Review research paper

ChatGPT AS A LEARNING TOOL IN AN UNDERGRADUATE ADVANCED ACADEMIC ENGLISH COURSE AT SOUTH EAST EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

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Abstract. *The role ChatGPT and similar AI tools inevitably play in every single aspect of contemporary life, including the field of foreign language teaching and learning can definitely not and should not be ignored and overlooked. Although the development of AI cannot be immediately and precisely forecasted, it is more than obvious that it is already dictating trends in foreign language learning. Given the heavy dependence of today's generations on technology, integrating ChatGPT into English language curricula in tertiary education can significantly enhance student motivation. This paper explores the potential of ChatGPT as a language learning tool in the context of tertiary education and advocates for policy of inclusion rather than policy of banning state-of –the art technologies in the realm of tertiary education. It summarises and reports on the results and key findings from a student survey aiming to reveal how familiar is the undergraduate student population at South East European University (SEEU) with ChatGPT and shed light on students' experience with it so far. The paper also briefly elaborates on the pioneer attempt for integration of the artificial intelligence tool ChatGPT in the foreign language teaching process in the Advanced Academic English course at SEEU with the sole purpose of improving its quality and effectiveness.*

Key words: *ChatGPT, SEEU, Advanced Academic English, Higher Education*

1. INTRODUCTION

Individual students have different learning needs and styles. Moreover, groups always consist of mixed abilities students and the limited number of language teaching hours is often subject to reductions, therefore, proper use of ChatGPT can make it convenient for higher educational institutions to innovate and adapt their teaching methods to accommodate to the variety of students they serve. Since today's generations are completely reliant on technology, including ChatGPT in English Language syllabi can considerably increase motivation. It is of vital significance for tertiary education institutions to promote teaching that encompasses and not bans new technologies.

This paper briefly summarises relevant literature reviewed, focusing mainly on the advantages and challenges of including chatGPT in language learning. It gives an insight into the extent of familiarity of first year undergraduate students at SEEU with ChatGPT and the attempts for raising their awareness of the variety of language learning options it

offers apart from copying in writing assignments. It also anticipates possible near future challenges we will be faced with and forced to tackle. Drawing on the key findings from the field research conducted at SEEU, which are aligned with relevant literature reviewed, this paper advocates for exploring optimal approaches to leverage ChatGPT in enhancing the English language learning experience at tertiary level. Rather than automatically prohibiting its use, the paper promotes the approach of mitigating the risks of plagiarism resulting from ChatGPT misuse in exams and writing assignments.

2. BACKGROUND

"Artificial Intelligence is a system with the same intelligence as humans and is characterised by the ability to learn, adapt, solve problems, make decisions and understand human language. Artificial Intelligence provides many conveniences in the world of education" (Shidiq 2023, 353).

ChatGPT (Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer) is a series of popular generative AI chatbots developed and maintained by OpenAI. The large language models (LLMs) that support earlier chatbot models were unimodal and could only process and generate text. The latest versions of the chatbot are multimodal and can recognize images, generate images, engage in voice conversations, and search the Internet in real-time through the same conversational user interface (CUI) (Rouse 2024).

ChatGPT, the chatbot everyone is talking about ever since its appearance in November 2022, designed to respond to all kinds of requests is described as "a-general-purpose conversation chatbot expected to impact all aspects of our society significantly. However, the possible educational implications of this natural language processing technique are uncertain" (Alo. At al.2023, 42). ChatGPT has also been described as an "immense disruptor of the education field," which should be used "as an opportunity to make substantial improvements in teaching and learning effectiveness" (Hong 2023, 40). According to Baskara and Mukarto (2023) the noteworthy consequences of ChatGPT for language learning, communication and education in general stem from the fact that it is a large-scale unsupervised language model trained on vast amounts of text data and able to generate coherent, contextually appropriate, human-like response to a given prompt. ChatGPT and similar artificial intelligence tools bring about opportunities, but at the same time create challenges and concerns to foreign language teaching.

2.1. Advantages of using ChatGPT in language learning

Traditional foreign language teaching methods can no longer meet the digital natives' learning styles and needs, so Shidiq (2023) has every right to claim that it "becomes necessary for the world of education to participate in making changes in its learning system to increase the competitiveness of graduates in competing to equip them with the ability to think critically, creatively and collaboratively" (Shidiq 2023, 353). EFLT has to keep up the pace with the emerging technological developments. Due to students' heavy reliance on technology nowadays, the inclusion of ChatGPT as a learning tool can significantly boost motivation. In a quantitative study on how ChatGPT impacts learning English, Ali, *at al.* (2023) confirm that ChatGPT–based teaching is motivational especially for developing reading and writing skills. Based on the findings from this study, the authors recommend that "ChatGPt should be used as a learning tool instead of fearing its negative impacts, which require further detailed investigations" (Ali, et al. 2023, 41).   Hong (2023) reminds

that educators have consistently expressed concern about the adoption of new technologies as was the case with *Google search, Wikipedia,* etc. Within language teaching the greatest concern is related to unoriginal writing and plagiarism. As a solution, he suggests reducing homework assignments or assigning tasks that cannot be easily assisted by chatbots, such as keeping daily journals or summarising a lecture attended.

Among the numerous ways in which ChatGPT supports language learning, Kohnke, Moorhouse and Zou (2024) stress the simulation of authentic interaction by identifying meaning of a word in context, correcting and explaining language mistakes, creating texts from various genres, developing quizzes, annotating texts, as well as providing dictionary definitions, example sentences and translations.

One of the greatest arguments in favour of utilising ChatGPT as a foreign language tool is that it finally enables implementation of flipped classroom concept which can considerably improve teaching effectiveness and student performance by increasing teacher-student, as well as student-student interaction in a student-centred classroom with improves quality of classroom time. The ability of ChatGPT "to offer personalised instruction and generate authentic language material highlights its potential for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of language education" (Baskara and Mukarto 2023, 353).

Related literature on ChatGPT in language learning has shown that AI has "the potential to revolutionize the way of learning and teaching," and that "the teacher's role is essential in … determining how to use it honestly, with integrity and transparency and agree on some rules of engagement" (Shidiq 2023, 355). The results of previous research published discussing ChatGPT confirm that ELT professionals should focus on finding the most viable ways of turning ChatGPT into a teaching and learning assistant as "the potential of chatbot technology for education and research is unbounded" (Hong 2032, 42).

The fact that ChatGPT is free of charge and easy to use makes it very convenient and easily accessible. This contributes immensely to its popularity. We can definitely not prevent students from using it so we are left with no other option than putting it to its most effective use.

2.2. Challenges of using ChatGPT in language learning

Apart from the obvious conveniences for the education system, due to its capability to generate a rich variety of text formats (formal, informal, creative, etc.), ChatGPT also poses challenges for the education system and "can potentially reduce some of the skills that students should master, including critical, creative and collaborative thinking skills … including creative writing skills" (Shidiq 2023, 354). Among the identified drawbacks of ChatGPT which can seriously harm the language learning process are its misuse for cheating and performing tasks instead of the students themselves, providing feedback that is not detailed and systematic enough for improving students' communication skills and the necessity for checking the accuracy of responses provided. In an attempt to avoid the aforementioned drawbacks of ChatGPT and similar AI language models, Athanassopoulous *et al.* (2023) suggest both teachers and learners using them responsibly, ethically and judiciously with a dose of reserve and scepticism.

Kohnke, Moorhouse and Zou (2024) are among the authors who discuss the accuracy of responses provided by ChatGPT and note that even though OpenAI warns of possible inaccuracy by providing users with the option to give their feedback in the form of thumbs-up or thumbs-down, the impressive and authoritative tone of the responses misleads users into accepting them unquestioningly. "The output of ChatGPT should always be filtered and revised. It should not be taken for granted because it is not complete and final and may contain incorrect output that always requires human intervention" (Ali, et al. 2023, 47).

With reference to the main concerns related to the use of ChatGPT in language learning, Baskara and Mukarto (2023) indicate that being an unsupervised language model, ChatGPT can produce biased, inappropriate, incorrect and misleading content. Apart from displaying serious limitations when dealing with complex and abstract concepts, it can also have a direct negative impact on teaching as a profession.

Yan (2023) observes that ChatGPT and similar AI technologies impose the need for reformulating and redefining the concept of plagiarism as they provide various methods to evade plagiarism detection. They render the definition and categorisation of plagiarism obsolete. One of the key questions we are currently faced with is should content produced by ChatGPT as a response to a prompt given be considered as plagiarism or not? Is it enough to simply indicate by citing that content has been produced by an AI tool? While this question might remain unanswered for quite some time, there is no dilemma that ChatGPT makes the need to raise awareness against plagiarism stronger and more urgent than ever before. First and foremost, plagiarism needs to be redefined and greater emphasis should be placed on detecting it since using summarising, paraphrasing and quoting as methods for avoiding plagiarism are no longer enough.

Since "the quality of the responses depends on the quality of the questions," it is recommended that "teachers and students rephrase their questions if they are not satisfied with responses" (Kohnke, Moorhouse and Zou 2024, 8). As the response depends entirely on the prompt given, first and foremost, to write effective ChatGPT prompts, it is essential to be clear, concise, and specific. More details, further instructions and closer guidance on how to write prompts can be found in Rouse 2024.

3. FIELD RESEARCH

In order to reveal the extent of familiarity of the undergraduate student population at SEEU with ChatGPT and shed light on their experiences with it so far a field research in the form of an online survey on ChatGPT as a learning tool was conducted at SEEU. This field research also served as awareness rising to suggest possible ways of utilising ChatGPT as a foreign language learning tool.

The participation in this survey was optional and voluntary. The students were asked for an oral consent to participate after they have been informed about the purpose of the field research, the confidentiality of their personal data and the time needed for completing the questionnaire. To avoid the attempt for modifying their answers to please the teacher, the students were informed that they should not expect to be given extra grading credit for participation. The student respondents were informed that the main aim of the research was to reveal how familiar is the undergraduate student population at SEEU with ChatGPT and what their experience is with it for the research. The participants were clearly asked to bear in mind that there are no right or wrong answers and that their honest answers are highly valued as only such answers would give a clear insight into the perception and treatment of ChatGPT as a learning tool on the part of the students. The participants were also informed that their answers and personal data shall be kept strictly confidential and used for compiling an overall, general report in which personal names and/or email addresses shall not be mentioned. The survey was administered in a computer lab, during the last lecture at the end of the summer semester in the academic year 2022-2023 allowing students to give well-informed answers based on their personal experience. Although present in the computer lab, the researcher was only an observer who explained the research aim and procedure, and asked for oral consent for participation in the research. All the

technical questions the participants had were redirected to the other students with greater experience using ChatGPT.

3.1. Participants and data collection instrument

Participants in this survey were 35 undergraduate, full-time, first-year students aged 18 to 20, attending the Advanced Academic English course, in the summer semester of the academic 2022-2023. 60% of the respondents were female and 40% male. The respondents were from five out of the total of six faculties at SEEU: 68.6% from the Faculty of Contemporary Science and Technology, 14.3% from the Faculty of Law, 8.6% from the Faculty of Business Administration, 5.7% from the Faculty of Contemporary Social Sciences, 2.9% from the Faculty of Languages, Cultures and Communication. There were no students from the Faculty of Health Sciences since the course Advanced Academic English is not offered to them. Advanced Academic English is an undergraduate, second semester course offered to first year students at upper intermediate (B2) level of proficiency from all SEEU faculties, except for the Faculty of Health Sciences. For a more detailed insight into the practical experience of designing and implementing the undergraduate Advanced English course, its objectives and grading criteria please consult Marjanovikj-Apostolovski 2023.

An online Google form questionnaire consisting of 21 questions was used as a main data collection instrument. The estimated completing time was somewhere between 10 and 15 minutes. The first three questions were demographic, focusing on details of the target population, such as the respondents' age group (Q1), gender (Q2) and faculty attended (Q3). The rest of the questionnaire consisted of a combination of open-ended (Q4, Q8, Q11, Q20, Q21), closed-ended (Q5, Q6, Q7, Q10, Q12) and likert scale (Q9, Q13, Q14, Q15, Q16, Q17, Q18) questions.

The survey questionnaire along with the detailed answers provided can be accessed at the link below:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1KlFRPVdq4_qhCRcLaRybaagNxb_U374eoY0ClFLHG-w/edit

3.2. Survey results and findings

When asked to define ChatGPT in their own words in Question 4, the respondents surveyed described it as: a "*human made artificial intelligence robot that can chat with humans and solve problems*", "*artificial intelligence that helps us with everything*", "*can help us for many things we need and is very good for us*", "*artificial intelligence*", "*AI tool that is very good at dialogue in English or most of the other languages as well. It can do things for you, talk to you, talk for you, etc.*", "*AI chatbot made by OpenAI that can do every task you ask them to do*", "*Helpful app which can solve many problems (about homework) that we have as students*", a "*helpbot*", "*a site that has a solution for everything*", "*a website/app to help people with assignments, homework. It is a great tool to help everyone not just students*", "*AI language model. It can be used for answering questions we don't know, offering creative writing suggestions, giving advice*", "*a great tool to do the easy job for you. <u>If you use it correctly you can learn a lot from it.</u> I use it for html C++, math, and a lot of my courses*". "*AI that contains all the information up to 2021*", "*lifesaver*", "*AI chatbot*", "*This was created as a new way of learning things*", "*AI that helps to answer some of the questions that people have*", "*artificial intelligence tool that stands for generative pre-trained transformer*", "*an assistant that helps us find answers to questions we don't know*", "*a platform, a tool in reality, from which you can get answers for almost everything and interact with it. It works as a Wikipedia but one that does assignments and things that it is asked to*", "*An artificial intelligence, when you search for something and*

multiple bots at the same time provide the answer you were looking for", "AI that helps with everything you need","One of the AI language models, published in November 2022. This language model can answer questions and help you with tasks such as emails, essays and code to help you with programming", "Artificial intelligence 'robot' that will give you any answer that you ask, it can also do many things such as writing codes for building a website", "AI language model that has been fed thousands upon thousands of literature text, on which it has learned how to communicate in the most efficient way possible through language", "AI tool that is made to help people with solving different questions", "a more precise and accurate form of 'Google' where you can ask a specific question and get an answer altered to your needs quick instead of doing extensive research that takes a long time. For me it's like having a person on call who answers my academic or personal questions, who is also somewhat reliable source", "a platform that knows 80% of your question that helps you do your work easier and provides help for something you need", "AI chatbox" , "AI assistance that helps you with homework, writing assignments, essays, gives you new, creative ideas" "AI that helps you with anything you need", " AI platform that makes finding valid information easier", "AI tool that can be used to obtain various information in a very quick way. It can be used for academic purposes and personal advice as well", "AI tool 'google like' but even better that helps us with anything we need. It has the answer for everything.", "AI chatbot developed by OpenAI and released in November 2022".

When asked about their experience with ChatGPT in Questions 5 & 6, a vast majority of 97.1% of respondents stated to have already used ChatGPT, mainly for research purposes, i.e. finding the needed information (77.1%) and just for fun or out of curiosity to see what exactly it can actually do (71.4%). Only 2.9% of the respondents who participated in this survey boldly and honestly admitted using ChatGPT for cheating in exams, although a much higher percentage was expected.

In response to Question 7, almost 83% of the respondents claimed that none of their professors and/or teaching assistants has suggested using ChatGPT in their studies, and only 17% claimed that they have been asked to do so once only. None of the participants opted for the option of being asked to use GhatGPT on more than one occasion. It would be interesting to conduct a research on the teachers' views on ChatGPT as a handy teaching tool or a teaching assistant.

In Question 8 the respondents listed the following as reasons for which they were asked to use ChatGPT: *"to make changes to the original assignment", "to write codes for the html class", "for some coding staff", "for checking an assignment", "to prepare for class", "a professor suggested that it is a big service and we should use it".*

When asked to rate the level of satisfaction from using ChatGPT (Question 9), almost 86% of the respondents expressed their satisfaction with ChatGPT, more precisely 51.4% rated their satisfaction 4 out of maximum 5, where as 34.3% rated it 5 out of 5. It is more than obvious that students are quite satisfied with the use of ChatGPT and the very fact that it is free of charge makes it even more appealing.

Question 10 focused on the respondents' willingness and readiness to use ChatGPT again. Interestingly enough the percentage of students who have used it already and expressed an interest or even an intention to use it again is identical, more precisely 97.1%.

In Question 11 when asked to state the purpose for using ChatGPT again, among the reasons respondents stated: *"because it is very helpful", " for information needed to do research or homework that I do not understand", "maybe for a project to give me ideas or for anything that I need", "explaining something I do not understand", "for emergency*

reasons", " *for programming exercises when my codes do not work*", "*research paper*", "*research or something I want to know*", " *to write lines of code for programming*".

In response to Question 12, half of the respondents (51.4%) could not decide for sure if using ChatGPT is a form of plagiarism or not which is the only acceptable answer as the entire academic population is unsure of the treatment this innovative tool should receive. This is the most accurate answer which reflects the current situation. Slightly higher number of respondents consider it form of plagiarism (28.6%) compared to the 20% of the respondents who do not see it as a form of academic dishonesty i.e. plagiarism.

In Question 13 equal percentage of students (34.3%) somewhat agree and are neutral (nether agree, nor disagree) regarding ChatGPT as a good resource which should be used at universities. This once more confirms the current reality of divided opinions about the justification and effectiveness of ChatGPT as a learning resource in University studies. The students' answers to Q12 and Q13 might be influenced by the teachers who present this language model as nothing else but a pure form of manipulation and cheating in exams especially with written out of class assignments.

The responses to Question 14 reveal that over half of the students who participated in this survey (57.1%) see ChatGPT as a convenient tool for cheating in exams, 37.1% somewhat agree, whereas 20% strongly agree with this claim. In contrast to these answers, in Question 15 a considerably high percentage of participants (82.9%) rejected that they have ever used ChatGPT for copying in exams.

In Question 16 which focuses on Using ChatGPT for completing written assignments and essays, 51.4% of the respondents claimed to not have used ChatGPT for completing written assignments and essays, whereas 28.6% admitted having used ChatGPT for writing essays. 20% of the students remained neutral in response to this questions probably out of uncertainty when should the credit for writing be given to ChatGPT.

Compared to the relatively low percentage of students who claimed to have used ChatGPT for completing written assignments and essay, in Question 17 over half of the respondents, more precisely 68.6%, stated that have used ChatGPT for checking and correcting their written work which in my personal opinion is a good tool for self-study, self-evaluation and self-correction.

In Question 18 it is really encouraging and refreshing to see that a considerable amount of students (14.3% strongly and 11.4% somewhat) disagree that the information provided by ChatGPt is always valid, correct and checked. At the same time it is very discouraging to see that 25.7% completely and 8.6% strongly agree that ChatGPT always offers valid, correct and checked information. This is where we as teaches should step in and raise students' awareness of the fact that ChatGPT offers answers based on what is available as a source out there. Everything needs to be double or even triple checked to make sue the claims made and references provided are correct.

In response to Question 19, high 68.8% of the respondents declared to have never experienced any difficulties or problems when using ChatGPT. However, when asked to specify any problems and difficulties encountered in Question 20, students mentioned the following: "*False information and bugging out*", "*bugs*", "*when writing lines of a code it would repeat the same mistake and not write it in full*", "*ChatGPT is not as big as people make it. I believe AI more than I believe people. If used correctly and for good purposes it can help a lot. The only problem is that it will make people lazy and not working hard on thigs, not making effort*", "*ChatGPT needs very clear instructions on the methods to do things, if it is not given the exact instructions it won't deliver the needed results*", "*sometimes when I ask it to do math problem it gives wrong answers*", "*codes created by ChatGPT don't always work and need to*

be looked at, the essays written by ChatGPT are not very opinionated and the personal opinions aren't helpful", *"it gives too much information that is not needed"*, *"miscommunication, I had to elaborate a lot for it to understand what I was asking"*, *"in order to get more accurate information you have to get very specific and detailed instructions in order for the information to be more in tune with the context of the matter"*. The underlined comments highlight the importance of properly formulating the prompts.

When asked to share any final thoughts about ChatGPT and make predictions regarding its future effects in Question 21 opinions were largely divided. Almost every comment was a combination of one positive, helpful and beneficial aspect of ChatGPT, and one very likely drawback or side effect. ChatGPT was viewed as an unstoppable and very useful tool which could easily turn into a huge problem if misused. Students warned against the overreliance on ChatGPT since just like the Internet, it is hard to tell if it makes our lives easier or more difficult.

The need for regulating the use of ChatGPT was expressed by a couple of respondents since in their opinion this language model definitely has certain advantages but with future consequences. For some students the cons outweigh the pros, whereas other remind that instead of opposing change, people should embrace it since almost every generation is faced with some new technological development. These respondents suggest educating ourselves instead of fighting against technology, claiming that the oldfashioned way of doing things was better when it technically was not. In their opinion there should be information about how to use newly developed technologies without breaking university rules and regulations. While to some students ChatGPT seems fascinating, to others it is very scary. The rest of the immediate benefits and potential future threats of ChatGPT according to the participant in this survey could be summarised as follows:

Immediate Benefits
- Making our lives easier and better
- Helping with coding
- Checking and correcting work already done
- Helping humanity
- Finding & getting information fast
- Getting second opinion
- Very helpful
- Very useful for people with dyslexia
- Boosting creativity and ideas
- Explaining university staff as good as or even better than professors
- Very beneficial method for studying if used properly

Potential future threats
- Not using our own ideas and our own work
- Developing addiction to it, not writing even a simple essay
- Becoming lazier and less creative
- Damaging productivity and logical thinking
- Jobs being at risk, Taking over jobs, Laying off people
- Students not studying and doing homework
- Solving any problem through ChatGPT
- Forgetting to do things correctly by ourselves
- Possible abuses
- Creating inequality between those who write themselves and those using ChatGPT
- People not using their brains
- Undervaluing professional in different fields
- Unlimited and unsupervised access for anyone
- Unqualified people getting positions
- Plagiarising
- People not learning because things are done for them
- Providing inaccurate results & incorrect information
- Impairing peoples' productivity
- People becoming 'parasites'

3.3. Discussion

Prior to administering the survey it was assumed that all the participants had already had at least some experience using ChatGPT. However, some of the students participating in the survey were creating accounts for the very first time with the help of their colleagues just before answering the questions in the survey. The fact that over half of the respondents (more precisely 68.6%) were from The Faculty of Contemporary Science and Technologies, might account for some of the answers provided, especially the definitions of what ChatGPT actually is, as well as the frequent mention of writing codes as one of the main reasons for using ChatGPT. It would be interesting to compare the results across faculties by conducting parallel case studies at all faculties within SEEU, especially if SEEU intends to officially regulate the use of modern technology in the teaching process.

"Help", "Assist", "Solve problems," were the predominant ideas used by the students to describe and define ChatGPT. ChatGPT being "a reliable source", easily "finding valid information" and "having the answers for everything," were some of the common misconceptions discovered among students' answers. We teachers have the obligation to deal with it. It has to be brought to students' understanding that ChatGPT is far from always being reliable, as a result of which it should not be blindly and uncritically followed. Very often ChatGPT would apologize for not being able to answer due to the lack of information available, or would ask for additional, more detailed prompts. It would even apologise for not being able to provide assistance or guidance on unethical behaviour. "ChatGPT can produce text responses similar to human language, answer follow-up questions, admit its mistakes, challenge incorrect premises and reject inappropriate requests" (Hong 2023, 38). The assumption that the real number of students misusing ChatGPT for copying in exams was going to be much higher that the reported 2.9%, could be assigned to a common teacher paranoia of students attempting to cheat in exams in general. Although the answers to Question 8 in the questionnaire regarding the purpose for which the students were asked to use ChatGPT were not as specific and detailed as it was hoped, the answers do instil some hope for disseminating the idea of implementing ChatGPT as an effective language learning and teaching tool, especially due to the fact that ChatGPT offers a variety of possibilities for the revival of the concept of flipped classroom making its application seems never easier and more convenient.

With reference to mentioning "*emergency*" as a reason for using ChatGPT again in Question 11, follow up interviews would help understand the idea better and get more detailed answers, however in the absence of follow up interviews, I would allow the liberty to interpret this as being pressed for time when meeting deadlines for completing assignments and projects.

There is an interesting mismatch between the answers for Question 14 and Question 15, i.e. the fact that students are aware of the convenience of ChatGPT for copying in exams compared to the very high percentage of students who declared to have never attempted (mis)using it for cheating in exams. One possible interpretation for this could be that students simply do not consider it as cheating since they have produced their specific prompt when requesting the chatbot to perform a certain operation for them.

The answers to Question 18 once again highlight the need for teachers to intervene and raise students' awareness of the fact that ChatGPT is not an all-knowing, always right and completely reliable source of information. This is a major drawback compared to all its convenience in the ability to process available information super fast and almost instantly offer a response to a given prompt.

The underlined insightful comments made by the respondents in Question 20, highlight the importance of wording the prompts given to ChatGPT and the need to teach users, both teachers and students, how to write proper prompts. The more precise and direct the prompt, the more relevant the response obtained. The need for regulations on the proper use of ChatGPT occurred more than once.

3.4. Suggestions for further research

Far more extensive, long term research needs to be conducted in the area of emersion of technology in ELT in order to better understand how can EFLT be more efficiently facilitated, supported and enhanced and all that not at the expense of job losses and plagiarism eruption. The major limitations of this study are the number of participants and the time frame due to which follow-up, semi structured, in-depth interviews and focus groups could not be organized. A semester long parallel studies involving teachers and students form all six faculties at SEEU would offer by far more insightful findings and would enable drawing more precise conclusions.

An immediate future research which logically stems directly from this paper is the survey of teachers' perception and treatment of ChatGPT as a teaching and learning tool. It would be interesting to see what potentials of ChatGPT as an effective tool do teachers see, as well as their readiness and willingness to utilise ChatGPT in their teaching practise. Covering each of the four basic language skills separately, i.e. suggesting practical ways of implementing the cutting-edge technology in the process of their development along with measuring their effectiveness is yet another research focus which deserves due attention.

A questions pressing for an answer is whether the integration of ChatGPT in EFL learning will help students cheat and pass exams without studying, or it will encourage students to learn more in order to pass exams. Closely related to this last issue and inevitably imposing on every language teacher is the dilemma whether ChatGPT is really going to kill traditional language learning and teaching at higher education and leave many teachers jobless, or it will just turn out to be nothing more than another useful learning tool (as grammarly, Google translate, etc.). I personally choose to be on the optimistic side and say no, however, the future developments in this direction are really challenging to anticipate.

Hopefully, this paper will intrigue ELT professionals to reflect on their teaching reality and the possibility of including latest technology in it, evaluate potential benefits and challenges and suggest innovative socially, morally and academically acceptable, proper and safe ways of employing ChatGPT and similar technologies within the context of tertiary ELT.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As one of the students cleverly put it as an answer to Question 4 of the questionnaire: "If you use it (ChatGPT) correctly you can learn a lot from it." It is the central premise of this paper - utilising ChatGPT correctly and in an academically honest manner as an effective foreign language teaching and learning tool. All our attention should currently be focused on finding the right balance between using GhapGPT for assistance and support and avoiding its misuse for plagiarism and passing exams without studying.

ChatGPT is a real-time tool for encouraging and promoting autonomy in language learning as it is available 24/7 allowing students to work on their own pace anywhere and

anytime, focus on items they need more practice in, and get not only personalized learning materials but also assessment and feedback. In a nutshell, ChatGPT offers all the essential prerequisites for autonomous language learning. Offering all these possibilities, ChatGPT enables the concept and practice of flipped classroom to be revived again.

It is of vital importance to invest expertise into learning about the options and possibilities offered by ChatGPT rather than wasting enormous energy on fighting to ban ChatGPT form higher education institutions. This language model is here to stay and not likely to stay outside higher education institutions. It will only gain popularity so we should make most of it for the benefit of both parties involved in the language learning and teaching process while maintaining the already established principles of academic integrity and honesty. In order to use ChatGPT as a language learning tool, teachers and students alike should first and foremost learn how to interact with it. Both parties involved in the language teaching/learning process need to develop digital competences for utilising the tool in a pedagogically beneficial and ethical manner. We teachers should focus all our know-know and experience first of all on learning and then instructing our students how to properly word and formulate the prompts when using ChatGPT in order to get the most relevant response. We language teachers are also obliged to warn students against ChatGPT using fictional, non-existent sources. We have to ensure students develop the habit of meticulously checking the sources and references suggested by ChatGPT. Properly crediting sources is essential at tertiary education as it represents the last opportunity for instilling this habit into current students and future professionals in all spheres of society.

The limitless possibilities ChatGPT offers make summarising, paraphrasing and quoting insufficient for avoiding and fighting against plagiarism. It is now more crucial than ever to educate individuals about the risks of spreading unverified and uncredited ideas, facts and theories.

In order to raise the awareness of the potential of ChatGPT as a language learning tool, in the undergraduate Advanced Academic English course at SEEU, ChatGPT was used as a writing assistant for self-checking, self-correcting, comparing and rewriting students' work. Students were asked to use ChatGPT to check the introduction of the group research paper for spelling and grammar mistakes. They were also asked to prompt ChatGPT for an improved version of the conclusion they wrote for their group research report. They were instructed to closely analyse and discuss the suggestions within their groups and produce the final version of the introduction and conclusion of the group research report before submitting it for grading.

Yan (2023) is one of the many researchers and ELT practitioners who warns against the possibility of unethical use of ChatGPT and proposes developing and implementing an application protocol for proper use of technology in language teaching rather than impeding students' opportunities to encounter and utilize AI-based tools. Currently SEEU has no policy on using ChatGPT whatsoever, but it is my personal conviction that education institutions need to offer specific guidelines for using tools such as ChatGPT, modify and adapt the current teaching and assessment practices so as to properly prepare students for a "*world where AI-driven digital tools are part of daily life*" (Kohnke, Moorhouse and Zou 2024, 10).

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