and pedagogical aspects.
successful use of AI in education depends on a balanced approach that maximizes AI’s strengths and mitigates its challenges, ensuring it aids human interaction and learning.

This research provides valuable insights for English language educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers, suggesting strategies for effectively integrating ChatGPT in language teaching. Future studies should expand the scope of the investigation to include a broader range of English language learning environments for a more comprehensive understanding of ChatGPT's impact.

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**About the Authors**

**Nataliia Avsheniuk** is an esteemed figure in the field of education, Professor and Doctor of Science in Education. She leads the Foreign Systems of Pedagogical and Adult Education Department at the Ivan Ziaziun Institute of Pedagogical and Adult Education, which is part of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine. She is recognized for her significant contributions to educational research and policy in Ukraine.

Email: nataliya.avshenyuk@gmail.com ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1012-005X

**Olena Lutsenko** is an associate professor at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, specifically in the Educational and Scientific Institute of Philology’s Department of Foreign Languages for Natural Sciences Faculties. Holding a Ph.D. in Education, Olena Lutsenko specializes in foreign language teaching, focusing on integrating language education with natural sciences. Her work is instrumental in bridging the gap between language studies and scientific disciplines.

Email: olenzialu@gmail.com ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6864-908X

**Tetiana Svyrydiuk** is an associate professor in the Department of Foreign Languages at the Faculty of Economics, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. With a Ph.D. in Linguistics, her expertise lies in the intersection of language studies and economics, providing students with the essential language skills required in the business and economic sectors.

Email: svyrydiukt@gmail.com ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9482-8228

**Nataliia Seminikhyna** is an assistant professor in the Department of Foreign Languages at the Faculty of Economics, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. Her work focuses on pedagogical methods in language education, particularly in the context of economic studies. Her
role involves equipping students with the linguistic competencies necessary for their academic and future career in Economics. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6246-4132

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