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## *A Note from the Editor-in-Chief*

Dear authors and colleagues,

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to the latest edition of the International Journal of Language Instruction, Volume 2, Issue 3. As we delve into the contents of this issue, we are excited to present a diverse selection of research articles that shed light on various facets of language instruction and learning.

In the realm of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, this issue features a thought-provoking case study by Nguyen Thi Thu Hang, titled “EFL Teachers’ Perspectives toward the Use of ChatGPT in Writing Classes: A Case Study at Van Lang University.” This paper offers valuable insights into the integration of technology, specifically ChatGPT, within the context of writing classes, providing fresh perspectives on its effectiveness.

Continuing on the path of EFL pedagogy, Phan Thi Thuy Quyen’s contribution, “EFL Students’ Perceptions towards Cooperative Learning in Writing Skills at a University in the Mekong Delta,” delves into the world of cooperative learning and its impact on writing skills among university students in the Mekong Delta region. The findings shared in this article offer a glimpse into innovative teaching methods and their implications.

The unprecedented challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic have compelled educators worldwide to adapt rapidly. “An Investigation into the Perception of Online Teaching and the Challenges of Online Teaching Faced by English Lecturers at Quang Trung University during the COVID-19 Outbreak” by Vo Thi Thu Suong and Le Thi My Nho explores the experiences and challenges faced by English lecturers during this critical period, shedding light on the transformative nature of online education.

Shifting our focus, we delve into the realm of courses within English Studies programs with Nguyen Thi Tuyet-Nhung’s paper, “Exploring Vietnamese EFL Students’ Perceptions towards Literature Courses in English Studies Program.” This study delves into the perceptions of Vietnamese EFL students regarding literature courses, bridging the gap between language instruction and literary appreciation.

As editors of the International Journal of Language Instruction, we are delighted to provide a platform for these valuable contributions to the field of language instruction. The research presented in this issue not only enriches our understanding of language teaching and learning but also fosters a deeper appreciation for the complexities and challenges faced by educators and students alike.

We extend our gratitude to the authors for their dedication and hard work in producing these insightful articles. We also thank our esteemed editors and reviewers for their invaluable feedback, which has ensured the quality and rigor of the research published here.

With warm regards,

Assoc. prof. dr. Pham Vu Phi Ho  
Editor-in-Chief  
International Journal of Language Instruction



## EFL Teachers' Perspectives toward the Use of ChatGPT in Writing Classes: A Case Study at Van Lang University

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### ABSTRACT

The introduction of ChatGPT is seen as a potential chance to improve second language learning and instruction. However, the acceptance of technology in education is dependent on instructors' views. As a consequence, it is vital to explore how EFL teachers assess the implementation of ChatGPT in language classes, particularly in Vietnam, where research on this topic is scarce. The goal of this study is to learn about EFL teachers' thoughts on using ChatGPT in writing sessions and to gather ideas for its implementation. The research involved twenty Van Lang University EFL teachers who utilized ChatGPT in their language education and taught numerous writing courses. An online survey and a structured interview were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data. The study's results show that EFL instructors at Van Lang University are enthusiastic about using ChatGPT in writing lessons. Furthermore, the research emphasizes the necessity of professional training for instructors, boosting user knowledge of the limits and possible hazards connected with ChatGPT, and assuring correct chatbot use as critical elements that contribute to its successful deployment.

#### Keywords:

ChatGPT, teachers' perspectives, writing classes

### Introduction

It is undeniable that during the past century, technological development has provided an innovative approach to language learning and teaching (Nguyen, 2021). Reportedly, artificial intelligence (AI) has been widely used in a variety of classroom settings. Thus, the effects of AI on language acquisition have been the subject of extensive research. According to Gali, Ayyad, Abu-Naser, and Laban (2018), using AI as a tutor to teach grammar lessons generated an enjoyable learning environment that significantly improved students' grammatical knowledge. Having the same mindset, Park (2019) affirmed that implementing AI in the form of a grammar checker could assist in lowering students' grammatical errors in their written works. Dewi et al. (2021) strengthened the notion by reiterating AI's benefits for improving students' language skills. Clearly, incorporating AI into language learning and teaching results in enhanced learning outcomes for students, as it provides them with ample opportunities for

regular language practices (Fitria, 2021).

Concurrently, one of the most popular AI technologies, chatbots, has been explored in educational research (Okonkwo & Ade-Ibijola, 2020). Because of their practicality and accessibility, Haristiani (2020) claimed that chatbots have significant potential for usage as teaching tools. Indeed, chatbots give rapid replies to learners' inquiries (Hiremath et al., 2018), boosting students' learning outcomes (Kim, 2019). In a similar line, Tran, Tran, and Nguyen's 2022 research demonstrated how effective chatbots were at improving students' performance and participation in grammar lessons. Winkler and Soellner (2018) contributed to the area by determining that chatbots are conversational companions that significantly boost learning results and student pleasure. Furthermore, chatbots are regarded as useful instructors who provide personalized support (Pham et al., 2018), rapid access to educational materials (Murad et al., 2019), and automated assessment of students' learning abilities (Durall & Kapros, 2020).

Writing is a form of productive talent that is frequently used in a range of circumstances, ranging from businesses to higher education, and it undoubtedly plays an important role in second language acquisition (Klimova, 2012). Furthermore, writing is one of the most difficult abilities to acquire when learning a second language, according to current educators, since it involves several processes, such as gathering ideas, constructing an outline, writing, and revising (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). As a result, teachers' guidance and regular feedback in writing classes is critical (Vo, 2022; Steve Graham et al., 2012; Reid, 1993), especially when combined to produce a strengthened conversation between the teacher and specific student, increasing the student's sensitivity to write better and more easily (Phung, 2020). Vu, Tran, Le, and Dao (2022) consistently claimed that students viewed instructor criticism of their writings to be critical for enhancing their written output.

The researcher's practical experience in teaching various writing courses at the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Van Lang University, has highlighted the significant challenge of limited individual interaction between teachers and students in crowded classes. Obviously, the reality of a crowded writing class with more than 40 students prevents the teacher and her students from having one-on-one interaction. Furthermore, due to the stringent time restrictions of school hours, it is unlikely that the teacher will provide immediate responses to students' questions or offer extensive feedback on their written work. Additionally, teaching writing necessitates a considerable amount of work in developing diverse instructional materials and providing frequent feedback on students' written work, which increases instructors' workload considerably. Therefore, there is a pressing demand for a teaching assistant who can engage in regular personalized conversations with students to address their queries and who is dependable in assisting teachers throughout various stages of instruction. AI appears to meet these requirements through the introduction of chatbots, which have gained popularity due to their convenience and ease of access (Ranoliya et al., 2017). Reportedly, these virtual assistants are capable of establishing a sense of intimacy with students, devoid of judgment for their mistakes, and provide immediate assistance (Petrova & Mikheeva, 2021). They can also assist teachers by providing tailored learning materials (Okonkwo & Ade-Ibijola, 2021) and aiding in the assessment process, thus contributing to the development of an automated and intelligent teaching system (Durall & Kapros, 2020).

In essence, prior research shows that many studies on the efficacy and usability of chatbots in second language learning and teaching have been undertaken. In contrast, there has been little study on how teachers assess the use of chatbots in EFL classes. The researcher was compelled to conduct a study to determine how EFL teachers perceive the use of ChatGPT in writing classes due to a pressing need for a workable solution to the lack of interaction between teachers and specific students in crowded writing classes, an effort to reduce teachers' workload, and a gap in the ongoing literature review. Given that teachers are the primary consumers of any educational innovation, it is vital to explore their views on the use of chatbots in EFL scenarios. The project's goal is to learn about EFL teachers' experiences with ChatGPT, as well as their thoughts on its potential as a supportive teaching assistant in writing classes, and to collect their ideas for effectively implementing ChatGPT into writing instruction.

## Literature review

### *AI and the use of AI in language learning and Teaching*

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is defined and seen differently in contemporary literature. One prevalent viewpoint regards AI as a kind of computational creativity that reflects technological progress (Cheng & Day, 2014). Similarly, Karsenti (2019) expanded on this notion by emphasizing that AI entails the creation of intelligent machines capable of performing tasks akin to the human brain. As a result, AI is often referred to as Machine Intelligence (Mehrotra, 2019), and it is capable of simulating human-like activities (Joshi, 2019) and demonstrating human-like cognitive processes (Campeato, 2020). This idea is reinforced further by Kaur and Gill (2019), who claim that AI is a digital endeavor aiming at obtaining human-level intelligence via the usage of different computerized technologies.

AI is often characterized as a computer science technology that includes computer systems and computerized devices that execute cognitive activities similar to those performed by human brains (Baker & Smith, 2019). As a result, using AI in education creates new chances, potentials, and problems in educational practices (Ouyang & Jiao, 2022). Notably, several research has looked at the use of AI in language learning and teaching. Ghali et al. (2018) investigated the usefulness of an AI-created tool called the Intelligent Tutoring System in grammar lessons. According to the research, this application improved students' grammar understanding by providing personalized training based on student performance data and providing rapid feedback on their replies. Similarly, Dewi et al. (2021) investigated prominent AI-based services such as Duolingo, Google Translate, and Grammarly to confirm the usefulness of AI in educational contexts. The study's findings indicated that AI has a good influence on English language learning and that it should be included in English language instruction to enhance student learning outcomes. Fitria (2021) suggested using Grammarly, an AI-powered program, to improve pupils' writing abilities. According to the findings of this research, the tool aided students by analyzing their written work, detecting problems, and making recommendations for vocabulary selections, grammar, punctuation, style, and tone. As a result, Grammarly was seen as a virtual helper that helped students improve their writing skills (Karyuatry, 2018). Furthermore, Tonicic (2020) suggested that AI grammar checkers were very advantageous for instructors since they reduced their effort while marking students' papers. As a consequence, instructors had more time to give relevant criticism on the papers' substance and

organization. Chaudhry and Kazim (2021) highlighted prior research results on the adoption of AI in education, emphasizing its important role in creating personalized learning experiences for students, lowering teacher workloads, and revolutionizing the assessment process.

### *Chatbots*

The word chatbot is essentially described as a computer program that converses with a human being, usually through the Internet (Oxford Dictionary Online, 2020). According to Shawar and Atwell (2007), a chatbot is software driven by artificial intelligence that can engage in natural language interactions with people. These dialogues may occur through audio or text (Shevat, 2017), with either keyword-matching algorithms (Weizenbaum, 1966, as mentioned in Hwang & Chang, 2021) or natural language processing mechanisms (Brennan, 2006) being used. As a consequence, chatbots may imitate human-like interactions across a wide range of areas or themes, offering a variety of objectives such as entertainment, data inquiries, exercises, and answering questions (Copulsky, 2019).

In response to the fast evolution of technology, chatbots have experienced substantial development. According to reports, chatbots are run utilizing complicated programmed models and algorithms (Shi, Zeng, & Li, 2021), acting as conversational or interactive agents to give users quick replies (Okonkwo & Ade-Ibijola, 2020). As a result, chatbots are increasingly seen as a helpful tool for enhancing students' learning experiences (Clarizia et al., 2018). Furthermore, chatbots provide students with a fun learning environment (Kim et al., 2019), enhanced peer communication skills (Hill et al., 2015), and higher learning efficiency (Wu et al., 2020).

### *The use of chatbots in language learning and teaching*

There has been an upsurge in the number of studies that look at the usage of chatbots in educational settings in recent years. Fryer and Carpenter (2006) discussed the benefits and applications of chatbots, namely Jabberwacky and ALICE, in foreign language teaching and learning. The authors emphasized six advantages of using chatbots as a language learning tool, including the ability to create a relaxed learning environment, increase student motivation, provide a variety of learning resources, provide prompt and effective feedback on spelling and grammar, facilitate reading and listening practice, and serve as patient conversation partners. Shawar (2017) backed up this claim, stating that using chatbots in language learning may increase students' pleasure, decrease language anxiety, and give abundant opportunities for practice and the usage of multimodal elements. Similarly, in their research, Shin et al. (2021) found that chatbots showed tremendous potential as productive dialogue partners to boost student engagement and give relevant learning opportunities.

In a separate analysis, a study by Kim (2019) assessed the effectiveness of the Replika chatbot, which served as a personal grammar instructor. According to the author, frequent one-on-one conversations with the chatbot helped students become more proficient in grammar. In addition, the welcoming atmosphere provided by these human-like dialogues helped students overcome their affective filters related to stress, worry, and fear. With a similar perspective, Lu et al. (2006) confirmed that chatbots were successful conversational companions because they gave users the flexibility to communicate with them wherever they were. Additionally, the capacity

to record talks for subsequent analysis was another benefit they provided. Ayedoun and colleagues (2015) consistently employed a semantic technique to demonstrate how integrating a conversational agent promotes the willingness to communicate (WTC) in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The chatbot provided participants with many everyday conversation settings in their research, allowing them to simulate ordinary English conversations, which lowered anxiety and increased people's self-assurance. Similarly, Tai and Chen (2020) studied how a two-week intervention using Google Assistant, an intelligent personal assistant, may enhance the oral interaction skills of adolescent EFL learners. Their findings showed that, despite the intervention's short duration, using intelligent personal assistants resulted in increased communication confidence and reduced speaking anxiety among students. Chatbots, in general, may act as virtual companions, providing feedback to human partners during conversations and cultivating a sense of closeness. (Costa, 2018).

### *Teachers' and students' perspectives on the integration of chatbots in language learning and teaching*

When contemplating the use of chatbots in language learning and teaching, it is clear that instructors and students are the major end-users who should be considered (Chuah & Kabilan, 2021). As a result, various studies have been conducted to study instructors' and students' opinions of the incorporation of chatbots in educational settings. Kiptonui, Too, and Mukwa (2018) performed a study that highlighted instructors' favorable opinions towards adding chatbots into their courses. The majority of instructors thought that chatbots improved students' learning outcomes by delivering a fun learning experience and boosting understanding. Furthermore, instructors reported an interest in using chatbots in their classrooms, seeing them as user-friendly technology that made themes more fascinating. Similarly, Chuah and Kabilan (2021) investigated instructors' perceptions about the use of two chatbots in English learning and teaching, Wordsworth and Andy English Bird. The research indicated that instructors were amenable to using chatbots in their classroom instruction. Chatbots, they claimed, might help with social presence by enhancing interaction, teaching presence by serving as teaching assistants and mentoring students, and cognitive presence by integrating students into critical thinking processes (Garrison et al., 2001). Yang and Chen's (2023) investigation, on the other hand, came to a different result. While pre-service teachers had a strong desire to engage with chatbots for the purposes of organizing understanding and finding material, they expressed little want to employ chatbots owing to a lack of familiarity with the technology.

The literature also explores the viewpoints of students on the application of chatbots. According to Underwood (2017), EFL learners expressed a preference for artificial intelligence interactions and found them to be motivating and enjoyable. Echoing this sentiment, Thai and Chen (2020) conducted a study on EFL students' perspectives on using Google Assistant for learning English. They affirmed that these students exhibited high levels of motivation, engagement, and comfort during their interactions with the chatbot. Similar findings were found in Cardoso's (2016) study, which showed that second language learners had a positive attitude towards chatbot interactions, perceiving them as a comfortable experience. However, contrasting findings were presented by Cakmak (2022), who noted that students held a negative attitude toward using chatbots as conversational partners.

### *Several concerns on the use of chatbots in language learning and teaching*

Chatbots have been shown to be effective conversational agents in boosting learning outcomes and motivation in students. They do this by providing a variety of learning tools, responding quickly to students' inquiries, and establishing a fun learning atmosphere. However, including chatbots in language learning and teaching requires careful consideration of a number of factors in order to maximize their usefulness.

According to the available research, integrating chatbot technology into education poses considerable problems. Chatbots work by storing and analyzing large volumes of data using complicated programmed patterns and algorithms (Shi, Zeng, & Li, 2021). This raises ethical issues, such as user privacy and agent identity (Ruane et al., 2019). Chatbots have the ability to capture personal data from students, such as their names, email addresses, and academic achievement records (Liden & Nilros, 2020). As a result, worries about privacy and security have a substantial impact on users' desire to employ chatbots in education (Shumanov and Johnson, 2021). To overcome these issues, chatbot systems must adhere to established privacy norms. Furthermore, educational institutions must guarantee that such information is collected and stored securely and in line with applicable data protection legislation (Liden & Nilros, 2020).

The problem for instructors, according to Dincer (2018), is their ability to integrate information and technology into their teaching and learning practices. In layman's words, instructors need training on how to utilize instructional technology effectively (Kiptonui, Too, & Mukwa Mukwa, 2018). Liden and Nilros (2020) agreed on the need for educational institutions to give instructors the training and assistance to properly incorporate chatbots into their teaching techniques. This training might include learning how to use chatbots properly, smoothly integrating them into current lesson plans and tracking student engagement and success.

The financial aspect emerges as an additional constraint when it comes to implementing and upkeep chatbots, as finance necessitates continuous programming and updating to align with evolving language learning trends and changing information (Rahman et al., 2017). Supporting this idea, Liden and Nilros (2020) highlighted the significance of regularly maintaining and updating the chatbot to keep pace with technological advancements and the ever-changing needs of students. This ensures the chatbot's continued effectiveness and its suitability to students.

### *ChatGPT*

Deep learning and large language models (LLM) based on the Generative Pre-trained Transformer (GPT) architecture are used by OpenAI's ChatGPT advanced chatbot (Radford et al., 2018). ChatGPT has a thorough knowledge of natural language as a result of extensive training in a wide range of textual sources such as books, papers, and websites. As a consequence, it may provide replies that are not only contextually appropriate but also consistent with user cues (Radford et al., 2018).

### *Features of ChatGPT*

ChatGPT is trained on enormous datasets of text and conversational data, allowing it to understand natural language patterns and appropriate responses (Greyling, 2022). This training process, termed "primary prompt engineering" (Greyling, 2022), aids ChatGPT in creating responses that follow natural language patterns. ChatGPT improves its performance in some tasks by combining supervised fine-tuning, reinforcement learning (Lee et al., 2018), and conversational prompt injection techniques (Greyling, 2022). Supervised fine-tuning, a natural language processing (NLP) technique, specifically trains an existing pre-trained model for a specified task or domain. ChatGPT, for example, enhances response generation for tasks such as responding to questions and conducting smooth talks (Lee et al., 2018).

ChatGPT is continually improving the quality of chatbot dialogues via conversational prompt injection and supervised fine-tuning. In order to regulate the response of a machine-learning model, conversational cues are included in the input data (Salam, 2023). ChatGPT obtains specific knowledge and increases its capacity to create relevant and engaging replies when cues from a specific discussion are inserted to offer extra context (Greyling, 2022).

Reinforcement learning, on the other hand, is a machine-learning technique employed in ChatGPT to enhance its performance through user interactions (Lee et al., 2018). Indeed, ChatGPT observes its environment, takes action to achieve desired outcomes, and subsequently earns positive or negative rewards based on its effectiveness in completing assigned tasks (Atlas, 2023). Progressively, ChatGPT learns to optimize its actions to maximize rewards and continually improve its performance. Generally, this iterative learning process allows ChatGPT to excel in various applications such as customer service and personal assistance (Atlas, 2023). This advanced chatbot has made significant progress in the field of language models and leverages artificial intelligence to generate human-like text (Atlas, 2023). Accordingly, ChatGPT represents a substantial advancement in chatbot technology, enabling it to handle a wide range of text-based tasks, from simple inquiries to complex assignments (Liu et al., 2021).

### *The merits of using ChatGPT in language learning and teaching*

Academic studies have looked at the potential benefits of ChatGPT in the realm of language acquisition. ChatGPT has a large vocabulary and can generate text that closely resembles human conversation over a wide variety of topics, making it a valuable tool for language teaching and learning, according to Shahriar and Hayawi (2023). Kasneci et al. (2023) highlighted ChatGPT's usefulness in assisting university students with research and writing assignments, as well as the development of their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. According to the authors, utilizing a large language model may offer students document summaries and outlines, which improves their grasp of technical jargon and teaches them how to structure their thoughts for writing. Zhai (2022) concurred, adding that ChatGPT supports researchers in producing writings that are logical, accurate, systematic, and instructive. ChatGPT may also give feedback on students' work, helping them to improve their writing abilities (Baidoo-Anu & Owusu Ansah, 2023). ChatGPT's advantages in language learning were elaborated upon by George and George (2023), who claimed that it could be used to develop interactive conversational agents that duplicate authentic dialogues and help students

to enhance their speaking and listening abilities. ChatGPT is a useful conversational companion that improves students' language practices by using large language models (Tack & Piech, 2022).

The use of ChatGPT in language instruction has been a source of debate in academic circles. Baskara and Mukarto (2023) performed research that demonstrated ChatGPT's usefulness in lowering instructors' burdens. The authors emphasized ChatGPT's usefulness in assisting instructors with lesson planning, preparing learning materials, and performing in-class activities. Similarly, Kasneci et al. (2023) backed up this claim by claiming that ChatGPT may save instructors time and energy by delivering customized materials and feedback, enabling them to concentrate on other vital parts of teaching, such as giving compelling and engaging sessions. Zhai (2023) confirmed ChatGPT's importance in assessing student performance. He said that the program could give students with automatic grading and feedback, as well as help with proofreading and revising their written work. Moore et al.'s (2022) study bolstered this claim by proving that ChatGPT may assist instructors in analyzing students' responses. Rudolph et al. (2023) emphasized ChatGPT's significant aid in analyzing and grading student performance, including the generation of tasks, quizzes, and assignments, the marking of student work, and the provision of important recommendations for individual students.

#### *Ethical considerations and limitations of ChatGPT*

The development of ChatGPT is seen as a watershed point in technological and artificial intelligence progress (Rudolph et al., 2023; Ruby, 2023). As a result, there has been much debate over its use in education. Recent research has examined the advantages of incorporating ChatGPT into educational settings, while other studies have raised concerns about its usage in such settings.

Educators, in particular, have highlighted grave concerns about prejudice and discrimination with respect to ChatGPT. According to Kasneci et al. (2023), big language models utilized in ChatGPT may inherit social biases, prejudices, and preconceptions from training data. According to Rettberg (2022), the cultural bias in ChatGPT replies is caused by the underlying database and AI algorithms. Bias and prejudice result in erroneous and unjust results that harm the teaching and learning processes (Lund & Wang, 2023). As a result, it is critical to ensure that the training database is varied and that the model's performance is continuously checked and tested on different groups of individuals (Kasneci et al., 2023).

Second, the use of ChatGPT in education raises concerns about academic integrity, which is defined as a commitment to six fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage (International Centre for Academic Integrity, 2021). When a user utilizes ChatGPT to create written work that is then graded similarly to student-generated work, the essential concepts of academic honesty are jeopardized (Eke, 2023). Cassidy (2023) has often highlighted worries about utilizing ChatGPT for cheating, which may have a negative influence on evaluations. To overcome this problem, new assessment techniques that prioritize students' creativity and critical thinking are required (Zhai, 2022). Furthermore, one possible solution includes instructors using anti-plagiarism software to ensure the authenticity of writings created using ChatGPT (Aydn & Karaarslan, 2022).

ChatGPT has grown in popularity because of its distinct features and superior performance when compared to other AI technologies. This status has spurred debate regarding another topic. A number of studies have expressed concern over instructors' and students' dependence on ChatGPT. Kasneci et al. (2023) confirmed that ChatGPT's fast-produced solutions will hamper students' ability to think critically or solve problems. The authors also addressed a similar problem that might occur for instructors who use ChatGPT as a replacement for their lesson preparations. Lund and Wang (2023) shared the same concern about how much students and teachers depend on ChatGPT for research and writing tasks. However, if users are aware of the benefits of utilizing ChatGPT as a supplement to learning or to aid in the teaching process, the problem may be readily resolved (Pavlik, 2023).

The ethical usage of ChatGPT in education needs a conversation about the possibility of jeopardizing data privacy and security. Large language models in ChatGPT may synthesize students' knowledge and use it for a variety of applications (Dwivedi et al., 2023). Furthermore, Kasneci et al. (2023) indicated that ChatGPT's personal information might be used for impersonation or deceit. ChatGPT's creation of synthetic information also increases the danger of sensitive data leakage, including personal, financial, and medical information (Lund & Wang, 2023). Users should take care and utilize ChatGPT appropriately to minimize this possible danger (Lund & Wang, 2023). According to Kasneci et al. (2023), a combination of steps, such as data usage legislation, increasing awareness among educators and students, and installing modern technology to prevent unauthorized access, may help reduce the likelihood of data breaches.

#### *Related Studies*

Several studies have been undertaken to investigate instructors' perspectives on the use of ChatGPT in English language instruction. Ali, Shamsan, Hezam, and Mohammed (2023) performed a study with 42 instructors and 32 students who completed an online questionnaire. The study's goal was to learn about their thoughts on how ChatGPT may improve students' learning motivation. According to the survey findings, the majority of educators and EFL practitioners believe ChatGPT is effective in enhancing students' independent, intrinsic, and extrinsic motivation. Notably, the participants' views regarding the use of ChatGPT to improve students' motivation for acquiring reading and writing abilities, grammar, and vocabulary were favorable, with mean scores ranging from 3.9 to 4.5. The study results, however, suggested that the participants had a more neutral view towards the usage of ChatGPT to push children to improve speaking and listening skills.

According to Firat's (2023) broad analysis of qualitative research, both experts and students have favorable opinions of the incorporation of ChatGPT into educational contexts. A thematic analysis of data acquired through an online survey with a sample of 21 individuals from Turkey, Sweden, Canada, and Australia was performed by the researcher. The study's findings demonstrated that participants agreed on ChatGPT's efficacy in supporting students in the learning process by providing personalized learning experiences and immediate access to information, thereby increasing student engagement, motivation, and soft skill development. However, participants raised concerns about some ethical difficulties related to the use of ChatGPT, such as privacy concerns and inherent biases in decision-making.

Contrarily, the study conducted by Iqbal, Ahmed, and Azhar (2022) presented contrasting findings. They examined the perspectives of twenty faculty members from a private university in Pakistan regarding the implementation of ChatGPT in education. Through the analysis of data collected from semi-structured interviews, it was discovered that teachers exhibited unfavorable attitudes toward incorporating ChatGPT into their classrooms. The majority of teachers expressed resistance, citing worries about potential student dishonesty, privacy breaches, and inadequate support from their colleagues (Iqbal, Ahmed, & Azhar, 2022).

A thorough review of the existing literature reveals that numerous well-structured studies have been conducted to investigate teachers' perspectives on the use of chatbots in educational settings, with the majority of them confirming that teachers have positive attitudes towards incorporating chatbots in language learning and teaching. Similarly, several research on ChatGPT has shown favorable sentiments among instructors on its use in education, despite significant ethical problems and limits. However, these studies have not particularly investigated teachers' perspectives on integrating ChatGPT for teaching language skills, nor have they fully recorded instructors' proposals for successful ChatGPT use in pedagogical situations. The researcher was encouraged to perform a detailed study on this issue with EFL instructors at Van Lang University because of a research vacuum in the present literature. The current study seeks to investigate how Van Lang University professors assess the incorporation of ChatGPT in writing sessions. Furthermore, it is intended to give significant insights into their suggestions for effective ChatGPT application in writing courses. To accomplish these goals, data was collected using a mixed-method approach that included both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The outcomes of this study might provide particular suggestions to EFL instructors at Van Lang University for integrating ChatGPT in their language teaching and inspire them to embrace technology improvements to reinvent their teaching ways.

### *Research Questions*

To achieve the above purposes, the study focuses on these research notions:

1. How do EFL teachers at Van Lang University utilize ChatGPT in their language teaching practices?
2. How do EFL teachers at Van Lang University perceive the utilization of ChatGPT in writing classes?
3. What recommendations do EFL teachers offer regarding the effective application of ChatGPT in writing classes?

### **Methods**

#### *Pedagogical Setting & Participants*

Van Lang University, established in 1995, has made noteworthy educational accomplishments and has developed as a prominent private university in Vietnam, garnering international acclaim for its academic research. The educational philosophy of Van Lang University is focused on offering a well-rounded, lifelong, ethically-driven, and impactful learning experience, according to Decision No.109/Q/VL-HT issued by the Chairman of Van Lang University's Council on August 18th, 2020.

The Purposive Sampling technique was utilized to choose relevant participants for the research, with the purpose of studying the opinions of experienced instructors who taught many writing courses at Van Lang University and employed ChatGPT in their teaching. The research was conducted during the second semester of the 2022-2023 academic year and featured a total of twenty EFL instructors with extensive experience teaching writing and skill in using ChatGPT. These experts were carefully selected to ensure they had enough technology literacy and specialized competence in teaching writing workshops. The twenty experienced professors responded to an online questionnaire given on the website of the Faculty of Foreign Languages. Following that, ten people were chosen to participate in structured interviews using the purposive and judgment sample approach. Five of the ten participants used ChatGPT in their writing classes, three in their research methodology classes, and two in their translation classes. These instructors were asked to discuss their experiences with using ChatGPT in their classrooms, explain their views about its use in writing courses, and provide ideas for optimal implementation of this chatbot. The participants were told that the obtained data would be used for research purposes only and would not be disclosed outside of the study environment or to unauthorized individuals.

### *Design of the Study*

To collect data that would thoroughly answer the research topics, a mixed-method technique was used in the study. This method included gathering both quantitative and qualitative data, which was then analyzed to fulfill the main study goals. An online questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data, while structured interviews were used to collect qualitative data. The research aims to gather accurate and valid data on instructors' usage of ChatGPT in language education, their attitudes about its use in writing courses, and their suggestions for the successful use of ChatGPT in EFL classrooms by combining these two approaches. The quantitative strategy allowed for data gathering from a broad sample size, whilst the qualitative method gave in-depth insights into the problem. As Spratt et al. (2004) point out, combining these two strategies "capitalizes on the strength of each approach" and compensates for their respective weaknesses.

### *Data collection & analysis*

#### *Questionnaire*

To begin the data collection procedure, a Google Forms-based online questionnaire was constructed and sent to a group of twenty instructors who had utilized ChatGPT in their courses and had substantial experience teaching writing. The questionnaire is broken into two portions with 39 questions each. The first component consisted of five questions intended to elicit demographic information such as gender, age, and teaching experience. The second section had 34 questions broken into three groups. Section A, which included eight questions (1–8), investigated the instructors' experiences with using ChatGPT in language training. Section B included 15 questions (9-23) designed to elicit instructors' thoughts on using ChatGPT in writing sessions. Finally, part C included eleven questions (24-34) aimed at eliciting instructors' recommendations for successfully adopting ChatGPT.

The participants got the online survey through Outlook emails and completed all of the

questions in around five minutes. To ensure the confidentiality of the gathered data, instructors might use pseudonyms or leave their identities out of their replies. The questionnaire, as a quantitative research instrument, facilitates the collection of numerical data to determine the prevalence of a phenomenon, identify correlations between measured variables, and draw generalizations (Aliaga and Gunderson, as cited in Muijs, 2010). Furthermore, conducting a survey benefits the researcher by saving time and effort when data is gathered automatically and concurrently (Wright, 2005). The questionnaire items were generated from validated questions previously used by Kiptonui, Too, and Mukwa (2019) and Chuah and Kabilan (2021), who had previously examined and confirmed the instrument's credibility and reliability.

An online questionnaire of 34 questions was offered to collect data for three study subjects, comprising one open-ended question, two multiple-choice questions, and 31 five-point Likert scale questions. On a scale of 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (absolutely agree), participants were asked to choose one of five choices. After that, the data was examined using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 26 (SPSS 26) tool. The results were presented as numerical figures and percentages.

The researcher employed Cronbach's Alpha and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), which included KMO and Bartlett's Test, to assess the reliability of the data obtained via the online questionnaire.

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess the reliability of the five-point Likert scale, which was used to collect data for three study objectives. The total Cronbach's Alpha score is .914 showing a high degree of consistency in participant replies throughout the list of 31 items. Cronbach's Alpha ratings for each part surpass the benchmark value of .7, which is used to evaluate response dependability. Notably, the Cronbach's Alpha value for the participants' viewpoints variable, which consists of 15 items, is .890. The participants' practices variable, which includes six items, has a Cronbach's Alpha of .854. Furthermore, the participants' recommendations variable, which consists of ten items, has a Cronbach's Alpha value of .838. In general, these Cronbach's Alpha values fell within the acceptable range of 0.6 to 1 and gave a strong indication that the questionnaire questions were trustworthy for practical study.

**Table 1.** KMO and Bartlett’s Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.715
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2823.978
	df	595
	Sig.	.000

The KMO Test was used by the researcher to determine the suitability of the questionnaire data for factor analysis. The computed KMO value of .715 in Table 1 indicates a significant partial association between the variables. It indicates that the variables are appropriate for factor analysis. The researcher also used Bartlett's Test on the acquired data to check if the variables were unrelated and unfit for factor analysis. As stated in Table 1, Bartlett's Test produced sig. = .000 (0.05), suggesting that the variables in the data were correlated. Given the relevant KMO value and the significance level from Bartlett's Test, it is clear that the questionnaire data is

well-suited for factor analysis.

### *Structured interview*

In this recent research, qualitative data was acquired via structured interviews with ten instructors at Van Lang University who were chosen based on their expertise in utilizing ChatGPT to teach English to EFL students. The study included five instructors who used ChatGPT to teach writing, three who used it in the research methodology course, and two who used the advanced chatbot in the translation course. These instructors answered nine questions on how they use ChatGPT in their classrooms, discussed their thoughts on how it may be used to teach writing, and offered ideas for how to utilize this chatbot effectively in writing courses. Each instructor was invited to a 10-minute online interview using Microsoft Teams and advised that the interview would be videotaped. The recordings were utilized for research reasons only and were not disclosed or shared with anybody outside of the study environment. The interviews were performed in Vietnamese, the native language of both the participants and the researcher, to promote clear communication and minimize any misunderstandings throughout the interview process. Following that, during the analysis phase, the concepts presented during the interviews were translated into English.

Thematic analysis, including open coding and axial coding, was used to analyze the qualitative data acquired from the interview (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorensen, 2010). The author used open code to uncover noteworthy trends, such as participant experiences, thoughts on utilizing ChatGPT, and suggestions for the effective use of this chatbot in writing courses. Following that, axial coding was utilized to link these patterns, construct themes, and provide larger insights into these challenges.

## **Results/Findings**

### *Results of the online questionnaire*

The quantitative results from the online questionnaire were analyzed in SPSS 26 using descriptive statistics. The mean, minimum, maximum, frequency, percentages, and standard deviation were all calculated. The results were organized into categories such as demographic information, participant practices, participant opinions, and participant ideas.

### *Demographic information*

**Figure 1.** The participants' genders and ages

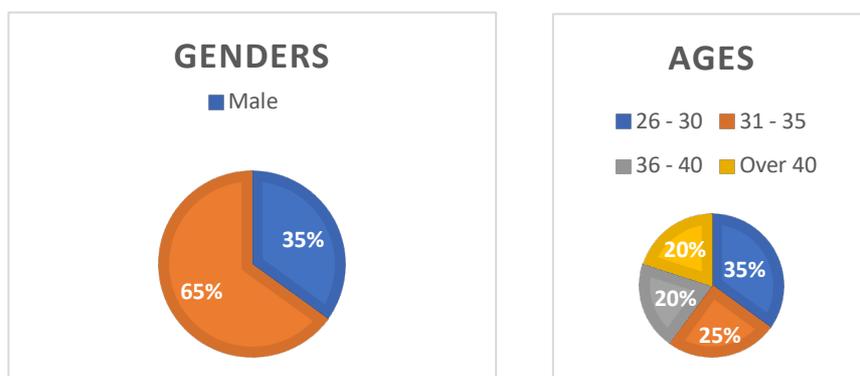


Figure 1 summarizes the data regarding the respondents' genders and ages. According to the statistics, the bulk of the participants in the study were female, accounting for 65% of the sample (N=13), with 7 male instructors accounting for 35% of the total. Figure 1 also demonstrated that a considerable number of instructors were above the age of 30, showing extensive experience teaching English. In particular, 35% of the participants were between the ages of 31 and 35, while 20% of the professors were between the ages of 36 and 40, which equaled the proportion of participants over 40 (N=4). Furthermore, individuals aged 26 to 30 made up 25% of the sample (N=5), with no participants younger than 26 years old.

**Figure 2.** Demographic information on participants' teaching experiences

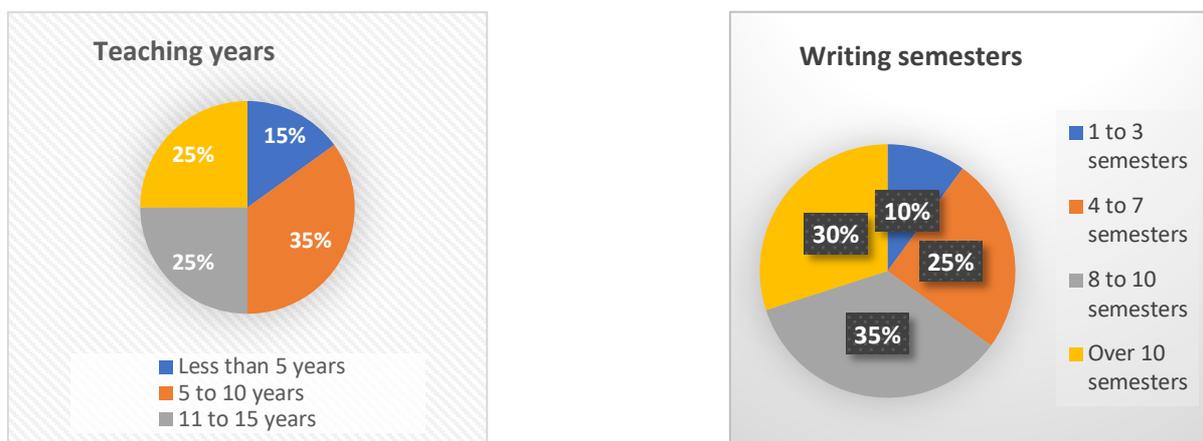


Figure 2 summarizes the outcomes of the language training experiences of the participants. According to the data, half of the participants (50%) had more than 10 years of teaching experience. In particular, 25% of participants have taught English for 11 to 15 years, with the remaining 25% having taught for more than 15 years. The bulk of teachers (35%) have been teaching English for 5 to 10 years, with 15% having less than 5 years of experience.

In terms of semesters taught, 35% of instructors have taught writing for 8 to 10 semesters, compared to 30% of participants who have taught writing for more than 10 semesters. The proportion of instructors who have only taught writing for one to three semesters is the least (15%), whereas five teachers account for 25% of the whole sample and have taught writing for four to seven semesters.



When it comes to writing courses, 30% of the participants, or twelve instructors, have taught Writing 1, a course focused on teaching students how to produce accurate, grammatically and semantically right sentences. With 22.5% of the participants, instructors who have taught Writing 2 rank second. Seven instructors (17.5% of the sample) taught Writing 3, a course that teaches students how to write cohesive and coherent paragraphs, while 15% of the teachers

taught Writing 4, which teaches students how to write various types of essays. Six instructors have also taught Writing 5, a subject that teaches students how to write a research report.

Table 4 shows that the majority of participants (85%) had significant experience teaching English, with 17 instructors having more than 5 years of experience. With 65% of the sample, the number of instructors who had taught writing for more than 7 semesters was likewise the highest. Furthermore, all respondents had taught writing classes, with 30%, 22.5%, 17.5%, 15%, and 15% having taught Writing 1, Writing 2, Writing 3, Writing 4, and Writing 5, respectively.

### *Teachers' practices on using ChatGPT in teaching English*

The gathered data examined the participants' utilization of ChatGPT in their teaching across four different aspects: language courses, frequency, purposes, and primary challenges.

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics of language courses that applied ChatGPT.

Item	Questionnaire	Courses	Percentages
1	In what courses have you employed ChatGPT as a teaching tool?	Writing	28%
		Reading	16%
		Research Methodology	20%
		Translation	20%
		Grammar	16%

Table 2 displays the outcomes of the language courses in which the participants used ChatGPT in their teaching practices. ChatGPT has been used in the classroom by seven instructors, representing 28% of the entire population. ChatGPT is used by 16% of instructors in Reading classes, which is the same proportion as those who use it in Grammar courses. Furthermore, 20% of the overall sample utilized ChatGPT in the course of Research Methodology, which is the same amount of instructors that used it in the course of Translation.

**Table 3.** The statistical analysis of how often ChatGPT is utilized for teaching English.

Item	Questionnaire	Courses	Percentages
2	How frequently is ChatGPT utilized as a teaching tool in your classes?	Every lesson of the course	25%
		Most of the lessons in the course	50%
		Some lessons from the course	25%
		One or two lessons of the course	0%

According to Table 3, the majority of participants (N=15, 75%) used ChatGPT often in their English teaching endeavors. More specifically, 50% of the instructors used ChatGPT for the bulk of the lessons on the curriculum, while the remaining 25% used ChatGPT for all lessons on a continuous basis. Five instructors, representing 25% of all replies, used ChatGPT in their classrooms on occasion. Surprisingly, there were no instructors who merely used ChatGPT for one or two classes in the curriculum.

**Table 4.** Participants' purposes for using ChatGPT

Items	Questionnaire	1 (TD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (TA)	Mean
3	ChatGPT was employed to aid in the development of my lesson plans.	5	15	20	40	20	3.55
4	ChatGPT was utilized to help generate learning materials for my students.	5	10	30	30	25	3.6
5	ChatGPT was used as a teaching assistant by evaluating students' papers and providing constructive feedback on their work.	5	30	20	45	0	3.05
6	ChatGPT was utilized to devise exercises and assignments for the students.	5	15	35	40	5	3.25

According to the data given in Table 4, the majority of participants ( $M=3.6$ ) and 60% agreed that ChatGPT considerably helped them in producing learning materials ( $M=3.55$ ). Teachers, on the other hand, were ambivalent about utilizing ChatGPT to evaluate students' learning achievement. The mean ratings of 3.25 and 3.05 indicated that respondents were indifferent in their use of ChatGPT to develop exercises or learning activities for students as well as grade and offer feedback on students' performance.

**Table 5.** Challenges that participants encountered in using ChatGPT

Items	Questionnaire	1 (TD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (TA)	Mean
7	I face challenges incorporating ChatGPT into lesson plans and activities.	0	5	30	20	45	3.0
8	The issues I have encountered in utilizing ChatGPT in language teaching are primarily technical problems.	20	15	35	15	15	2.9

Table 5 shows that the ratings for the items indicating the problems that instructors experience while using ChatGPT are in the moderate range ( $M=2.61-3.4$ ). This shows that respondents had a neutral approach, admitting that incorporating ChatGPT into their lesson planning and learning activities was moderately challenging ( $M=3.0$ ). Similarly, they reported technical issues encountered when using ChatGPT in their instruction as neutral ( $M=2.9$ ).

#### *Teachers' perspectives toward the use of ChatGPT in writing classes*

The questionnaire gathered quantitative data on the participants' attitudes toward the deployment of ChatGPT in writing courses, which were classified into three major categories. The first part focused on studying instructors' perspectives on the benefits of utilizing ChatGPT in writing sessions, taking into account both the benefits for teachers and students. The second

was to elicit information on possible concerns or difficulties highlighted about the usage of ChatGPT. Finally, the final component investigated the participants' perspectives on the relevance of ChatGPT in the future of language instruction.

**Table 6.** The participants' perspectives on the advantages of ChatGPT in writing classes

Items	Questionnaire	1 (TD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (TA)	Mean
9	Teachers can save time on grading and providing feedback with the help of ChatGPT.	0	15	45	35	5	3.3
10	ChatGPT offers significant support to teachers in their lesson-planning endeavors.	0	0	5	35	60	4.55
11	The diverse learning sources suggested by ChatGPT assist teachers in creating engaging learning materials for writing classes.	0	0	10	35	55	4.45
12	The use of ChatGPT in writing classes has the potential to enhance students' writing skills.	5	5	5	60	25	3.95
13	ChatGPT proves useful by suggesting reading resources to students, which can inspire ideas for writing tasks.	0	0	5	30	65	4.6
14	In my opinion, ChatGPT can provide immediate responses to any questions posed by students.	0	0	5	40	55	4.5
15	By providing accurate feedback and valuable suggestions for revisions, ChatGPT aids students in improving their grammar and vocabulary in writing performance.	5	15	30	30	20	3.45
16	Integrating ChatGPT in writing classes can boost students' learning motivation.	5	5	30	40	20	3.65
17	In my view, ChatGPT can serve as an effective tutor in writing classes.	0	0	25	35	40	4.15

Based on the data presented in Table 6, it is evident that most of the participants strongly agreed on the benefits of incorporating ChatGPT in writing classes for both teachers and students. A high percentage (95%) expressed their strong agreement with the valuable support provided by ChatGPT in creating lesson plans ( $M=4.55$ ). Additionally, they took a favorable attitude towards ChatGPT's ability to suggest a wide range of learning resources, aiding teachers in developing materials for writing classes ( $M=4.45$ ). However, the participants took a neutral stance when asked about the support of ChatGPT in grading and assessments ( $M=3.3$ ).

The results shown in Table 6 demonstrate the favorable influence of ChatGPT on students' writing skills. The participants' great agreement in practically every element of this category is reflected in the mean ratings, which fall within the high assessment range ( $M=3.45-4.6$ ). Notably, with mean ratings of 4.6 and 4.5, the instructors demonstrated great agreement on the

value of ChatGPT in proposing useful reading materials to students, assisting them to develop ideas for writing assignments with rapid replies to any needs. Furthermore, they unanimously agreed that ChatGPT was beneficial in improving students' writing abilities ( $M=3.95$ ), grammar and vocabulary understanding ( $M=3.45$ ), and desire to participate in writing assignments ( $M=3.65$ ). Furthermore, an overwhelming majority of participants (75%) agreed that ChatGPT serves as an excellent teaching assistant in writing sessions.

**Table 7.** The participants' perceptions on the potential concerns of using ChatGPT in writing classes

Items	Questionnaire	1 (TD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (TA)	Mean
18	Teachers might encounter challenges when incorporating ChatGPT into their lesson plans and writing activities.	15	25	30	25	5	2.8
19	Students might become too dependent on ChatGPT, potentially impairing their critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.	5	5	30	40	20	3.65
20	Introducing ChatGPT in writing classes may give rise to concerns regarding the academic integrity of students' submitted papers.	20	15	15	20	30	3.25
21	Employing ChatGPT could potentially lead to significant privacy and security risks tied to the handling of student data.	5	35	20	35	5	3.0

The results shown in Table 7 show that the mean scores fall within the medium assessment range (2.61-3.4). The participants had a neutral stance when they said that technical concerns were their challenges while using ChatGPT to teach writing ( $M=2.8$ ). They also indicated neutral views on possible issues raised by students' usage of ChatGPT in writing lessons. Teachers remained impartial in indicating that utilizing ChatGPT offered dangers such as privacy and security problems, students' strong reliance on this technology, and a possible loss in academic integrity in the papers produced by students, with mean scores of 3.0, 3.05, and 3.25, respectively.

**Table 8.** The participants' views toward the role of ChatGPT in the future of language teaching

Items	Questionnaire	1 (TD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (TA)	Mean
22	In the future, ChatGPT has the potential to serve as a supplement to human teaching and instructions.	0	20	50	25	5	3.15
23	In the future, ChatGPT can potentially substitute certain aspects of human teaching and instruction.	15	30	30	20	5	2.7

As presented in Table 8, the participants maintained a neutral stance when considering the role

of ChatGPT in the future of language teaching. They were neutral that ChatGPT could replace teachers in certain teaching stages ( $M=2.7$ ). Additionally, the teachers expressed a neutral opinion regarding the potential future of ChatGPT as a supportive tool for language teaching ( $M=3.15$ ).

*Teachers' suggestions for an effective application of ChatGPT in writing classes*

The section on teachers' proposals for successful ChatGPT deployment in writing courses emphasizes a number of important ideas linked to essential assistance, teacher knowledge, and strategies to alleviate possible issues.

**Table 9.** Participants' opinions on the necessary support for teachers (SPSS 26)

Item	Questionnaire	Support	Percentages
24	What kind of support do you believe teachers require in order to effectively implement ChatGPT in writing classes?	The availability of technology and software for use	20%
		Training on the utilization of ChatGPT in language teaching	47%
		Assistance from colleagues and management	33%

The statistics presented in Table 9 reveal that the majority of participants ( $N=14$ ) emphasized the importance of receiving proper training on how to effectively incorporate ChatGPT into language teaching, specifically in writing classes. Moreover, half of the teachers identified support from colleagues and the administration as a key factor in efficiently utilizing this advanced chatbot for teaching writing. The other 20% of the respondents affirmed the necessity of having access to technology and software to ensure the effectiveness of ChatGPT in their teaching practices.

**Table 10.** The participants' recommendation for an efficient implementation of ChatGPT

Items	Questionnaire	1 (TD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (TA)	Mean
25	Teachers should be aware of the limitations of ChatGPT and consistently evaluate the quality of its responses to their questions or requirements.	0	10	35	40	15	3.6
26	It is crucial for teachers to know how to provide specific prompts that work well with ChatGPT	0	5	15	55	25	4.0
27	Teachers should recognize that ChatGPT serves as a supplementary tool for their instruction	5	15	30	30	20	3.45
28	Teachers should provide guidance to students on how to properly utilize ChatGPT.	0	25	25	25	25	3.5
29	Teachers should allow students to utilize ChatGPT during classroom activities.	15	15	60	10	0	2.65
30	In my viewpoint, teachers should actively encourage students to utilize ChatGPT during the revision and editing phases.	10	20	25	20	25	3.3
31	Teachers should mandate students to submit rough drafts or outlines alongside their final papers to maintain academic integrity.	15	15	35	25	10	3.0
32	Teachers should notify students that AI content detectors such as GPTZero, PercentHuman, and Originality AI will be used to review their submitted work.	5	30	20	45	0	3.05
33	Teachers should construct activities that necessitate the utilization of critical thinking and problem-solving abilities by students.	0	10	35	40	15	3.6
34	I am optimistic that I will be able to teach students how to use ChatGPT effectively in language acquisition.	0	15	15	50	20	3.0

As demonstrated in Table 10, a large majority of respondents (80%) strongly agreed that teachers should provide specific cues to ChatGPT in order to elicit acceptable and valuable responses ( $M=4.0$ ). With mean scores of 3.6 and 3.45, participants agreed that teachers should increase their understanding of the limitations of ChatGPT and its complementary purpose in language instruction. Half of the participants (50%) agreed with item 28, underlining the importance of teaching students how to properly utilize ChatGPT in writing education ( $M=3.5$ ). The low mean score of item 29 ( $M=2.65$ ), which is slightly higher than 2.6, suggests that the majority of respondents had a neutral attitude about utilizing ChatGPT during class time. Similarly, they stated that instructors should encourage students to use ChatGPT throughout the

review and editing stages (M=3.3). Participants were separated into two groups when it came to steps to address academic integrity concerns: asking students to submit draughts or outlines with their final papers (M=3.0) and learning about helpful AI content detectors that professors would use to assess their written work (M=3.05). Furthermore, more than half of survey respondents agreed that teachers should incorporate activities that encourage students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills (M=3.6), while they expressed neutral confidence in effectively instructing students on the use of ChatGPT in learning writing (M=3.0).

### *Results of the structured interview*

**Table 11.** Frequency of using ChatGPT

<b>1. Do you often use ChatGPT in your teaching? Why?</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
Every lesson in the course	10%
Most of the lessons in the course	60%
Some lessons in the course	30%
One or two lessons in the course	0%

According to the data presented in Table 11, a majority of the interviewed teachers (70%) reported a regular implementation of ChatGPT into their language teaching practices. Specifically, sixty percent of the participants utilized ChatGPT in teaching most of the lessons in the syllabus. They asserted that ChatGPT supported them substantially in developing learning materials and practice tests for writing and research methodology courses.

*“I used ChatGPT to create learning materials for most of the lessons for my writing classes. I find it helpful to suggest diverse sources for designing learning activities and practice exercises suitable to the theme of each lesson.” (Participant 1)*

*“ChatGPT is really beneficial to provide reliable sources for teachers to diversify students’ learning practice and activities. I usually use this chatbot to support me in making lesson plans. (Participant 2)*

*“My writing classes need various learning sources for students to gather ideas, analyze different writing samples and widen lexical resources. ChatGPT can help me save time finding appropriate documents.” (Participant 3)*

*“ChatGPT supports me a lot in varying the learning documents for my students in research methodology course. If I give it detailed and customized prompts, I can receive valuable reading sources for each lesson.” (Participant 4)*

*“I frequently make use of ChatGPT to suggest ideas for classroom activities and various practice exercises tailored to different writing classes.” (Participant 5)*

*“I often utilize ChatGPT to provide writing samples for different essay genres and diverse input (vocabulary, structure, ideas) for students.” (Participant 6)*

The other 10% of the interviewees employed ChatGPT in all of their lessons because they believed it to be an effective tool for recommending reading materials, summarizing concepts, and generating outlines for research-oriented courses.

*“I employ ChatGPT in teaching all lessons in the research methodology course since it*

*is effective to help teachers summarize ideas in research articles, generalize outlines and provide different research products for reference.” (Participant 7)*

Thirty percent of the participants stated that they selectively utilized ChatGPT in certain lessons of translation or research methodology courses, specifically when there were sections that could be effectively explained with the assistance of ChatGPT.

*“Sometimes I use ChatGPT to suggest extra learning materials for several lessons in the syllabus. Particularly, some sections in these lessons need to be more explained by extra documents.” (Participant 8).*

*“I employ ChatGPT to recommend documents that can explain some sections in the coursebook.” (Participant 9)*

*“I only use ChatGPT in my teaching when I have difficulties in finding some specified learning document.” (Participant 10)*

## **2. How do you employ ChatGPT in your teaching?**

According to the findings, eight interviewees reported using ChatGPT significantly in creating learning materials for their students. They posited that ChatGPT helped them save time by providing a wide range of suitable resources for different learning styles and levels. Additionally, half of the participants utilized ChatGPT to assist in designing exercises and learning tasks for their students. They found that by providing specific prompts regarding the lesson objectives, students' English levels, and evaluation rubrics, ChatGPT could effectively meet their requirements in creating appropriate practice materials. Only two interviewees occasionally used ChatGPT for grading students' work. They acknowledged its usefulness in evaluating student assignments based on provided rating scales. However, the teachers expressed concerns about potential biases introduced by ChatGPT.

*“I used ChatGPT to create learning materials for most of the lessons for my writing classes. I find it helpful to suggest diverse sources for designing learning activities and practice exercises suitable to the theme of each lesson.” (Participant 1)*

*“ChatGPT is really beneficial to provide reliable sources for teachers to diversify students' learning practice and activities. I usually use this chatbot to support me in making lesson plans. (Participant 2)*

*“My writing classes need various learning sources for students to gather ideas, analyze different writing samples and widen lexical resources. ChatGPT can help me save time finding appropriate documents. Additionally, this chatbot can suggest ideas for designing practice exercises or writing tasks” (Participant 3)*

*“ChatGPT supports me a lot in varying the learning documents for my students in research methodology course. Besides, I give it detailed and customized prompts, and I can receive valuable suggestions for learning activities suitable for different students' levels.” (Participant 4)*

*“I frequently make use of ChatGPT to suggest ideas for classroom activities and various practice exercises tailored to different writing classes.” (Participant 5)*

*“I often utilize ChatGPT to provide writing samples for different essay genres and diverse input (vocabulary, structure, ideas) for students. ChatGPT is useful in designing learning practice and writing assignments suitable for different classes.” (Participant 6)*

*“I use ChatGPT to find diverse learning documents to facilitate students’ learning process. I save a great deal of time browsing, selecting, and categorizing these materials. (Participants 7, 8).*

*“I apply ChatGPT in my teaching to diversify writing samples for my students. Additionally, sometimes I use it to analyze students’ written products. ChatGPT is effective in detecting errors in students’ essays and could help to determine students’ writing performance if teachers provide it with a detailed rubric.” (Participant 9)*

*“ChatGPT saves my time in grading students’ papers. As long as teachers provide it with a detailed writing rating scale, it can determine students’ writing performance.” (Participant 10)*

### **3. In your opinion, how could ChatGPT benefit teachers in teaching writing?**

The vast majority of interviewed participants (80%) asserted that ChatGPT offered a great advantage to teachers by streamlining the process of creating learning materials for writing classes. They noted that ChatGPT was able to suggest a wide range of learning resources that were suited to varied lesson objectives as long as this chatbot was given detailed prompts. The participants also emphasized that ChatGPT's generative pre-trained transformer mechanism allowed it to recommend diverse writing samples, thereby enriching students' learning experience. Consequently, teachers were able to save time that would otherwise be spent browsing, selecting, and aligning learning materials.

*“Teachers can employ ChatGPT to suggest valuable sources to create learning materials for writing classes. ChatGPT can provide plenty of sample essays and reading sources for making lesson plans.” (Participant 1)*

*“Teachers can save time and energy in preparing materials for writing lessons with the support of ChatGPT.” (Participant 2).*

*“ChatGPT can recommend diverse writing samples and learning sources for writing classes. (Participant 3)*

*“Teachers can save time in browsing, selecting, and arranging learning documents when employing ChatGPT to recommend sources for their classes.” (Participants 4, 5).*

*“The pre-trained architecture in ChatGPT allows it to provide various learning sources for writing classes. Teachers easily access plenty of writing samples, websites for lexical resources, and readings for building up ideas.” (Participants 6, 7, 8)*

Four interviewees affirmed that ChatGPT had the potential to alleviate the workload for teachers during the assessment process. They explained that ChatGPT could aid in generating customized writing tasks tailored to different learner profiles, identifying errors in students' written work, and providing specific feedback to individuals. The interviewees also emphasized the importance of providing ChatGPT with a detailed rubric as input in order to obtain accurate

evaluations.

*“ChatGPT can suggest ideas for designing practice exercises if teachers provide it with detailed prompts regarding themes of the lessons and students’ levels. Additionally, they can ask this chatbot to detect errors in students’ papers” (Participants 7, 8)*

*“Teachers can employ ChatGPT to design practice tests or assignments for writing classes as long as they give it detailed prompts about kinds of tests, contents, instructions, and students’ English proficiency. ChatGPT also gives comments and detects errors in students’ written works.” (Participants 9, 10)*

Out of all the interviewed teachers, only two acknowledged the capability of ChatGPT to provide ideas for in-class activities. They suggested that ChatGPT could propose suggestions for creating engaging activities that were customized to students' proficiency levels if teachers provided specific prompts regarding the activity name, duration, task outcome, lesson aims, and students' English levels.

*“I find ChatGPT helpful to suggest diverse sources for designing learning activities and practice exercises suitable to the theme of each lesson as long as I give it specific prompts regarding the kind of the activity, how much time to conduct, and the objective of the lesson.” (Participant 1)*

*“I think teachers can frequently make use of ChatGPT to suggest ideas for classroom activities and various practice exercises tailored to different writing classes.” (Participant 5)*

#### **4. What are the merits of using ChatGPT in learning writing?**

When questioned about the benefits of using ChatGPT for writing instruction, the majority of the interviewees (70%) stated that ChatGPT allowed students to have access to a diverse range of educational materials, which could greatly assist the learning process. These educators elaborated that the abundance of reading resources offered by ChatGPT could aid students in developing ideas and forming outlines for various writing assignments. Moreover, ChatGPT had the capability to furnish students with standardized writing examples, enabling them to analyze and acquire knowledge on how to produce well-structured written pieces aligned with specific genres and writing evaluation criteria.

*“ChatGPT is highly beneficial to students’ learning process. It provides them with diverse learning input such as writing samples and reading sources for building up ideas.” (Participants 1, 2)*

*“Students can get ChatGPT to suggest valuable learning materials that facilitate their learning process. They can save time in browsing, selecting, and categorizing these documents.” (Participants 3, 4)*

*“ChatGPT benefits students by recommending a rich source of learning documents in which students can learn how to write. They can easily get a standardized writing sample of a particular genre of essay, then analyze its organization, language use, and ideas.” (Participants 5, 6, 7)*

The other ideas emphasized the ability of ChatGPT in terms of proofreading and editing. Five respondents expressed agreement that students could utilize ChatGPT as a mentor to receive feedback on their written assignments and receive recommendations for improvements.

*“ChatGPT can detect grammar and spelling mistakes in students’ written works. Therefore, they can employ it in the proofing and editing process to perfect their papers before submission.” (Participant 6).*

*“Students can get ChatGPT to give comments on their written works and make suggestions for revision.” (Participant 7).*

*“I think students can use ChatGPT as a reviewer for their writing essays since it can correct their mistakes and suggest valuable ideas for revision.” (Participant 8)*

*“When finishing a writing assignment, students can get ChatGPT to proofread and give feedback on the language use, organization, and writing styles.” (Participant 9)*

*“Students can use ChatGPT to double-check their papers before submission. As a result, their written products are revised and get better quality.” (Participant 10)*

Only two teachers acknowledged the positive impact of ChatGPT on expanding students' vocabulary resources, whereas four respondents asserted that integrating ChatGPT into writing instruction could boost students' learning motivation. These individuals asserted that ChatGPT greatly assisted students by providing a wide range of educational materials, delivering immediate responses, and offering personalized feedback on their work. Consequently, the utilization of ChatGPT facilitated the process of learning writing, resulting in an overall enhancement of learning motivation.

*“ChatGPT can suggest reading sources that help to enrich students’ range of vocabulary. Besides, this chatbot can detect errors in language use and suggest better ones for revision. Students feel less stressed in creating a written product and more eager to learn writing” (Participant 3)*

*“Students can expand their lexical resources thanks to documents suggested by ChatGPT. They also can get this chatbot to give comments on the use of words in their papers. Students feel more confident and interested in writing essays.” (Participant 4)*

*“The use of ChatGPT benefits students in learning writing so it can enhance their learning motivation and get students engaged in writing classes.” (Participant 5)*

*“ChatGPT supports students a lot in recommending diverse learning documents, proofreading their papers, and giving comments on written products. So, the use of ChatGPT facilitates the learning process and consequently enhances students’ motivation for learning writing.” (Participant 6)*

However, ten interviewees claimed that to fully utilize the advantages of ChatGPT in learning writing, students are required to have an intermediate or higher level of English proficiency. This prerequisite enables them to accurately judge and make the right choices of recommendations offered by ChatGPT.

## 5. What may be potential concerns over the use of ChatGPT in writing classes?

Although the majority of participants saw the significant advantages of integrating ChatGPT in writing sessions, they also raised reservations about its use. One significant issue raised by half of the respondents was the possibility of pupils being too dependent on ChatGPT. These professors were certain that some students relied only on ChatGPT-generated responses rather than using their own cognitive talents to think critically and reply to problems. This overreliance may undermine pupils' critical thinking and problem-solving abilities over time.

Furthermore, four out of ten instructors polled expressed concern about the academic integrity of their pupils' written work. They emphasized that ChatGPT's capacity to create standardized writing examples might lead to pupils replicating these written outputs, resulting in biased grading in writing courses.

Finally, three interviewees expressed worries regarding students' capacity to assess and consider ChatGPT replies. According to these professors, just a few pupils were able to make solid judgments based on the advice provided by ChatGPT. They indicated that the majority of the pupils lacked the ability to recognize wrong responses or choose better solutions for their inquiries.

*“ChatGPT is trained to give response to users’ questions, so the application of this chatbot in writing class may lead to students’ heavy reliance on the device. Students may copy answers generated by ChatGPT and gradually lose their critical thinking. Additionally, if they submit ChatGPT-generated essays, they violate academic integrity standards. (Participants 1, 2)*

*“Potential concerns over the use of ChatGPT is students’ dependence on the device due to their overuse of this chatbot. Students become dependent on its response to any questions and lose their problem-solving skills” (Participant 3).*

*“Users’ improper use of ChatGPT can lead to their reliance on the chatbot. Gradually, students lose their confidence in dealing with learning matters.” (Participant 4)*

*“When ChatGPT is implemented in writing classes, students may use it to generate written products which raises a concern over the authenticity of their submitted works.” (Participant 5)*

*“ChatGPT can give responses to any questions immediately, so students may be heavily dependent on this chatbot if they use it improperly. Moreover, students are not qualified enough to check these responses and detect incorrect answers by ChatGPT.” (Participant 6).*

*“If students are instructed on how to use ChatGPT in learning writing, I strongly believe that they can utilize its massive merits. My concern is how students scrutinize responses from this chatbot to choose the best answers.” (Participant 7)*

*“Some students only copy essays generated by ChatGPT and submit them as their own ones. This leads to a worry over academic integrity.” (Participant 8)*

*“Students may be dependent on ChatGPT to generate answers to any questions. As a*

*result, they are unable to think logically and solve problems independently.” (Participant 9)*

*“Some lazy students just order ChatGPT to create well-organized written products for submission, which results in an unfair evaluation in writing classes (Participant 10)*

During discussions about the potential challenges teachers might face when incorporating ChatGPT into their writing classes, most of the educators admitted experiencing moments of confusion regarding how to effectively integrate this advanced chatbot. This uncertainty stemmed from the fact that ChatGPT is a state-of-the-art technology, introducing an innovative approach to language instruction that they had only recently started to explore. Consequently, in certain specific situations, the teachers lacked confidence in their ability to utilize the full potential of ChatGPT in teaching writing.

*“The novelty of ChatGPT sometimes makes me uncertain about how to apply it effectively in some teaching contexts. I am confused about how to conduct learning activities that can employ its benefits completely.” (Participants 1, 2, 3, 4)*

*“Sometimes, I was wondering if I had applied ChatGPT in my writing classes properly. ChatGPT is totally new, and how to employ it efficiently is still less discussed.” (Participants 5, 6, 7, 8)*

## **6. What are practical solutions to the potential concerns with the application of ChatGPT in writing classes?**

According to the survey, 60% of respondents were convinced that correct usage of ChatGPT could successfully solve the problem of pupils being unduly dependent on this sophisticated chatbot. They said that students should be aware that ChatGPT is a supplement to their study, not a replacement for their own intellectual ability. Furthermore, the professors emphasized the need to give students extensive advice on how to utilize ChatGPT appropriately. They contended that in order to make use of ChatGPT's substantial help, students must first learn how to send cues to it. Furthermore, the instructors agreed that students should utilize the available learning tools to improve their writing abilities rather than just duplicating example essays supplied by ChatGPT.

*“Overuse of ChatGPT would lead to users’ heavy dependence on the device. I think this problem would be handled if students were instructed on how to use this chatbot properly.” (Participant 1)*

*“It is vital to instruct students on how to use ChatGPT in a proper way. Students should realize the potential threats and limitations of the chatbot and use it as a supplementary tool to facilitate their learning process.” (Participant 2)*

*“Students should be aware that ChatGPT is just a supportive learning tool, not a replacement for their cognitive abilities. So, they must consider when and how to use ChatGPT, not depend on this chatbot for answering any inquiries.” (Participants 3)*

*“Students should be aware that ChatGPT supports them in learning writing by providing sample essays to analyze and learn how to organize a standardized piece of writing, not writing essays for them to copy and submit.” (Participant 4)*

*“Proper use of ChatGPT requires students to know when and where to utilize its potential instead of using it to generate answers to any questions.” (Participant 5)*

*“Students may depend on ChatGPT to give answers to any questions and generate written products for submission. Therefore, students should be trained in how to use ChatGPT effectively. Teachers should instruct them to utilize this chatbot as a supporting device, not as an essay writer for any writing assignment. (Participant 6).*

The remaining 40% of responses proposed an alternative solution to the issue of student dependency on ChatGPT. They claimed that teachers could address this concern by engaging students in learning activities that involved analyzing writing samples generated by ChatGPT. They further explained that students would then be prompted to identify patterns in the organization, language usage, and idea development across various types of essays. These interviewees firmly asserted that through these interactive activities, students could effectively learn how to utilize ChatGPT as a tool for improving their writing skills.

*“Students’ heavy reliance on ChatGPT would be addressed if teachers design learning activities in which students are asked to use their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Therefore, the use of ChatGPT in these activities is useless. Students are asked to explain, analyze, and synthesize information to generalize ideas for different types of essays.” (Participants 7, 8)*

*“The types of learning activities conducted in writing classes could help to reduce the problem of students’ reliance on ChatGPT. Teachers should ask students to engage in activities in which they have to analyze writing samples, explain their organization and language use and conclude the typical features of different genres of essays. (Participants 9, 10)*

When it came to practical measures for addressing the issue of academic integrity, six out of ten respondents endorsed a combination of formative and summative assessment methods to assess students' writing abilities. The teachers suggested that students' writing skills should be evaluated through a minimum of three writing tests conducted throughout the learning period, alongside a final exam at the end of the semester. To ensure impartiality in the evaluation process, these tests should be carried out in the classroom under the supervision of teachers, and students were not allowed to use ChatGPT. Additionally, it was emphasized that consistency in the scoring of these tests for each student should be focused.

*“To evaluate students’ writing performance precisely, students should be asked to do several writing tests in class with the observation of the teacher without the use of ChatGPT.” ((Participant 1)*

*“ChatGPT is not allowed during the writing tests administered during the writing course. Students submit their own written products, and their writing abilities are determined based on the scores they gain in these tests.” (Participant 2)*

*“I propose administering regular writing tests throughout the semester, supplemented by a comprehensive final exam to evaluate students’ writing skills. Students do the tests in class with the observation of teachers.” (Participant 3)*

*“Writing tests should be conducted frequently in class, disallowing the use of ChatGPT. The consistency in students’ scores through these tests reflects their writing abilities.” (Participant 4)*

*“Students submit their own essays when asked to do writing tests in class without using ChatGPT and under the observation of a teacher.” (Participant 5)*

*“Three or four assignments and a final exam ensure a fair evaluation and tackle the problem of academic integrity.” (Participant 6)*

The other two interviewed teachers asserted that, in order to uphold academic integrity in students' submitted works, it is essential for teachers to request rough drafts and outlines along with the final papers. They elaborated that by reviewing these documents, teachers would be able to examine the process by which students produced their written works.

*“Teachers can determine the authenticity of students’ submitted works by asking them to submit rough drafts of the finished essays.” (Participant 7)*

*“Teachers should require students to present the progress of constructing ideas, making outlines, and generating the essay to determine the originality of their written work.” (Participant 8)*

The remaining 20% of participants strongly agreed that raising students’ awareness of the fact that their papers will be examined by a variety of AI content detectors may help address the problem of academic integrity. They emphasized that students would be deterred from using ChatGPT to generate written works because of concern over getting bad scores.

*“The writing rating criteria should indicate that AI content detectors will be used to check students’ submitted papers. If AI-generated paragraphs are detected, students will get a zero for the assignment. When students are informed of the criteria, they are concerned about using ChatGPT to cheat, and it helps to minimize the issue of academic integrity.” (Participant 9)*

*“Teachers should inform students that they will use some detectors to check the authenticity of their submitted papers, and a cheater will get a zero for a ChatGPT-generated essay. I believe students will be reluctant to use ChatGPT to complete a writing assignment.” (Participant 10)*

Concerning students' ability to effectively filter suggestions from ChatGPT, the collected data revealed that the majority of respondents strongly agreed that students must achieve at least a B2 level on the CEFR proficiency scale in order to use ChatGPT effectively in learning writing. They contended that students with lower proficiency levels were not competent to make informed judgments based on the replies supplied by ChatGPT. As a result, these students would be able to use ChatGPT for writing purposes only if they were guided by someone with a high degree of English proficiency.

*“To use ChatGPT effectively in language learning, students should be able to examine its responses. However, if students are lower than B2 level on the CEFR proficiency scale, they cannot be qualified enough to judge the suggestions.” (Participants 1, 2)*

*“Not all answers generated by ChatGPT are good ones, so students need to consider and check them carefully. Low-level students are unable to do this. Students’ level must be intermediate or above to efficiently use ChatGPT.” (Participants 3, 4)*

*“A majority of students are unable to judge responses by ChatGPT. So, a tutor who is proficient in English should coach students in the use of this chatbot.” (Participants 5, 6)*

The findings from the interview revealed that 70% of the participants believed that receiving professional training on how to incorporate ChatGPT into writing classes would be beneficial in addressing their lack of confidence in using the tool. These teachers expressed that due to the novelty of ChatGPT, they sometimes felt uncertain about fully utilizing its capabilities. As a result, a symposium on the integration of ChatGPT in writing instruction was critical for all language teachers. The remaining three teachers acknowledged the value of receiving support from their colleagues as helpful guidance for effectively using ChatGPT.

*“ChatGPT is really novel, so professional training for teachers on the implementation of this chatbot in EFL classrooms is an urgent need to ensure an effective use.” (Participant 1)*

*“Teachers will feel more confident if they are trained on how to integrate ChatGPT in teaching writing. Workshops, seminars, or symposiums on the application of this chatbot should be conducted. Sharing ideas on the implementation of ChatGPT and discussing with their colleague is also necessary.” (Participant 2)*

*“Although I have used ChatGPT in my teaching, the process is still confusing sometimes. So, it is vital for institutions to hold professional training for teachers to increase their confidence and digital literacy.” (Participant 3)*

*“I think professional training and support from the colleagues can enhance teachers’ confidence in using ChatGPT in their language teaching.” (Participant 4)*

*“The novelty of ChatGPT sometimes makes teachers confused in some teaching contexts. Therefore, a training course on features, procedures, and techniques in integrating this chatbot is really necessary.” (Participant 5)*

*“ChatGPT is newly invented and introduced in language teaching. So some teachers doubt its merits in writing class. Hence, workshops or symposiums on the implementation of this chatbot should be held to provide valuable insight for teachers. Accordingly, their confidence in using it is increased.” (Participant 6)*

*“Teachers need to attend training courses on how to apply ChatGPT in teaching writing to utilize its full potential. They also need to receive help from their colleagues to ensure a smooth implementation of ChatGPT.” (Participant 7)*

## **7. What advice do you give to teachers who intend to employ ChatGPT in teaching writing?**

According to the survey, eighty percent of respondents agreed that instructors should be aware of the problems and possible risks connected with using ChatGPT in their writing lessons. These instructors were convinced that overusing ChatGPT in language training would result in

reduced critical thinking abilities and reliance on technology. As a result, they urged instructors to think carefully about when and why they wished to add ChatGPT to their lessons. Furthermore, half of the polled instructors encouraged their colleagues to be aware of ChatGPT's limitations while utilizing it in writing sessions. They argued that it was critical to scrutinize ChatGPT replies and make sound decisions about how to utilize them. Furthermore, virtually all of the respondents agreed that in order to fully use the potential of ChatGPT, instructors must understand how to offer cues to the chatbot in order to obtain replies that closely match their expectations. They emphasized that the more exact the input, the more pleasant the ChatGPT responses.

*“I advise teachers to be aware of the limitations and threats of using ChatGPT in their teaching. Teachers should examine responses generated by this chatbot and consider when they need to utilize its support.” (Participant 1)*

*“Although ChatGPT can respond to any user’s inquiries. To use it effectively, teachers should know how to give prompts to get satisfying answers. Moreover, they should check answers offered by ChatGPT to gain the better ones.” (Participant 2)*

*“An overuse of ChatGPT can lead to users’ heavy reliance, so teachers should think carefully about when and where to apply it in their teaching.” (Participant 3)*

*“It is advisable to check and double-check answers given by ChatGPT. Besides, how to give prompts to gain satisfying responses is also vital.” (Participant 4)*

*“Teachers should be aware that the use of ChatGPT has both merits and defects, so they need to scrutinize suggestions by this chatbot carefully. Moreover, teachers should be trained on how to give prompts.” (Participant 5)*

*“It is vital for teachers to be mindful of the threats and limitations of employing ChatGPT in their teaching. Teachers should contemplate when and how to implement this chatbot to avoid relying on it.” (Participant 6)*

*“To apply ChatGPT effectively in their teaching, teachers should be able to give prompts to this chatbot. The more detailed the input is, the better the answer is.” (Participant 7)*

*“Teachers should consider both potentials and threats over the implementation and have a good decision on how to use it.” (Participant 8)*

*“I recognize how to give good prompts to ChatGPT to generate answers that reach my expectations is challenging. Teachers should give more detailed input to get better responses.” (Participants 9, 10)*

## **8. Will you recommend using ChatGPT in teaching writing?**

Out of the ten participants, six expressed a strong endorsement for using ChatGPT in teaching writing. They believed that the innovative features of ChatGPT should be given a chance to be utilized in writing classes. Furthermore, they encouraged teachers to expand their valuable experience in language teaching by incorporating ChatGPT, highlighting the importance of implementing changes and fostering innovation in education.

*“In my opinion, ChatGPT is a cutting-edge chatbot embracing innovative features that*

*benefit both teachers and students if users know how to use it properly. Therefore, teachers should take advantage of its massive potential to innovate their teaching approach.” (Participant 1)*

*“I think teachers should grasp the opportunity to implement ChatGPT in their teaching. The implementation has both benefits and concerns, but the innovative features of ChatGPT make it derivative to be applied in writing classes.” (Participants 2, 3).*

*“Language teaching needs to innovate to coincide with the continuous development of technology and society. Therefore, teachers should apply ChatGPT in teaching writing to utilize its benefits. (Participants 4, 5)*

*“I advise teachers to implement ChatGPT in teaching writing because it supports them a lot in making learning documents and designing learning activities. Although there are some difficulties during the application, teachers gain valuable experience in their language teaching.” (Participant 6).*

The remaining 30% of the interviewees remained neutral on applying ChatGPT in their teaching. They mentioned that they felt unsure about the potential of ChatGPT in teaching writing due to its novelty.

*“Due to the novelty of ChatGPT, I think teachers have to consider carefully whether they should use this chatbot in their teaching.” (Participant 7)*

*“I am not sure whether teachers should implement ChatGPT in their writing classes or not. ChatGPT is newly invented and contains quite a lot of novel features that make me uncertain about its benefits.” (Participants 8, 9)*

There was only one teacher (10%) expressed a dissenting opinion on encouraging the use of ChatGPT in writing classes. The teacher raised concerns about academic integrity, the potential for excessive reliance on the chatbot by both teachers and students, and the perceived dominance of AI technologies over human beings in EFL classrooms.

*“I think the drawbacks of using ChatGPT in EFL classroom outweigh its benefits. Hence, I do not think teachers should apply it in writing classes. (Participant 10)*

## **9. How do you predict ChatGPT's role in the future of language teaching?**

The responses obtained from the interview demonstrated different perspectives on the role of ChatGPT in the future of language learning and teaching. Fifty percent of the interviewees asserted that ChatGPT would become a complementary tool to support teachers in their teaching process. They explained that despite being continuously innovated, ChatGPT still contained limitations and could not replace teachers in professional aspects. Therefore, in their opinion, in the future, when there is a great deal of detailed research on the integration of ChatGPT in language teaching, ChatGPT will be widely used as a supplementary tool for teachers.

*“I guess ChatGPT will be applied widely in EFL classrooms since teachers are professionally trained in implementing this advanced chatbot to innovate their teaching approaches. They will be confident to utilize ChatGPT as a supplementary tool helping*

*in some stages.” (Participants 1, 2)*

*“In the near future, research on the application of ChatGPT will be popular, and its effectiveness in supporting teachers will be justified. Therefore, a lot of teachers will utilize ChatGPT as a supportive device helping them to design learning documents and practice exercises.” (Participants 3, 4)*

*“I predict that the use of ChatGPT will be favored. However, ChatGPT couldn’t replace teachers in the teaching process. This chatbot will be improved, but it still contains limitations and drawbacks.” (Participant 5)*

The other three teachers claimed that ChatGPT would substitute for teachers in some stages of the teaching process. They debated that the continuous development of technology would entail a perfect version of ChatGPT that could perform several tasks previously done by humans. In their view, in the future, ChatGPT could replace teachers in creating learning materials or grading students’ papers.

*“The uninterrupted development of technology would result in a perfect version of ChatGPT which could minimize its drawbacks and limitations. Hence, ChatGPT could replace teachers in some teaching stages. For example, ChatGPT would grade students’ papers concisely and quickly thanks to the pre-trained information of a writing rater.” (Participant 6)*

*“In the future, ChatGPT would be trained to become a content designer who could create handouts, choose learning content, and design learning materials for students.” (Participant 7)*

*“ChatGPT could replace human raters in grading students’ papers thanks to advancements in its features. Teachers will not need to give comments or grade students’ assignments anymore. The task would be perfectly performed by ChatGPT. (Participant 8)*

Only two interviewees predicted the disappearance of ChatGPT in the future. They asserted that the advent of ChatGPT resulted in threats to the labor market and serious ethical concerns. Consequently, the project of integrating ChatGPT into language teaching was halted.

*“I assume that the project of using ChatGPT in EFL classrooms would be halted since the application of this chatbot raised serious concerns regarding academic integrity, user independence, and the leakage of personal data.” (Participant 9).*

*“The potential threats and drawbacks of using ChatGPT would lead to a backlash against the use of this chatbot. Thus, ChatGPT would not be applied in language teaching.” (Participant 10)*

## Discussion

### *Question 1: How do EFL teachers at Van Lang University utilize ChatGPT in their language teaching practices?*

The present study investigated how EFL teachers at Van Lang University employ ChatGPT in their language teaching in four aspects: language courses, frequency of the integration, teachers' purposes, and their difficulties during the application. The findings revealed that EFL teachers at Van Lang University implemented ChatGPT in teaching courses related to writing skills and research aspects. There were seven teachers (28%) who used ChatGPT in teaching writing, while the number of teachers employing ChatGPT in translation courses was five (20%), equal to those who integrated this advanced chatbot in research methodology courses (20%). There was the same percentage of responses that stated the use of ChatGPT in reading courses and grammar courses, accounting for 16% of the total sample. The findings of the recent study were supported by the conclusion of the research by Kasneci et al. (2023), which suggested the employment of ChatGPT in the courses of writing and research since ChatGPT offered substantial assistance to university students in their research and writing practices.

In terms of the frequency of applying ChatGPT in language teaching, the findings demonstrated that fifteen out of twenty participants confirmed their frequent use of this advanced chatbot in teaching lessons. The other 25% of the respondents asserted that they utilized ChatGPT in teaching several lessons in the syllabus. From the interview data, the teachers explained the reasons for the times they used ChatGPT. Most of the interviewees strongly stated that they often applied ChatGPT in their teaching since it assisted them greatly in constructing learning resources, designing practice tests, and preparing lessons (70%). The other interviewed teachers affirmed that they sometimes integrated ChatGPT in teaching several lessons whose sections were better demonstrated or clearly explained with the assistance of ChatGPT.

The results of the research revealed that the common use of ChatGPT in language teaching at Van Lang University was to create learning resources ( $M=3.6$ ) and to develop lesson plans ( $M=3.55$ ). The data from the structured interview supports the findings. The teachers (80%) firmly claimed that ChatGPT offered considerable assistance in providing varied learning sources that were tailored to diverse learning needs and different types of learners. In addition, the teachers affirmed that when provided specific prompts on the objectives of the lesson, students' English proficiency, and rubrics for the evaluation, ChatGPT could generate suitable exercises and learning tasks. Therefore, teachers can save time and energy. These findings matched with the results of different studies, such as Baskara and Mukarto (2023) and Kasneci et al. (2023), indicating that ChatGPT provided substantial support in reducing teachers' workload, saving their time and energy in creating learning materials and designing learning activities. However, EFL teachers at Van Lang University neutrally claimed that they employed ChatGPT in grading students' papers ( $M=3.05$ ) since ChatGPT was a novelty and they had not become fully familiar with its capabilities.

Discussing difficulties occurring during the integration of ChatGPT in teaching language, EFL teachers at Van Lang University claimed that they could conduct the lesson smoothly without any serious technical issues related to the use of ChatGPT. These findings confirmed the results

of the study by Kiptonui, Too, and Mukwa (2018), who affirmed that teachers interpreted chatbots as user-friendly tools and expressed their willingness to apply chatbots in their teaching. Additionally, the results of the recent study displayed that the teachers were neutral in mentioning that it was a real challenge to integrate ChatGPT into learning activities ( $M=3.0$ ).

*Question 2: How do EFL teachers at Van Lang University perceive the utilization of ChatGPT in writing classes?*

The results of the present study demonstrate that EFL teachers at Van Lang University have positive attitudes toward the use of ChatGPT in writing classes. The teachers assert that ChatGPT provides substantial benefits to both teachers and students when it is employed in writing classes. Based on the findings, ChatGPT was perceived to be highly beneficial to the process of constructing lesson plans and creating learning materials ( $M=4.55$ ,  $M=4.45$ ). The interview data clarified these findings. Most of the participants (80%) strongly agreed that teachers could order ChatGPT to suggest diverse learning resources containing various writing samples to support specific lesson objectives. Consequently, teachers could save time and energy in the process of browsing, selecting, and aligning learning resources. The results confirm Baskara and Mukarto's findings (2023), which revealed that ChatGPT could reduce teachers' workloads in developing lesson planning and crafting materials that enriched students' input. The findings also support Kasneci et al. (2023), who believed that ChatGPT was a time-saving tool that teachers could use to save efforts in constructing customized learning materials.

The in-depth analysis of research data reveals that EFL teachers at Van Lang University perceived the outstanding merits of ChatGPT in supporting students to learn writing. The teachers expressed their strong agreement with the statement that ChatGPT facilitated the learning process since it could provide immediate responses to any inquiries ( $M=4.5$ ), recommend useful reading materials helping students to build up ideas ( $M=4.6$ ), and enhance students' language use ( $M=3.45$ ). The findings completely match the results of the study by Firat (2023), who asserted that the participants agreed with the substantial support of ChatGPT in students' learning process because it offered them customized learning experiences and on-demand access to information. Moreover, the results of the study demonstrate that EFL teachers at Van Lang University were in favor of the idea that ChatGPT benefited students by improving their writing skills ( $M=3.95$ ) and increasing their motivation for learning writing ( $M=3.65$ ). These findings share agreement with the results of the research by Ali, Shamsan, Hezam, and Mohammed (2023) stating that seventy-four samples displayed favorable responses to the positive impact of ChatGPT on increasing students' motivation for learning writing. The findings also emphasized the theories proposed by Kasneci et al. (2023), as these authors firmly posited that ChatGPT was advantageous to university students in performing writing tasks.

The present study finds that the majority of the participants ( $M=4.15$ ) considered ChatGPT as a useful tutor in writing classes. The data from the interview also describe teachers' consensus on the role of ChatGPT when 70% of the interviewees stated that ChatGPT could provide students with enriched input for their learning, including reading materials, writing samples, and striking examples for language use. Therefore, students could learn to produce well-organized written products. Furthermore, ChatGPT could play the role of a supportive tutor giving feedback on students' works and providing suggestions for revision. These findings

demonstrate similarities with those of the study by Baidoo-Anu and Owusu Ansah (2013), who claimed that ChatGPT was capable of providing feedback on students' writing, which helped to enhance students' writing skills.

The results of the research reveal that EFL teachers at Van Lang University debated that the serious concern raised over the application of ChatGPT in writing classes was students' reliance on this advanced chatbot (M=3.65). The opinion was clarified with a detailed explanation from the interviewees. These participants asserted that the habit of asking ChatGPT to answer any questions and copying the generated responses blindly could turn students into rusty handles, lacking problem-solving skills and losing cognitive abilities. The findings are consistent with the ideas discussed in the research of different authors such as Lund and Wang (2023) and Kasneci et al. (2023), indicating that improper use of ChatGPT could lead to students' heavy dependence, which hindered their abilities to solve problems and think critically. Another real worry over the utilization of ChatGPT in writing classes that EFL teachers at Van Lang University discussed was the issue of academic integrity (M=3.5). The teachers explained that students might exploit ChatGPT to produce some AI-generated sections of their written works, leading to unfairness in evaluation. The results support the notions discussed in various research by Eke (2023) and Cassidy (2023), asserting that the exploitation of ChatGPT to generate writing works submitted to be evaluated violated academic integrity and had negative impacts on assessment. Most of the interviewed teachers stated that the novelty of ChatGPT occasionally made them confused in some particular contexts, causing their uncertainty about whether they used it efficiently in teaching writing.

The findings obtained from the detailed analysis of the recent study display that there is a controversial debate on the role of ChatGPT in the future of language teaching among EFL teachers at Van Lang University. In other words, diverse perspectives were raised on the issue. While thirty percent of the respondents agreed that ChatGPT would be a complementary tool to human teaching and instruction, the other 50% remained neutral on the idea, and the remaining 20% disagreed with the notion. With the belief in the replacement of ChatGPT for teachers in several aspects, twenty-five percent of the participants expressed their agreement with the idea, 30% were neutral, and the other 45% disagreed. The interview data supported the findings. Fifty percent of the respondents agreed that ChatGPT would play the role of a supportive tool for teachers. They strongly claimed that human instructions were still the key element in professional teaching, superior to any advanced AI technologies. The other thirty percent of the interviewees proposed that ChatGPT would replace teachers in some aspects of language teaching since a perfect version of ChatGPT would shortly appear and substitute teachers for some tasks, such as grading papers or designing tests. The remaining 20% of the participants supported the notion that ChatGPT would be halted due to serious concerns raised over its application.

### *Question 3: What recommendations do EFL teachers offer regarding the effective application of ChatGPT in writing classes?*

The findings of the recent study revealed that the majority of EFL teachers at Van Lang University perceive professional training on how to integrate ChatGPT in language teaching as a crucial factor in the efficient application of ChatGPT in teaching writing (N=14). Consistently,

the teachers affirmed that how to give useful prompts to ChatGPT for satisfying responses was vital for an efficient implementation (M=4.0). The interview data confirmed the findings. Seventy of the interviewees posited that seminars or symposiums on the utilization of ChatGPT in EFL classrooms could provide teachers with valuable insights into the features of ChatGPT, the opportunities and threats of its implementation, and the framework for classroom activities, which helped to increase teachers' confidence in applying an innovative teaching approach into writing classes. Additionally, the training was vital to instruct teachers on how to give useful prompts to ChatGPT to utilize its full potential, ensuring an effective application of this advanced Chatbot in language teaching. The findings are in agreement with the notion raised by Dincer (2018), who claimed that the teacher's insufficient literacy in integrating information and technology in teaching and learning caused troubles with the employment of novel technology. The findings also support the conclusion discussed in the research by Kiptonui, Too, and Mukwa (2018), who totally believed that it was necessary for teachers to be trained in appropriate techniques for incorporating educational technology. The results approve the idea stated by Liden and Nilros (2020), who debated the responsibilities of educational institutions in providing adequate training and support for teachers, leading to the efficient utilization of chatbots in their teaching methodology.

The second suggestion that most of the EFL teachers at Van Lang University discussed for a successful application of ChatGPT in writing classes was users' awareness of the limitations of this cutting-edge chatbot (M=3.6) and the potential threats raised by its implementation. The responses obtained from the interview clarified the results. Fifty percent of the interviewees advised teachers to scrutinize answers from ChatGPT and make wise decisions on how to use them. In addition, the interviewed teachers warned users about heavy reliance on ChatGPT due to the overuse of its capabilities. Consequently, teachers should carefully consider whether it was necessary to use ChatGPT in specific contexts. Consistently, the results of the research demonstrate that EFL teachers at Van Lang University asserted that students should be instructed on how to use ChatGPT in learning writing (M=3.5). Sixty percent of the respondents claimed that teachers should instruct students to use ChatGPT as a supportive tool for their learning, not a substitute for their cognitive thoughts. Specifically, they explained that students should be guided to analyze learning resources suggested by ChatGPT and learn how to produce well-organized written products. The findings support Pavlik's statement (2023), indicating that users who considered ChatGPT as a supportive tool instead of a replacement for their intellectual abilities could avoid being dependable on the technology.

A combination of formative and summative assessment to determine students' writing skills is suggested by the vast number of EFL teachers at Van Lang University as a useful measure to address the issue of academic integrity, contributing to an effective application of ChatGPT in writing classes. The teachers posited that consistent writing performance presented in scores of different tests helped to detect any violation of academic integrity, preventing students from using ChatGPT to generate written products. Furthermore, EFL teachers at Van Lang University stated that in-class assessments should include activities that require students to use their critical thinking and problem-solving skills (M=3.6). The data from the interview also voted in favor of activities in which students were asked to analyze writing samples and generalize how to construct standardized writing works. The findings strengthen the notion discussed in the

research by Zhai (2022), who asserted that it is critical to employ new forms of evaluation in which students' creativity and critical thinking skills are mainly focused.

## Conclusion

The study regarding how EFL teachers at Van Lang University perceive the use of ChatGPT in writing classes was carried out using both quantitative and qualitative data analysis acquired through an online survey and a structured interview. The study results demonstrated that teachers tend to apply ChatGPT in teaching writing and research methodology courses (68%). Most of the teachers frequently integrate ChatGPT in constructing learning resources ( $M=3.6$ ) and making lesson plans ( $M=3.55$ ) since they recognized that this advanced chatbot could suggest diverse learning materials and clever ideas for learning activities that were tailored to different learning styles and proficiency levels. During the implementation of ChatGPT in their language teaching, the majority of teachers had no serious technical problems ( $M=2.9$ ), proving that ChatGPT was perceived as a kind of user-friendly chatbot.

The findings obtained from the detailed analysis of data collected from the online questionnaire and the structured interview revealed that EFL teachers at Van Lang University have a positive attitude toward the application of ChatGPT in writing classes. The teachers asserted that ChatGPT substantially benefited teachers from considerable assistance in creating learning resources ( $M=4.45$ ) and developing lesson plans for writing classes ( $M=4.55$ ). Therefore, ChatGPT could reduce teachers' workload, saving their time and energy in some teaching stages. Additionally, EFL teachers at Van Lang University perceived ChatGPT as a useful tutor in writing classes ( $M=4.15$ ) since it could provide immediate responses to any questions ( $M=4.5$ ), recommend useful reading sources to construct ideas ( $M=4.6$ ), give feedback on students' works to enhance their language use ( $M=3.45$ ) and increase their motivation for learning writing ( $M=3.65$ ). Accordingly, ChatGPT was advantageous to students in the process of learning writing and helped to improve their writing skills ( $M=3.95$ ).

Although EFL teachers at Van Lang University had a favorable attitude to the use of ChatGPT in writing classes, they raised their voices on some potential concerns over the application. The worry about students' heavy reliance on ChatGPT due to improper use was discussed as the most serious problem ( $M=3.65$ ). Fifty percent of the interviewees claimed that the overuse of ChatGPT to generate responses to every question and the habit of copying its answers resulted in a lack of critical thinking and rusty problem-solving skills. Another serious issue that the teachers discussed was academic integrity ( $M=3.5$ ) since some students exploited ChatGPT to generate written works submitted to be evaluated, leading to an unfair evaluation.

Based on the findings of the recent study, it is concluded that EFL teachers at Van Lang University hold varied perspectives on the role of ChatGPT in the future of language teaching. While fifty percent of the interviewed teachers strongly believed that ChatGPT would be a supporting tool widely used in EFL classrooms, the other thirty percent of the respondents posited the notion that ChatGPT could replace teachers in grading students' papers and creating learning resources. The remaining twenty percent of the participants predicted the disappearance of ChatGPT due to serious concerns over its implementation.

The results of the recent study demonstrate that there are three practical suggestions that EFL

teachers at Van Lang University offer for the successful implementation of ChatGPT in writing classes. The first suggestion is that educational institutions should provide teachers with professional training on the integration of ChatGPT in EFL classrooms (N=14) so that teachers can utilize their full potential. The second piece of advice is that users of ChatGPT should be aware of its limitations and potential threats from the application (M=3.6) in order to employ this cutting-edge chatbot in writing classes properly, avoiding heavy dependence on its capabilities. The other suggestion is the combination of formative and summative assessments in writing classes to ensure a fair evaluation of students' writing skills and reduce the issue of academic integrity (M=3.6).

### *Limitations*

The present study has some remaining limitations. Firstly, the sample consisted of twenty EFL teachers at Van Lang University who had already applied ChatGPT in their language teaching, resulting in the restriction of the participants. Accordingly, the findings could not confirm that the perspectives and suggestions regarding the application of ChatGPT in writing classes were typical of the whole population. Secondly, although all the participants had experience in integrating ChatGPT into their language teaching, they were still in the process of familiarizing themselves with this advanced technology. In other words, they have not had a lot of opportunities to fully utilize this cutting-edge chatbot due to its novelty. Consequently, to some extent, the participants could not give an insightful analysis of some questions.

### *Suggestions*

Future studies should explore students' perspectives toward the use of ChatGPT in writing classes. Investigating how students view using ChatGPT in learning writing is necessary since they are the center of the lesson, affecting the effectiveness of any innovation in language teaching. In addition, research papers in the future should discover factors that impact the efficacy of ChatGPT in writing classes so that teachers and learners can utilize ChatGPT efficiently. Future researchers can also examine the effectiveness of ChatGPT in enhancing students' language skills.

The results of the study emphasize the favorable attitude of EFL teachers to the application of ChatGPT in writing classes. The lecturers can consider these ideas as an encouragement to apply an innovative teaching approach in their language teaching. Moreover, the suggestions offered by EFL teachers at Van Lang University can provide a specific reference for the project of integrating ChatGPT in language teaching for those who intend to innovate their teaching approach.

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## EFL Students' Perceptions towards Cooperative Learning in Writing Skills at a University in the Mekong Delta

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### ABSTRACT

#### Keywords:

Cooperative Learning, writing skill, EFL students, students' perceptions

The cooperative learning approach to writing skills has been found to be effective in many different contexts, as evidenced by many studies. That shows us the interest of researchers in the importance of writing and the cooperative learning approach. This paper aims to review EFL students' perceptions of cooperative learning in writing skills. The participants in this study were fourteen junior non-English major students from a university in the Mekong Delta. The primary qualitative analysis reported in this paper is to show how the students perceive their learning progress in cooperative activities. The result backs up the advantages as well as disadvantages of using cooperative learning in the classroom. The participants primarily acknowledge the benefits of cooperative learning. The atmosphere for learning is made more dynamic, participative, and exploratory via cooperative learning. Responsibility at a high level is the second prerequisite for cooperative learning. Thirdly, weaker foreign language students do better when grouped with strong students. Despite the benefits, participants admitted that it would be challenging to reach a consensus when working in small groups if they had divergent or opposing ideas.

### Introduction

One of the core subjects taught in schools is English. The Curriculum Specifications, as prescribed by the Ministry of Education, specify the four skills which need to be mastered by the learners in three areas of language use: interpersonal, informational, and aesthetic (MOET, 2020). These areas integrate the skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. Writing is an important skill that needs to be practiced by students. Students learn different genres of writing such as descriptive, expository, recount, and narrative according to the established curriculum of the Ministry of Education (2020).

Although writing can be an enjoyable and creative experience, the way EFL Writing is taught and learned has led to negative perceptions among learners who view it as a skill they like the

least (Do & Le, 2023). According to Nguyen (2009), writing skill is not easy to teach. The author states that the problem of most of EFL teachers in Vietnam is how to make students aware of writing in English. There are many approaches that teachers use to teach writing in the classroom. One of the approaches often recommended for teaching writing is cooperative learning (Kagan & High, 2002).

It is believed that the study of EFL students' views is of ultimate relevance in the teaching of English as a foreign language since it may have a substantial influence on what teachers need to accomplish in the classroom (Andrade, 2006). Students' perspectives play a crucial role since they need to be motivated in order to develop experience, motivation, and a writing attitude in addition to being taught the material. Many studies on students' perspectives of cooperative learning in writing skills have been conducted to examine the impacts of cooperative learning in the teaching of writing (Vo, 2022). However, there is still a shortage of studies about how junior non-English major university students-particularly those who attended a university in the Mekong Delta- perceived cooperative learning while learning how to write.

It is the reason that this subject should be investigated. This study will look at how junior non-English major students perceive learning to write when it is done in a cooperative learning environment.

To achieve that, the research question should be answered is "What are EFL students' perceptions toward cooperative learning in writing at a University in Mekong Delta?" In this article, EFL students' views about the impacts of cooperative learning in the teaching of writing in the Mekong Delta will be reported.

## Literature review

### *Defining writing skills*

According to Hamp-Lyson (1996, as cited in Autila, 2017), as a personal act, writing involves the writer taking concepts and transforming them into a personal voice. According to the notion, writing is characterized as a unique action with a clear goal in which the author receives inspiration and adapts it to their own subject and style. According to Brown (2001) the capacity to write naturally, logically, grammatically correct, fluently, genuinely, and purposefully is referred to as writing competence. According to Brown's definition, a writer's capacity to write clearly, as naturally as possible, with accurate grammar, cohesive, and authentic thoughts, while keeping the reader and the writing's objective in mind, constitutes writing talent. Besides, Nunan (2003) stated that writing is a mental process that involves coming up with, expressing, and structuring ideas so that they are understandable to the reader. According to the theory, writing is described as the act of thinking that includes coming up with intriguing ideas, communicating those ideas via language, and arranging those ideas into coherent paragraphs that the reader can comprehend. Moreover, according to Oshima and Hogue (2007) writing is defined as a process that includes thinking of thoughts, putting them into words, and then revising the writing until the writer is pleased that it represents exactly what they want to convey to the reader.

According to Hedge (2001), the ability to handle the writing process through various tactics is

referred to as writing talent. He described the many steps involved in writing as procedures, such as goal-setting, idea development, information organization, word selection, drafting, reviewing, editing, and rewriting.

### *Cooperative Learning*

There are several definitions of cooperative learning made by eminent scholars. Slavin (1980) defined cooperative learning as students working in small groups and being rewarded and recognized based on the group's performance. Artz and Newman (1990) defined cooperative learning as a cooperative process in which students work together to solve a problem, complete a task, or achieve a common goal. Additionally, cooperative learning is a category of collaborative learning, which was defined by Goodsell (1992). Cooperative learning is a learning approach in which students work together to achieve a common goal. It is a more general category of collaborative learning, which describes students working in groups of two or more.

### *Benefits of cooperative learning techniques*

There are many benefits to cooperative learning, including:

Helping students become more engaged in the writing process: It can also promote a sense of community and cooperation among students, as well as provide an opportunity for them to learn new skills. Students' intellectual and social development can be greatly enhanced via cooperative learning. Particularly, highly organized cooperative learning gives students the opportunity to better understand the key aspects of their coursework on their own while fostering positive interactions with peers by supporting and guiding them. According to Kagan (1994), working cooperatively strengthens positive attitudes toward learning the writing process and increases motivation and self-esteem, allowing students to become more involved in their writing tasks and improve their writing skills.

Helping students to find ideas for their writing in group work activities: Aldana (2005) found that the cooperative learning approach was used to apply the ideas of process writing in order to improve their writing skills. He also showed that students preferred to work in pairs or small groups rather than alone. Al-Sheedi (2009) conducted a survey to determine how group work affects students' learning. Ninety-eight per cent of the teachers said group projects benefited students' performance. Additionally, 98% of respondents thought group projects lead to more significant learning than individual ones. They all concurred that using group work in the classroom is a valuable strategy.

Helping to relieve students' anxiety in writing classes: Siddique and Singh (2016) claims that cooperative learning reduces students' fear, creates a positive attitude toward language acquisition, and boosts self-esteem in a very flexible setting. Furthermore, it taught children not to be selfish and reduced peer competitiveness and isolation (Slavin, 2011). Besides, the classroom environment improved, and students' self-esteem was restored (Johnson et al., 2000; Slavin, 2011). Ghufroon and Ermawati (2018) have come to the conclusion that cooperative learning and writing skills may be combined to develop a variety of academic and personal qualities.

Helping students to be more motivated in writing classes: Shammout (2020) suggests that cooperative learning's strengths are increasing student self-confidence and motivation, lowering student uneasiness, increasing student responsibility in learning, and making students easier to learn. According to Nair and Sanai (2018), the cooperative learning approach increased students' writing skill since they had the opportunity to modify their group essays. Students were actively involved in the process of writing during group work, and their social skills increased as a result of the observation.

#### *Teachers' and students' roles in cooperative learning*

In cooperative learning, teachers need to create an environment that is conducive to learning and appropriate tasks that allow all students to have an equal opportunity to improve their skills. According to Shammout (2020), the element of team competition should be incorporated into cooperative learning occasionally between well-matched competitors without having them graded on the norm-referenced grading system. This is because team competition can motivate students to achieve team goals (Thach, 2022). Group work or cooperative learning encompasses a variety of cooperative learning approaches. Erudite researchers redesigned group work to make it more effective and achieve its objectives (Slavin, 2011; Siddique and Singh, 2016). In a cooperative learning session, the elements of cooperative learning must be implemented in order to make the lesson a cooperative learning session. If a lesson is devoid of any of the elements of cooperative learning, then such a lesson cannot be considered as a lesson of cooperative learning (Shammout, 2020). Even though cooperative learning is student-centered, the teacher still has a pivotal role to play in structuring and planning the lessons (Johnson et al., 2000).

#### *Some limitations of cooperative learning*

In cooperative learning, each student needs to have different specific tasks, and is responsible for a common goal. Therefore, many studies have found that cooperative learning has the disadvantages of taking a long time to implement, requiring active engagement from both instructors and students, being difficult to manage, and requiring more preparation. According to Nihalani et al. (2010), teachers play an important role to ensure that students follow all aspects of cooperative learning throughout the classroom, otherwise students will receive lower-than-expected results. Low marks, however, had been given to groups when top performers seized charge. Moreover, Siddique and Singh (2016) said that cooperative learning has some weaknesses about equally participate in cooperative activities as more conscientious students generally take responsibility for the tasks assigned. They also mentioned that when students believe their lecturer is not as involved as they are, there is a risk that students will not pay full attention to the new structures of the target language.

#### *Related studies*

Aldana (2005) found that the cooperative learning approach was used to apply the ideas of process writing in order to improve their writing skills. He created a case study because it helps the researcher to investigate, comprehend, and articulate a specific subject. As previously stated, his personal difficulty was a lack of passion and participation in writing duties. The diagnostic stage revealed that the ninth graders' lack of involvement and engagement was

related to their fear of making mistakes, a lack of interest in the English language, and the fact that only a few engaged in order to receive excellent scores. It was also shown that students preferred to work in pairs or small groups rather than alone.

Suwantarathip and Wichadee (2010) looked at the mean learning anxiety ratings before and after taking part in cooperative learning activities. After that, they looked into the students' perceptions toward cooperative learning by contrasting the mean English proficiency scores obtained before and after participating in cooperative learning activities. The pre-test and post-test designs were used in this investigation. The data were obtained from one section of 40 students enrolled in an obligatory EN 211 three-credit course in the first semester of the 2009 academic year because students were already assigned to their sections. The questionnaire was presented to the participants first. Then, for 14 weeks, a 3-hour session was presented using a cooperative learning technique. After the intervention, the FLCAS questionnaire and a post-test were administered. The results of both instruments were compared to earlier results to see whether there were any changes in language performance or language anxiety. Six students, whose scores increased the most and least, were chosen to express their feelings about learning using this strategy in order to discover how they felt. The study's findings suggested that cooperative learning should be included as part of a language learning strategy since it reduced anxiety and improved language competence.

Li and Vandermensbrugghe (2011) examined how 38 international research students responded to group work. Students' opinions were gathered through focus groups, questionnaires, and classroom observations. The findings showed that group writing exercises inspired international students to improve their writing abilities, boosted their self-confidence as writers, and supported them as they wrote.

Farzaneh and Nejadansari (2014) provided a paper to demonstrate how learners feel about utilizing cooperative learning for intermediate-level reading comprehension. According to their questionnaire responses, the students showed strong support for using cooperative learning. Questionnaires, interviews, and observations were used to acquire the information. The participants expressed support for the application of cooperative learning in writing abilities. Additionally, the study found a very slight statistical gender gap in English writing; female students preferred using cooperative learning.

Siddique and Singh (2016) investigated the causes of poor writing skills among intermediate students in Punjab, Pakistan. They also examined the function of cooperative learning as a means of improving writing abilities. Then, they made recommendations for using a cooperative learning technique to improve intermediate students' writing skills in Punjab, Pakistan. To study the problem and provide answers, a thorough evaluation of previously published material was used as a strategy. The provision, appraisal, and assimilation of thoughts, perspectives, opinions, and interpretations offered by other researchers on the problem under examination is an essential function and purpose of the review.

Ghufron and Ermawati (2018) assessed the benefits and drawbacks of cooperative learning in EFL writing classes. This investigation made use of the case study methodology. Two EFL writing instructors and 60 students enrolled in an EFL writing course at a private university in

East Java, Indonesia, made up the study's participants. The respondents were chosen through a technique called purposive sampling. Questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and observation were used to gather information. According to the results of the descriptive data analysis, one of cooperative learning's benefits is that it boosts students' enthusiasm and self-confidence while reducing their anxiety and making them more open to learning. The drawbacks of cooperative, on the other hand, are the lengthy implementation time, the need for active participation from both instructors and students, the difficulty of management, and the need for greater preparation.

Nair and Sanai (2018) looked into the effectiveness of the STAD technique in helping students at an international school in Selangor, Malaysia, developed their descriptive writing skills. In this study, an action research design was employed. The study involved 20 of grade 6 students, whose ages ranged from 11 to 12. Data for the study were gathered via a pre- and post-test, student focus groups, instructor reflection, and an observation checklist. The six-week action research project was conducted. While the quantitative data was assessed using descriptive and inferential statistics, the qualitative data (interviews, teacher reflections, and observations) were reviewed based on emerging themes. The quantitative data showed that the STAD method helped students' descriptive writing abilities. The analysis of the qualitative data revealed that students enjoyed writing in groups and gained a lot of knowledge from their peers during this process.

Shammout (2020) further supported the idea that modern methods of teaching foreign languages had moved away from the conventional teacher-centered classroom and toward more learner-centered situations. His study used cooperative learning strategies to help students write more effectively. They employed a questionnaire to pinpoint their problems and weak points. Two different types of essays were used as the instrument for the pre- and post-tests in a quasi-experimental design. Two basic forms of research—qualitative and quantitative—were employed to evaluate the data. Topic, vocabulary, structure, grammar, and mechanics were utilized to evaluate the students' writing. The use of cooperative writing strategies might have increased students' self-esteem and enhanced their writing skills.

### *Research Gap*

All of the aforementioned research indicated that when it comes to writing, cooperative learning could be a great way for students to get involved and improve their skills, especially in the writing skills of EFL students. However, they mostly look over students' positive perceptions towards cooperative learning method rather than explore about the negative effects that this approach brings. Therefore, this study not only focused on exploring students' perceptions of writing skills, but also try to explore other perceptions, possibly negative perceptions, rather than just positive perceptions.

## **Methods**

### *Pedagogical Setting & Participants*

The participants in this study were fourteen junior non-English major students from a university in the Mekong Delta. The selection of participants for this study consisted of two phases. Initially, 15 students were selected to participate in the research project. In the next stage, a

questionnaire was sent to each of them to collect information about their feelings about learning English with Cooperative Learning. Based on the responses in the questionnaire, 14 official results were collected because 1 student was unable to participate. These fourteen participants consisted of 3 males and 11 females. These participants provide equal representation of the group of non-English major students. All participants are students with more than 8 years of learning English.

*Data collection process*

Data was mainly collected from a questionnaire. The questionnaire has 27 items, divided into 2 sections. All of the questions in the questionnaire are in the form of multiple choices. The first section, which consisted of 5 questions, collected the students’ perceptions about learning English, the purposes of learning English, and some of the difficulties that made them less likely to participate in the class. In the second section, the participants were encouraged to choose answers that talked about their perceptions of cooperative learning when learning English.

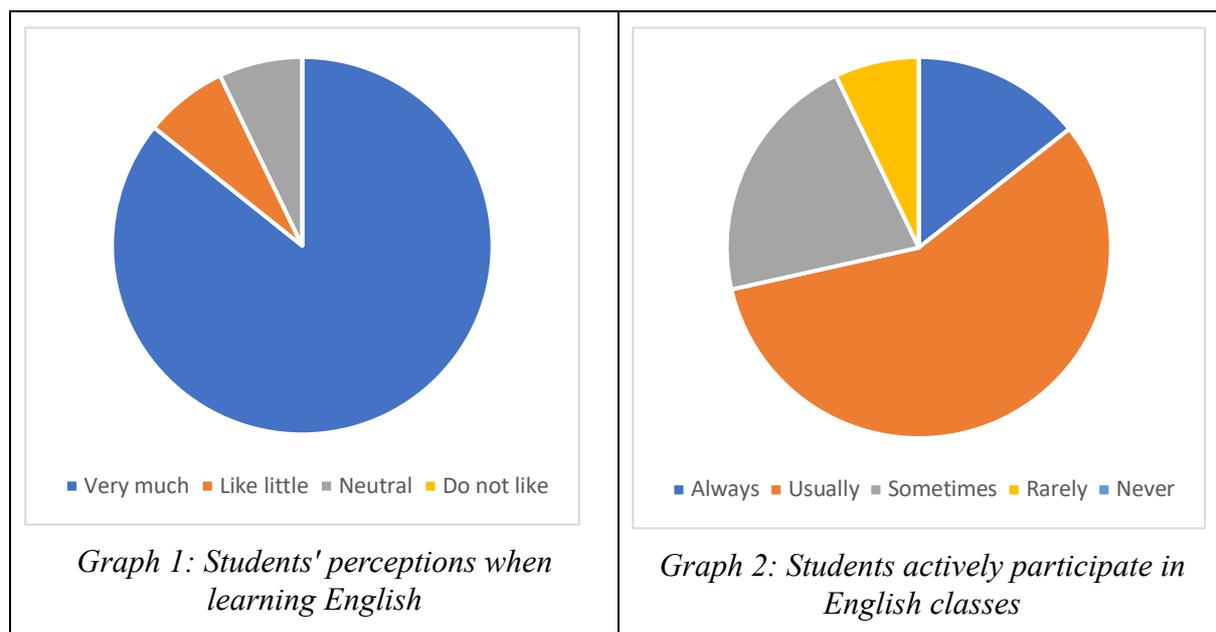
The questionnaire was designed in Vietnamese, although students are quite fluent in English, since the author wanted the students to understand better and choose answers faster. For that reason, the questionnaire used and attached in this paper has been translated from Vietnamese into English.

As for the quantitative data, the study will use the SPSS software to help the researcher gather and analyze the data easier.

**Results/Findings and discussion**

The first part of the questionnaire consists of 5 items (from question 1 to 5) related to students' perceptions when learning English.

In general, the participants love English. They usually actively participate in English classes for many different purposes such as getting more degrees, knowing more about English or improving skills (Graph 1 and Graph 2).



In Table 1, with the low rate of 14.3% of students want to get more English degrees and 0% of participants want to learn English to pass exams during the school year, it shows that every English student has an eagerness to learn and desire to improve skills (50%).

*Table 1. The reason students take English classes*

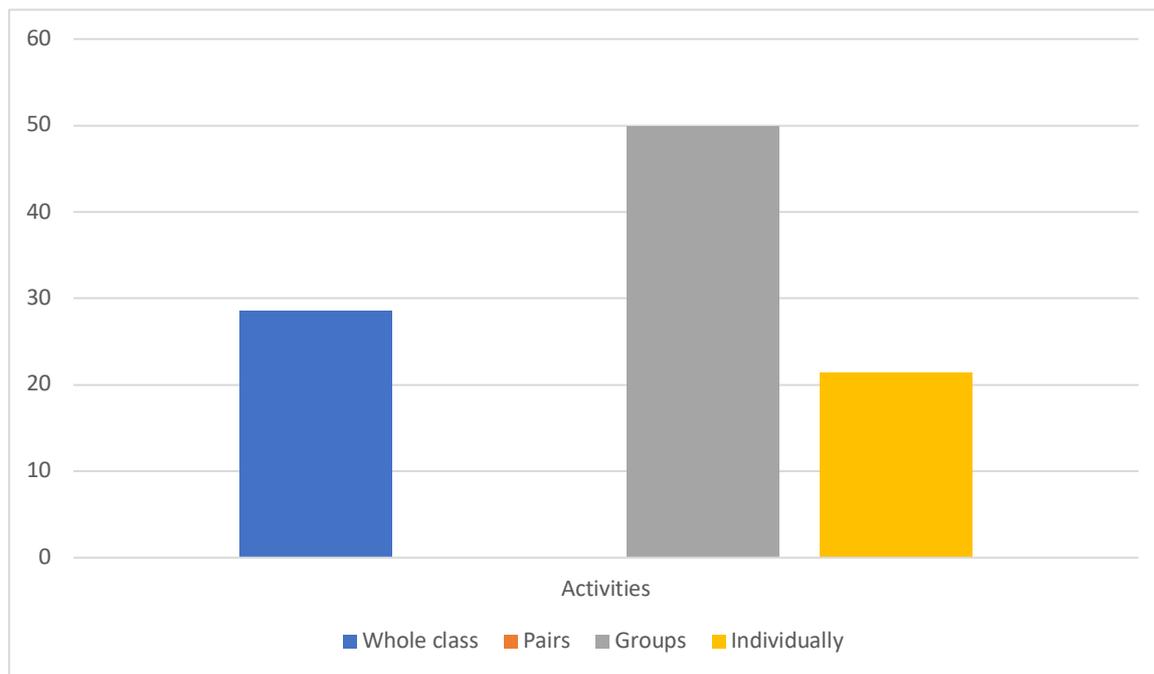
Items	Answers (%)				
The reason you take English classes is:	Because I want more degrees	Because I want to pass the exams during the school year	Because I want to improve my skills	Because I want to know more about English	Another idea
	14.3	0	50	28.6	7.1

However, in the learning process, they face many difficulties such as: students do not understand what the teacher has explained to them (14.3%), they are shy to speak up (7.1%) or are afraid of giving wrong answers (21.4%). Especially, the biggest reason is that students think they do not have enough knowledge of English (57.1%). Thus, all of these students want teachers to provide them spaces where they can actively explore the knowledge they are going to learn (Table 2).

*Table 2. The reason students rarely participate in class*

Items	Answers (%)				
The reason why you rarely participate in class is:	Because I'm afraid I'll give the wrong answer	Because I'm shy	Because I think my knowledge of the language is not enough	Because I don't understand what the teacher explained	Another idea
	21.4	7.1	57.1	14.3	0

Finally, the Graph 3 shows that there are only 21.4% of the participants want to do activities individually. Most of them prefer to work with the whole class (28.6%) or in small groups (50%). Participants prefer working in groups since there is less anxiety due to the division of focus among the group members. The group presentation's results in a cooperative classroom reflect the group's collective efforts.



Graph 3. The kinds of activities students want to participate

The second part of the questionnaire consists of 21 items (from question 7 to 27) related to students' perceptions of cooperative learning in English class, as presented in Table 3, Table 4 and Table 5. The outcomes back up the advantages of using cooperative learning in the classroom shown that participants are generally in agreement on the advantages of cooperative learning (the percentage of students chose “Agree” and “Totally agree” always above 50%).

Table 3. Students' perceptions about the benefits of cooperative learning in English class

No.	Items	Answers (%)				
		Totally disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Totally agree
7	In class, you are working on skills of dialogue, listening and debate.	0	14.3	7.1	42.9	35.7
8	When working in groups, you want to share ideas so that the whole group knows what is being done.	0	0	0	50	50
9	The help of classmates is very important to complete the task.	0	7.1	0	21.4	71.4
10	Team members must exchange and interact in assigned tasks.	0	0	0	28.6	71.4
11	Each team member must participate in the group's tasks.	0	0	0	21.4	78.6

From the results of questions 7 to 11, cooperative learning fosters an active, participatory, and exploratory learning environment because it calls for students to interact, exchange ideas and information, look for supplementary information, make decisions about the results of their review, and present their work to the class. (Table 3)

*Table 4. Students' perceptions about group work in cooperative learning in English class*

No.	Items	Answers (%)				
		Totally disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Totally agree
12	You make decisions by consensus among team members.	0	0	7.1	57.1	35.7
13	You cannot complete a task without the contributions of your classmates.	7.1	14.3	14.3	35.7	28.6
14	There needs to be interaction between the group members to perform the task.	0	0	14.3	7.1	78.6
15	Each member must make efforts in the group's tasks.	0	0	0	28.6	71.4

The results of second series of questions (12 - 15) show that cooperative learning is a high standard of responsibility. To be effective in their groups, students must come prepared to meetings with finished work. For the cooperative team to effectively serve as a challenge about their roles as team members, they must also comprehend the material they will be contributing to their team. (Table 4)

*Table 5. Students' perceptions about the difficulties in cooperative learning in English class*

No.	Items	Answers	0	0	21.4	71.4
		(%) Totally disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Totally agree
16	It is important to share documents, information, etc. to perform tasks.	0	0	0	28.6	71.4
17	Each team member should try to participate, even if they don't like the task at hand.	7.1	0	0	35.7	57.1
18	It's easy for your team to come to an agreement in the face of differing opinions or conflicts.	0	28.6	7.1	35.7	28.6
19	The better each team member does his or her task, the better the team will achieve.	0	0	0	14.3	85.7
20	Each team member must do his part to complete the task.	0	7.1	0	21.4	71.4
21	Working together with class members allows you to expand your knowledge of the subject.	0	0	0	28.6	71.4
22	Discussion will help you better understand the assigned topics/tasks.	0	0	0	28.6	71.4
23	Working together allows you to better identify the most important aspects of information.	0	0	0	42.9	57.1
24	Working together enriches the vision of the topic by the input of all team members.	0	0	0	21.4	78.6

Table 5 shows the rest of the results which illustrate weaker foreign language students do better when grouped with strong students, while stronger students reinforce their willingness to assist others. A good performance also increases one's self-confidence and interest in harder material. Sharing achievement with the group boosts everyone's and the group's self-esteem. Despite the advantages, in question 21, it shows us that in cooperative learning, there is a disadvantage. Nearly 30% of participants said that it would be difficult for them to come to a consensus if they had different or conflicting opinions when working in small groups.

## Discussion

The main aim of the questionnaire was to explore how junior non-English major students perceive learning to write when it is done in a cooperative learning environment. Data were analyzed in light of Aldana (2005), Li and Vandermensbrugge (2011), Siddique and Singh (2016) and Nair and Sanai (2018) for the idea that the cooperative learning approach can be used to apply the ideas of process writing. Besides that, the results also prove there are some learning anxiety ratings before and after taking part in cooperative learning activities like that in the research of Suwantarathip and Wichadee (2010). It also has the same findings with that

of Ghufron and Ermawati (2018) about the benefits and drawbacks of cooperative learning in EFL writing classes. Findings from the study were presented in this article shows that cooperative learning approach encourages students to become active participants in a writing class more than other approaches.

## Conclusion

Cooperative Learning approach allows EFL students to become active participants in class and cooperate to realize learning potentials that would be impossible to accomplish through traditional study individually. Cooperative Learning may make students feel less alone as well as help them become more productive. It is a way that encourages students to continue their Cooperative Learning process outside of the classroom and in the larger society. The present study, given its limited scope and scale, features unavoidable limitations. One of the limitations is that due to the time restrictions, the number of student participants was limited to only 14 students. The students, as such, might not represent the whole student population in the region or country.

## Further Implications

Students now have a positive perception of their own mission and the importance of teamwork, which is the first step towards achieving the best results in the future. In order to fully involve students in their learning process, this teaching method must be taken for a long period. Additionally, it takes time for a new technique to be absorbed and implemented. Based on the limitations of the current study, a recommendation for more research is given. It is advised that future research should use bigger sample sizes to increase the validity and reliability of the findings.

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### **Biodata**

*Phan Thi Thuy Quyen works as a freelance private English tutor in Vietnam. She has been teaching English for five years. Currently, Quyen is studying Master's degree at Tra Vinh University (TVU). In the teaching process, she finds that applying teaching methods and techniques brings many benefits to teachers and students. However, her students still face difficulties learning English as a second language. Therefore, the research topics that she is interested in are teaching methods, teaching techniques, and teaching curricula.*

## An Investigation into Perception of Online Teaching and the Challenges of Online Teaching Faced by English Lecturers at Quang Trung University during COVID-19 Outbreak

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### ABSTRACT

**Keywords:** teachers' perception, online teaching, challenges

Universities worldwide have shifted from face-to-face to online teaching due to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, and Quang Trung University in Quy Nhon City was not an exception. However, there has yet to be research on online teaching at the university. This research was conducted to fill this gap. The authors conducted the study to investigate teachers' perceptions and problems when teaching online. Seven English lecturers at the university were asked to fill in a semi-structured questionnaire and attend interviews afterward. The findings showed that most lecturers were satisfied with online classes and encountered some difficulties, including how to motivate and communicate with their university students effectively and lack of technical skills as well as technical issues. In this article, researchers have provided an overview of lecturers' perceptions and some obstacles to online teaching; therefore, teachers may overcome difficulties and attain effectiveness when teaching online.

### Introduction

The outbreak of Coronavirus disease (Covid-19) was so drastic it has changed many aspects of daily life. Due to the impact of the global pandemic and other social distancing policies of many governments around the world, schools, and colleges have considered and shifted from conventional teaching face-to-face to online learning (Mahyoob, 2020), which could take place via virtual platforms and ensure the interaction between teachers and students and among students with each other (Farrah & Al-Bakry, 2020). During this period of time, online learning was such an optimal solution that it brought many benefits to the whole education system. Besides its convenience proved during the Covid-19 pandemic (Pham, 2022) and students' access to abundant resources to cultivate knowledge (Yuhanna et al., 2020), there have been

some challenges and difficulties facing teachers and learners when teaching and learning online, such as technical problems, teachers' training for online teaching, etc. (Hung et al., 2010; Cavanaugh, 2005).

As in other global countries, schools, universities, and colleges in Vietnam also teach and learn online for all students' safety and health. Quang Trung University, a university in Central Vietnam, was not an exception and was urged to adapt and transform to online teaching as a saver for training. Therefore, it is crucial to identify and understand both the perception of teachers and the drawbacks of online teaching and learning so that adequate efforts can be initiated to develop online teaching. As a result, in this research, we aimed to investigate EFL teachers' perceptions and the challenges they faced when teaching online. Specifically, as for teachers' perceptions, we examined how they perceived online English classes, the lesson contents, and the mode of teaching they consider to be more efficient. Besides, regarding challenges, participants in the research also confronted the ways how to motivate and encourage students, inadequate technical skills, and technology application.

## Literature review

The literature review part begins with the definition of online teaching, followed by teachers' perceptions of teaching online. Finally, a review of teachers' challenges of teaching online is presented.

### *Online teaching*

Online teaching and learning during the Covid-19 outbreak have been highly affirmed and emphasized as an essential and urgent measure for most educational institutions around the world (Lee et al., 2022; Xhaferi & Xhaferi, 2020).

Salma (2013) delineates that online teaching is to provide learners with learning programs, training, and teaching materials by using computers or other electronic devices. In line with this, Yadzi (2013) defines online teaching as an education system that employs electronic applications such as computers, mobile phones, etc., to facilitate the teaching and learning of students through the connection of the Internet or computer network. The elaboration of the researchers Salma (2013) and Yadzi (2013) could help to realize that both teaching and learning are carried out on the virtual platform, not face-to-face traditional teaching through internet connection among electronic devices of teachers and students.

### *Teachers' perception of teaching online*

There are many changes in the education system caused by the covid-19 pandemic. According to Larreamendy-Joems & Leinhardt (2006), one of the biggest differences is a shift from in-person learning to online learning, in which interactions with teachers are indispensable, as stated by Jorge (2010) and Tao (2009). Whether teachers are aware of their role when teaching online and how they perceive online classes have been concerns by many researchers, one of them is Abhinandan Kulal (2020), who carried out research with Anupama Nayak (2020) to investigate the perception of teachers and students in relation to online classes. It was conducted to analyze the perception of teachers and students about online classes as well as explain

teachers' opinions on efficacy, teaching practice followed, and training received for distance learning courses. What we could obtain from the research mentioned is that there are some figures related to teachers' perception of online classes, such as their interest, skills in handling online classes, and how teachers perceived online classes. Another research examining instructors' perceptions in online learning environments is "Instructors' Perceptions of Instructor Presence in Online Learning Environments" (Richardson et al., 2016) from Purdue University. In this study, to consider online instructors' perceptions related to presence, beliefs about actions, and the perceived impact of instructional presence is the purpose, and there were some findings we could summarize as follows. First, every teacher concurred that it was essential for instructors to be present at online classes, while most felt it was critical or one of the most important aspects of online teaching. Second, instructors perceived that their presence potentially facilitated their connection with students by influencing participation, learning, and interactions in the online learning environment. Last but not least, some teachers felt restricted or frustrated with teaching a course they did not design. One more study is "Teachers' Perception of Online Learning during Pandemic Covid-19" by Retno & Yanty (2020). This study examined EFL teachers' perception of online English language learning in terms of three aspects: perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and their attitude toward online English language learning. This study's findings illustrated that less than half of the teachers expressed a positive perception of the usefulness and ease of use of online learning systems during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, more than half of the participants didn't agree on the effectiveness of it. Despite facing many online teaching problems, all participants in the study could show the right attitude toward using technology to teach online.

From all these case studies, we decided to find out what QUT English lecturers' perception regarding online teaching is by asking them about their feelings about teaching English classes online during the pandemic, about how they perceived the lesson contents which were delivered to students when teaching online, and about which mode of teaching they considered to be more efficient, face-to-face conventional teaching or online teaching.

#### *Teachers' challenges of teaching online*

Pham et al. (2021) and Satar (2018) reached a consensus that both teachers and students encounter difficulties due to the novelty of the new mode of teaching. Moreover, Satar (2018) contends that it is teachers who especially confront more challenges caused by the change in teaching and learning methods amid the global pandemic.

A number of challenges are shown from the perspective of teachers when they adapt to online teaching (Sangeeta & Tandon, 2020). Kamal and Illiyani (2021) highlight problems faced by teachers, including inadequate technical skills, lack of students' interest, and a drop in involvement. As clearly shown by Sangeeta and Tandon (2020), teachers have two difficulties regarding motivating and indulging students in the process of online teaching and learning and a number of technological issues in terms of poor internet connection, login issues, app installation difficulties, etc. From an overall view, the educational researchers delineate teachers' problems related to how to motivate students in online learning, lack of technical skills, and technological issues.

The first challenge that EFL teachers handle when using digital platforms to teach is to motivate and encourage learners. The cause leading to the decrease in the motivation of most students, according to Knowles and Kerkman (2007), is the requirement of online learning to participate on their own responsibility and their own awareness, without joining the class with other students. A case study conducted by Gustiani (2020) facilitates a clearer understanding of factors that affect learners' motivation. In this study, Gustiani (2020) scrutinizes factors that affected students' motivation in the English Department toward online learning amid the global pandemic, Covid-19 by analyzing data from interviews. The results depicted two influencing factors, including internal and external factors. To put it clearly, internal factors refer to students' desire to learn new knowledge and excitement about experiencing new learning modes. Along with that, learners in the study were affected by external regulations of their classes, and learners expressed that they took part in classes passively without necessity and enthusiasm. Although the study of Gustiani (2020) did not point out which factors had more impact on learners' motivation, it is important to help figure out the root causes, and then teachers and educational researchers could take actions to deal with the problems.

Another difficulty facing EFL teachers during online teaching is a lack of technical skills. Sareen and Nangia (2020) contend that despite some teachers' optimistic and positive perception of online teaching, these teachers felt that their online teaching could have been better than face-to-face conventional teaching due to the inadequacy of training in virtual teaching. This fact can be explained by the fact that underdeveloped countries must adapt and utilize digital platforms for teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic; however, digital platforms were just commonly used in developed countries, not underdeveloped countries (Kamal & Illiyani, 2021). The adaptation of undeveloped countries was immediate and significant during that period for maintaining the continuity of students' learning; therefore, it also posed training issues for teachers and lecturers who were unfamiliar with the new mode of online teaching. As mentioned by Cleaver (2014), a challenge is associated with technology implementation in classroom settings called the "double innovation" problem when teachers attempt to use new classroom technology. It can be understood that more additional preparation is needed for teachers to work through and revise lesson plans. Indeed, time was cited as being the sixth influential barrier in teachers' interviews in a study conducted by Ertmer et al. (2012). It takes teachers quite a long time to prepare lesson content by integrating new technologies. Therefore, teachers may consider implementing technology in teaching and learning as an imposition (Johnson et al., 2016). Furthermore, there will be some consequences that are attributed to teachers' lack of competency when using technology, such as teachers feeling less likely to control their online classes, they employ less technology in-class activities, and they are unlikely to discover great potential and benefits of technology facilitating students' online learning (Hughes, 2005; Rakes & Casey, 2002).

During the process of teaching online of lecturers, technical issues are also factors inhibiting EFL teachers from delivering lessons smoothly. Nugroho et al. (2020) contend that internet connection plays a decisive role in conducting an online class and organizing online learning activities of the class. The researchers comment on the role of internet access in connection is entirely correct and reasonable. From the reality aspect, many problems occur due to unstable internet connection, which impacts teaching and learning. For example, one of the participants

in a study by Nugroho et al. (2020) answered that poor internet connection made online teaching activities happen improperly and not punctually as time scheduled. This problem can be easily seen in the reality of teaching online, and there are also some other issues. For example, teachers cannot get what the students say or vice versa, and then teaching time may last longer because of poor internet signal, etc. Furthermore, Sangeeta and Tandon (2020) also highlight several technological difficulties affecting the teaching process in terms of app installation, login id, inaudible voice, and video. Although the technological problems mentioned by researchers were minimal and could be fixed or dealt with by teachers' experience, these problems frequently arise in the process of teaching online, which had a significant impact on the teaching and learning process of teachers and students during the Covid-19 pandemic.

### *Research Questions*

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the research sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is QTU English lecturers' perception regarding online teaching?
2. What are the challenges facing Quang Trung University's English lecturers when they teach online?

## **Methods**

### *Participants*

Seven participants, who were surveyed, were all English lecturers working in the Department of Foreign Languages at Quang Trung University (QTU). And most of them have more than five years of being devoted to the English teaching career path, so it can be said they are genuinely experienced ones. In addition, no lecturers have their names realized in the research article in order to ensure their confidentiality.

### *Research Methods and Procedure*

In order to conduct the research article, a semi-structured questionnaire, which is a type of interview with only a few predefined questions and the rest of the questions not planned in advance, was designed and distributed to the QTU English lecturers, and three lecturers were then interviewed to enquire about their opinions on online teaching and challenges facing them when teaching online. Subsequently, data gathered from the questionnaire and interviews are processed statistically, scrutinized, and reported by using descriptive, contrastive, and comparative methods following a qualitative approach.

### *Data collection & analysis*

In terms of data collection, the data of the research article were collected in March 2021 from the survey which was carried out on seven lecturers of the Department of Foreign Languages at Quang Trung University in Quy Nhon City, with the instrumentation of a semi-structured questionnaire and interviews. The authors accomplished the data-gathering procedures by disseminating the paper questionnaire to chosen lecturers, and then there were three lecturers participating in the interview after finishing the semi-structured questionnaire. Regarding the

semi-structured questionnaire, it is designed in both close-ended and open-ended forms with the expectation of enabling the respondents to provide feedback on some fascinating questions and explain their ideas on some issues. There are two sections in the questionnaire, namely Section 1 with some questions and Section 2 applying the 5-point Likert scale named after Dr. Rensis Likert, a well-known sociologist at the University of Michigan. In the book "A Comprehensive Guide for Design, Collection, Analysis, and Presentation of Likert and Other Rating Scale Data" (Ajit, 2020, pp. 27-29), the 5-point Likert scale is regarded as a psychometric response scale with five answer options which have two utmost poles and a neutral option linked with intermediate answer options. Not only is the 5-point Likert employed to measure statements of agreement, but it is also used to measure other variations such as frequency, quality, importance, likelihood, etc.

More specifically, in Section 1, three questions: "How did you feel about online English classes you were teaching during the pandemic?", "How did you perceive the lesson contents which were delivered to students when teaching online?" and "Which mode of teaching do you consider to be more efficient, face-to-face conventional teaching or online teaching?" were designed to answer the first research question "What is QTU English lecturers' perception regarding online teaching?". Section 2 consists of 6 statements to answer the second research question, "What are the challenges facing Quang Trung University's English lecturers when they teach online?". The lecturers were asked to show their evaluations of the online teaching challenges by choosing one of the given answers denoting the degree of agreement.

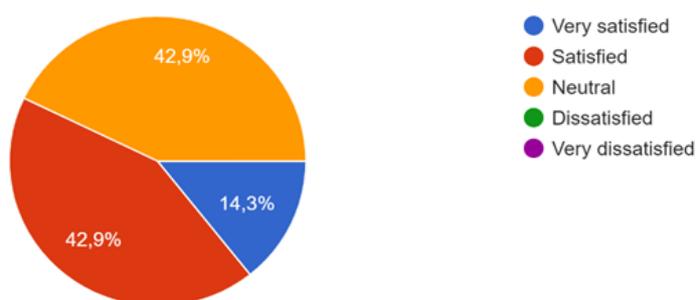
In respect of the interview, according to Merriam's work (as cited in Ton, 2004), it can be found "interviewing is a common means of getting qualitative data, especially when what the researcher is looking for is related to people's feeling or their interpretation about the world around them". Hence, the findings of this research article could not be completed without the opinions recorded in the interviews of the three chosen lecturers. As a result, in total, 5 questions were answered in English by the interviewees to make sure that they could clarify their choices in the questionnaire and associate them with reality as well, and each interview lasted from five to ten minutes.

In terms of data analysis, the semi-structured questionnaire was meticulously classified. Then, the data were imported to a computer with the assistance of the software Microsoft Office Excel so that the frequency and the proportion of the responses to the questionnaire were potentially calculated most accurately. Then, the data exported from the computer were analyzed and described in tables by utilizing comparative and contrastive techniques. As a result, some conclusions were drawn to illustrate how the participants evaluated the attributes, which attributes obtained the highest or least ratings, and so on. Furthermore, the participant's answers in the interviews were inserted into the texts, where relevant, to furnish necessary proof for the analysis.

## Findings and discussion

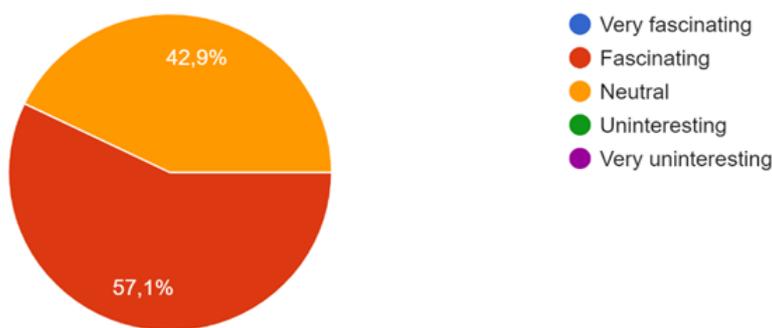
### *Findings in relation to the first research question: What is QTU English lecturers' perception regarding online teaching?*

This section is designed to answer the question “*What is QTU English lecturers' perception regarding online teaching?*” by answering three questions, including “*How did you feel about online English classes you were teaching during the pandemic?*”, “*How did you perceive the lesson contents which were delivered to students when teaching online?*” and “*Which mode of teaching do you consider to be more efficient, face-to-face conventional teaching or online teaching?*”.



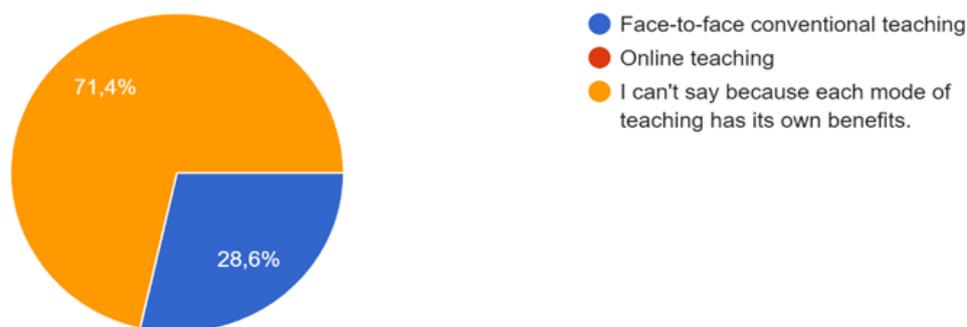
**Figure 1.** Lecturers' perception in relation to online English classes they were teaching during the pandemic.

As shown in Figure 1, nearly half of the lecturers were satisfied with the online classes they taught during the period of Covid-19. One of them, lecturer 6, said, “*For me, the satisfying aspects in online teaching are E-learning progressive teaching. I could search for information I was not so good at while teaching online, and there were countless online teaching websites and apps at that time I taught. Moreover, learning materials were available for students to exploit and apply. And I was lucky to be able to interact and teach lovely students. So, I feel satisfied with my online classes.*” By contrast, just a fifth of them felt very satisfied with online classes, while the percentage of those who felt neutral accounts for 42.9%. To clarify the reason why almost half of the participants had ambivalence regarding online classes, we interviewed lecturer 7 and received the answer like this “*I felt neutral about online classes during the Covid-19 pandemic because I recognized that although teaching online was more flexible for students to access the lectures and even search for knowledge whenever their devices are well connected with the Internet, my students were many times during the course distracted because of external impacts from the surrounding factors*”. To summarize, no one taking part in our research had feelings of dissatisfaction or very dissatisfaction with online classes during the Covid-19 period.



**Figure 2.** Lecturers' perception in relation to the lesson contents which were delivered to students when teaching online during the pandemic.

It is clear from Figure 2 that there are two separate points of view in relation to the lesson contents conveyed to students at Quang Trung University. Specifically, four lecturers, equivalent to 57.1%, believed that their lesson contents were fascinating enough for their students to learn online because most of them found various ways to make their lectures more interesting when teaching online. According to lecturer 4, "I integrated different methods when teaching online to make my lectures engaging. Firstly, I used applications to create audio and images for my lessons, which helped my students to interact well, just like I am teaching directly in a classroom, and the interactions among us were even better. Secondly, I used online game creation software in my lectures; hence, my students played games online to learn vocabulary and grammar structures better." When asked about some ways they used to help students study well at that time, they said that to some extent, they applied some strategies, including using video clips and using technological devices in two articles, "The Effect of Video Clips on Students' Speaking Performances" by Dinh (2023) and "Effects of Using Technology to Support Students in Developing Speaking Skills" by Nguyen & Pham (2022) to boost their students' English speaking skills. However, three lecturers quite hesitated about their lesson contents delivered to their students when teaching online during the pandemic, picking the "Neutral" scale.



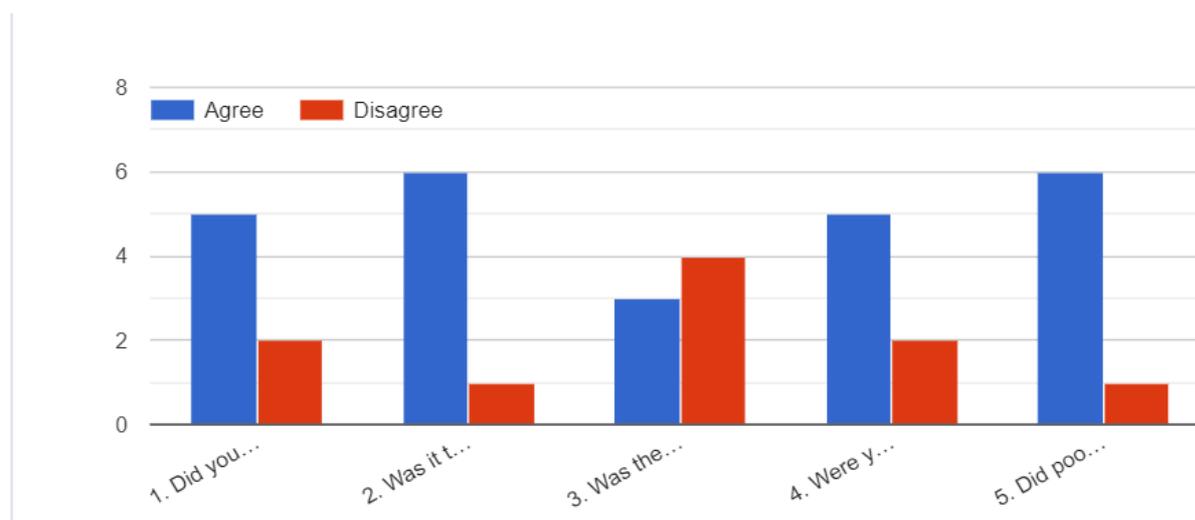
**Figure 3.** Lecturers' perception in relation to the mode of teaching they consider to be more efficient after teaching online.

What can be seen from Figure 3 above is that the mode of face-to-face conventional teaching

was considered to be more efficient by more than a quarter of the lecturers because they both commented that *"our students did not pay attention to the lessons when studying online,"* whereas the rest ones thought that face-to-face conventional teaching was as efficient as online teaching, so they decided to choose *"I can't say because each mode of teaching has its own benefits"* scale when asked about their perception in relation to the mode of teaching they consider to be more efficient after teaching online. Being in favor of this scale and when interviewed that *"Do you think teaching online during the Covid-19 pandemic is an opportunity or a challenge?"* lecturer 6 said, *"From my perspective, teaching online is both an opportunity. Teaching online not only helped me learn a lot of good and effective teaching tools which I had never known before but also saved me a lot of time because I did not need to commute to teach, so my husband and I could take turns taking care of my six-month-old daughter."*

In conclusion, most lecturers in our research were satisfied with online classes and their lesson contents as well when teaching online during the Covid-19 pandemic. Similarly, the results in the article of Retno & Yanty (2020) also illustrate that more teachers agreed with the usefulness of online learning systems for teaching, so they felt satisfied and really satisfied when teaching online. In addition to our article, the majority of lecturers perceived that the mode of face-to-face conventional teaching and online teaching are both equally efficient.

*Findings in relation to the second research question: What are the challenges facing Quang Trung University's English lecturers when they teach online?*



**Figure 4.** *Challenges facing English lecturers at Quang Trung University when they teach online*

Note: 1. Did you have difficulty in motivating learners when conducting online learning?

2. Was it tough for you to communicate and keep students engaged when teaching online?

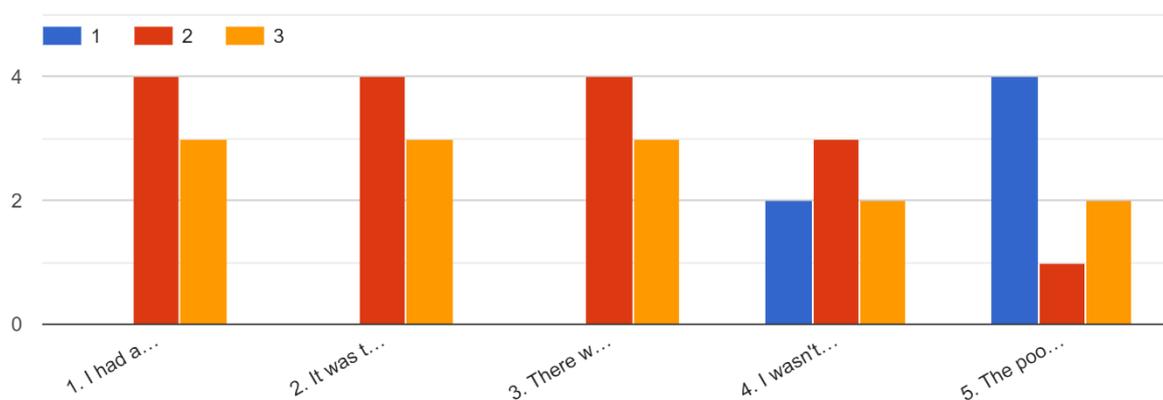
3. Was there a lack of students' interest in your online lessons?

4. Were you received enough training in online teaching regarding platforms to teach, instructions to integrate online tools into classroom activities, etc.?

5. Did poor internet connection make a difficulty in the process of online teaching?

In terms of challenges facing lecturers when teaching online amid the pandemic, most participants shared the same viewpoints and were in agreement about problems confronting them regarding how to motivate and communicate with students effectively through a virtual learning environment, lack of training support from administrators, and technical issues which occurred on a regular basis of teaching periods. The participants' answers in the survey questionnaire were in line with the studies of Sangeeta and Tandon (2020) and Kamal and Illiyan (2021). Considering training for lecturer staff in using online platforms to teach, such as Zoom, Google Classroom, etc., two interviewees clarified the situation that they underwent training in how to use online platforms to teach, but they considered this was not adequate for their teaching process because there were other problems in relation to designing lesson content with the integration of technology which could attract and engage students or assessing online learning results of students. Besides, one of 7 participants, lecturer 7, chosen to take part in the interview, was asked to say whether there were any other challenges, and he said that *"Not all students can access the Internet and have a device to make them acquire the lessons with full functioning features to help them study more effectively."* Clearly, the lecturer's concern was about students' lack of technological devices, which deserves more attention. This will be a future research direction; however, within the scope of this study, we just focus on investigating teachers' challenges of online teaching.

Question 9: Among the challenges below, which one affect your teaching most? Please rank the effect level of challenges given from 1 to 3, with 1...ce and 3 being the most serious level of influence.



**Figure 5:** The rank of how participants perceive the effect level of challenges

Furthermore, the survey questionnaire was also designed to ask lecturers to figure out how lecturers rate the impact of challenges. It can be seen from the survey that participants' answers were different and categorized into three groups. The first group, including Lecturer 4, lecturer 6, and Lecturer 7, showed their most worry about encouraging and interacting with their students. Their subsequent worry was about the training in technical skills. Even though lecturers are able to further study on the Internet, they are in need of official training from professors with long experience in teaching online so that they can develop and facilitate

students' learning optimally. This group of lecturers considered technical problems as the least concern. Another group of participants, lecturer 2 and lecturer 5, evaluated the most influential problem, which was the inadequacy of training for lecturers at the university. The ways to motivate and communicate with students through virtual platforms effectively and technical problems occurring during the online teaching process were the following lecturers' concerns, respectively. The third group, lecturer 1 and Lecturer 3 had different thinking compared to the first two groups, and they considered technical issues such as poor internet signal and difficulties of app installation as the most challenging issue during teaching online amid Covid-19. The two other problems, including how to inspire and interact with students and professional development of online teaching, were ranked lower than the technical issues. Although there was a small discrepancy among participants who were grouped, it could be generally seen that most interviewees expressed their worries about encouraging and communicating with students on virtual platforms and receiving training support for their professional development in online teaching. As such, educational administrators must provide sufficient training which can provide teachers with effective methods for intensifying and developing skills to integrate and conduct activities on virtual platforms so that learners can find lesson contents more engaging and intriguing to learn and interact with their teachers and classmates.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, most lecturers were satisfied with teaching online classes and felt satisfied with their lesson contents during the Covid-19 outbreak. In addition, in spite of the fact that two lecturers regarded teaching offline as more successful, there were five lecturers perceived that the mode of face-to-face conventional teaching and online teaching are equally effective.

The benefits of online teaching have far outweighed the face-to-face traditional learning mode, especially during the most problematic period of the whole world, Covid-19. Even with the significant advantages of virtual teaching mode, this kind of teaching mode has also caused some unavoidable challenges facing both teachers and students due to its specific characteristics of the online environment. Within the scope of this study, three common issues facing lecturers during their online teaching process include strategies to motivate and communicate with learners, the inadequacy of training to design lesson content with the integration of technological applications, and technical problems that have an impact on the process of teaching and learning.

There are certain limitations in undertaking this study. The first limitation is time constraints. Another one is the small surveyed number of participants, which could lead to the research findings given in a narrow range. However, this study can lay the foundation for the development of future research related to this topic and other related topics with the investigation on a larger scale in Binh Dinh Province. Thus, this research and future research will greatly contribute to teachers' teaching practice in integrating pedagogy and technology and then can bring fruitful effects on students' learning in the future.

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## Biodata

*Vo Thi Thu Suong has worked as an English teacher since 2014. Working for different places, including Asian International High School, Vietnam USA Society of English Centers (VUS), and FPT University Hochiminh City, has greatly enriched her English competence and also a variety of pedagogic skills related to teaching English to different ages and levels. She completed an MA degree in TESOL at Huddersfield University in the UK. Currently, she is an English lecturer at Quang Trung University in Quy Nhon City, Binh Dinh Province. Thu Suong is keen on researching areas in terms of English teaching methods, assessment, professional development, etc. with the purpose of continuously cultivating her research capacity and English teaching expertise.*

*Le Thi My Nho earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Quy Nhon University, and now she is also an English lecturer at Quang Trung University, Quy Nhon city, Binh Dinh province. In her teaching process, she prioritizes self-study and focuses on researching English teaching methods in order to develop her expertise in teaching English.*

## Appendix: Questionnaire

Question 1: What is your name?

Question 2: Were you assigned to teach online English classes during the Covid-19 pandemic?

- Yes
- No

Question 3: How did you feel about the online English classes you were teaching during the pandemic?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

Question 4: How did you perceive the lesson contents which were delivered to students when teaching online?

- Very fascinating
- Fascinating
- Neutral
- Uninteresting
- Very uninteresting

Question 5: Which mode of teaching do you consider to be more efficient, face-to-face conventional teaching or online teaching?

- Face-to-face conventional teaching
- Online teaching
- I can't say because each mode of teaching has its own benefits.

Question 6: Can you clarify your option in question 5?

Question 7: What were the challenges facing you during the process of teaching online in the pandemic?

	Agree	Disagree
1. Did you have a difficulty in motivating learners when conducting online learning?		
2. Was it tough for you to communicate and keep students engaged when teaching online?		
3. Was there a lack of students' interest in your online lessons?		
4. Were you received enough training in online teaching regarding platforms to teach, instructions to integrate online tools into classroom activities, etc.?		
5. Did poor internet connection make a difficulty in the process of online teaching?		
6. Did you have enough gadgets to enable you to teach online?		

Question 8: Were there any other challenges facing you during the process of teaching online in the pandemic?

Question 9: Among the challenges below, which one affect your teaching most? Please rank the effect level of challenges given from 1 to 3, with 1 being the least serious level of influence and 3 being the most serious level of influence.

	1	2	3
1. I had a difficulty in motivating learners when conducting online learning.			
2. It was tough for me to communicate and keep students engaged when teaching online.			
3. There was a lack of students' interest in my online lessons.			
4. I wasn't received enough training in online teaching regarding platforms to teach, instructions to integrate online tools into classroom activities, etc.			
5. The poor internet connection made a difficulty in the process of online teaching.			
6. I didn't have enough gadgets to teach online.			

## Exploring Vietnamese EFL Students' Perceptions of Literature Courses in the English Studies Program

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### ABSTRACT

#### Keywords:

Vietnamese EFL learners; Literature courses; Perceptions; Benefits; Challenges

This study aimed to identify Vietnamese EFL students' perceptions of literature courses in the English Studies Program at a university in the Mekong Delta. A total of 77 English-majored learners who were in their final year participated in the study. The researcher employed a quantitative research design and collected the data using a survey questionnaire. The questionnaire asked participants to select the importance, benefits, and challenges when they enrolled in different literature courses. The results indicated that literature provided a volume of grammatical structures and vocabulary, knowledge of culture, and fostered students' personal skills development. The participants also perceived the length of works and the complexity of different literary devices as their most significant challenges when participating in literature courses. Learners generally experienced more benefits than challenges during their literature learning process. The study suggested that stakeholders might take into consideration integrating more literature courses in the English Studies program.

### Introduction

There is a growing interest in the role of literature in language education. Several studies have documented the advantages of incorporating literature courses in English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom (Liaw, 2001; Alemi, 2011; Khan & Alasmari, 2018). Particularly, literature is a valuable resource for developing language structures, reading ability, vocabulary, language proficiency, critical thinking, and cultural understanding. Previous studies have also suggested that literature can enhance the psycholinguistic aspect of language learning by improving vocabulary expansion, reading skills, form and discourse processing skills (Ali & Ahmed, 2015; Mart, 2018; Guetatlia & Hamane, 2022). Literature can serve as a source of linguistic input, stimulate learners' self-expression, enhance learner motivation, and offer authentic materials for EFL classrooms (Shtokhman, 2022; Ugoji, 2016). Overall, literature can be a useful tool for language learning and can help learners improve their language skills, cultural awareness, and personal development.

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Literature has been integrated into many language curricula worldwide, including the English Studies Program in Vietnam. Pham (2022) found that explicitly teaching literary devices could improve EFL learners' reading comprehension, literary analysis skills, and critical thinking. Tran (2023) reported that integrating literary texts into a writing course could enhance learners' linguistic and literary competencies and their appreciation of cultural diversity. Han et al. (2022) discovered that Vietnamese EFL learners hold positive attitudes toward reading literature, considering it useful for language learning, cultural awareness, and critical thinking development. Amalyah (2021) explored the integration of literature into EFL pre-service teacher education programs, stating that it could help in developing Vietnamese EFL pre-service teachers' language competencies, pedagogical skills, and professional identities. These studies provide valuable insights into the importance of literature in EFL teaching and learning and highlight some of the challenges involved in the implementation of literary pedagogy.

However, some of the challenges in implementing literature in EFL teaching and learning were mentioned in the studies by Pham (2022), Tran (2023), and Amalyah (2021). According to Pham (2022), one of the challenges is motivating EFL learners to read and analyze unfamiliar literary texts. Tran (2023) also pointed out cultural and linguistic barriers that may limit learners' comprehension and appreciation of literary texts. Moreover, Amalyah (2021) suggested that teachers' lack of confidence in teaching literature, as well as the perception that literature courses are less important than other language courses, could also act as significant barriers. These challenges can hamper the effective implementation of literary pedagogy and reduce its potential benefits. Consequently, developing strategies and approaches to overcome these obstacles in EFL literature instruction is essential.

Literature courses have been found to be useful in learning English as a foreign language. However, learners in the English Studies program at a university in the Mekong Delta seem to favour other courses instead of literature courses. Also, there is a lack of research on Vietnamese EFL learners' perceptions of literature courses. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by investigating Vietnamese EFL learners' perceptions of literature courses in English studies programs, especially in the context of a university in the Mekong Delta.

The current study aims to explore the perceptions of Vietnamese English-major students towards literature courses at one university in the south of Vietnam. Based on the findings, the researcher proposes recommendations for improving literature courses' curriculum design to better meet students' needs. Therefore, this study is significant for teaching and learning English through literature in the Vietnamese context and for researchers and curriculum development experts in other contexts.

## Literature review

### *Roles of literature in language learning*

Literature functions as a portal to the globe. It forms a combination of cultural knowledge that enables students to acquire insights into the target language's history, beliefs, traditions, and customs, alongside its linguistic characteristics (Carter & Long, 1991). In a study conducted by McRae (1991), literature is fundamentally considered a study of language which allows

students to unconsciously enhance their overall language competence. Moreover, according to Wijaya and Rahman (2021), literature can be understood as being associated with either artistic or aesthetic forms of writing, which creatively and imaginatively express ideas, emotions, and experiences. Literary texts can be written in various forms (novels, short stories, essays, and plays) with a wide range of genres, including poetry, drama, fiction, and non-fiction (Wijaya & Rahman, 2021). In the present study, literature can be described as written or spoken works with aesthetic worth that employ language in a creative and inventive way to portray ideas, feelings, and experiences, which can also be used for communication and to connect people from different cultures.

In the field of language education, literary texts have been found to significantly impact EFL learners' learning. In particular, using literary texts in EFL classrooms can help to extend linguistic knowledge, enhance communicative competence, raise cultural awareness, generate motivation, and foster personal development among learners (Chalikendy, 2015; Khan & Alasmari, 2018; Rogti, 2019).

According to some researchers, literature courses can help learners improve their language proficiency, especially in areas such as vocabulary, grammar, and syntax (DiCerbo et al., 2014; Hişmanoğlu, 2005). Thanks to the rich input of literature, learners may be exposed to a wide range of vocabulary items, which are often contextually embedded. This can help learners understand the meaning and use of new words more effectively than if they are simply learning them through a vocabulary list. Additionally, by analyzing literary texts, learners can identify and understand the use of grammatical structures and their functions. Through close reading and analysis, learners can also identify and appreciate different sentence structures and the impact they have on the text's meaning and effect. Shtokhman (2022), for instance, contends that literature can be used to teach the English language since grammar and vocabulary activities can be presented and promoted through different literary texts. In other words, literature can also be used as a meaningful source for fostering the English language in general and developing the four language skills, grammar, and vocabulary through communicative tasks and activities in particular. One of the reasons is that literature can provide examples of language use in context, which is essential in EFL contexts where learners rarely use English in their daily conversation (Karakaya & Kahraman, 2013; Zakarneh & Mahmoud, 2021). Literature can also be used as an effective tool for learning English and enhancing the four main language skills (Rahayu, 2011; Ugoji, 2016; Shtokhman, 2022). Moreover, reading literary works encourages learners to develop their understanding and analyzing ability, which is one of the main goals of teaching English (Karatay, 2017). In order to reach that goal, learners are required to apply a variety of potential strategies to build a thorough understanding of the text and its themes. Therefore, their four English skills - reading, writing, speaking, and listening - can all be enhanced in EFL classes through the use of literary texts.

When exploring the impacts of literature in the language classroom, it can be said that learners' personal development is significantly outstanding. It was observed that taking literature courses can have several benefits for EFL learners in terms of cognitive growth and cultural understanding. First, literature may enhance students' reading abilities, encourage tolerance, and stimulate creativity (Sternberg, 2007). Additionally, Sternberg stated that literature may be

employed as a motivational tool to increase students' interest in studying and increase their efficacy. Likewise, it has been discovered that literary texts are able to foster EFL tertiary students' learning passion through lively debates about the contents of the works on their own (Ilyas & Afzal, 2021). Similar findings were made by Verhovtsova et al. (2022), who discovered that using analytical reading texts similar to literary works in foreign language learning can boost motivation to learn the language. According to Al-Saeed and Alenezi's research from 2021, students' emotional reactions to fictional characters are influenced by the dialogic interaction between the author and reader in texts, which also improves their understanding when they read closely.

Literary texts may also aid in the development of intercultural competency and critical thinking abilities of EFL students (Aydin & Sariçoban, 2022; Golkowska, 2011). Lazar (1993) investigated the function of literature in language instruction, particularly in light of its cultural content. According to the research, literature may be a valuable source of cultural information that can enable students to build their intercultural competency. By exposing students to a variety of ethnic viewpoints and experiences, literature may strengthen their understanding of global diversity and improve their communication abilities in intercultural settings. Cheung and Hennebry-Leung (2023) focused on the literature's cultural value as they looked at the role of literature in language learning in Hong Kong. They concluded that literature helps students understand the cultural norms and beliefs of the target language culture. This understanding may help students manage social situations and communicate with native speakers in the target language. These results are in line with previous studies on the use of literature in language training. Literature may improve language acquisition by exposing students to great works and broadening their cultural awareness, as Zakarneh and Mahmoud (2021) claims. Literature is a helpful instrument for teaching the English language and culture (Cheung & Hennebry-Leung, 2023; Karakaya & Kahraman, 2013; Nguyen, 2022; Zakarneh & Mahmoud, 2021). Literature improves exposure to authentic language usage, as highlighted by numerous academics (Aydinoğlu, 2013; Karakaya & Kahraman, 2013; Phan, 2022; Violetta-Irene, 2015), which is an advantage of adding it to language acquisition. Language students may gain a variety of linguistic information through literature, such as idiomatic phrases, collocations, and metaphors. Students may get acquainted with the many slang terms and writing patterns of the target language via literature, which will help them understand the social and cultural context of the language (Akanmu & Rasheed, 2015). In general, despite certain difficulties, recent research has demonstrated that integrating literary texts into EFL lessons provides benefits for increasing cultural awareness, improving language proficiency, and fostering intercultural competency and critical thinking (Gabriel, 2019; Kaowiwattanakul, 2021; Huynh et al., 2023).

Overall, it seems that literature can still play a valuable role in developing students' language proficiency and cultural competence, provided that it is used appropriately and with consideration of students' needs and abilities. Although there is some agreement among researchers about the effectiveness of literature courses for the language learning process, research on Vietnamese EFL students' perception of literary courses has been lacking. By examining what Vietnamese EFL students perceive as literary courses in English studies programs, this study seeks to fill this gap.

### *Challenges of using literature in teaching foreign language*

Language teaching and learning professionals have long debated the benefits of literature courses for language learning. While some researchers think that literature can be a useful medium for learning a language, others have voiced concern about its effectiveness.

Students' English proficiency level is one of the considerations for integrating literature into EFL classrooms. Leki (1991) indicated that literature texts might be overwhelming for students who are still having problems with basic language patterns and vocabulary. In a similar vein, Lazar (1993) contended that literature courses would be better suited for more critical students.

Another challenge is that literature courses may not provide language input for language learning. According to Macalister and Nation (2019), in order to learn a language, a student needs a lot of intelligible input. As the vocabulary employed in literary writings is frequently more complicated and abstract than that used in everyday dialogue, they speculate that literature courses may not provide enough of this input. Additionally, Crakli and Kiliçkaya (2011) discovered that literary works utilized in EFL classes lacked relevance to students' current issues, posed unnecessarily abstract tasks for non-native speakers, only permitted rephrasing and memorizing, and did not stimulate creative responses.

Based on the proposed research topic, the gap in literature could be related to the lack of exploration of Vietnamese EFL students' perceptions of literature courses in the English Studies Program. Despite the importance of literature in language learning, limited research specifically examines EFL students' perceptions of literature courses in the Vietnamese context. Additionally, the existing literature tends to focus on the perceptions of literature courses from the perspective of teachers or a broader range of students rather than specifically EFL students (Al-Matrafi, 2022; Amalyah, 2021; Bloemert et al., 2019; Chi, 2022; Le et al., 2022; Lien, 2014). Therefore, this proposed study would aim to fill the gap in literature by exploring the perceptions of literature courses among Vietnamese EFL students in the English Studies Program. The study may be able to point out the program's advantages and disadvantages and offer suggestions for improving the curriculum to help EFL students learn English and appreciate literature.

### *The theoretical framework*

There are various approaches to teaching literature in language education. Three common approaches are the cultural model, the language model, and the personal growth model (Carter & Long, 1991, as cited in Savvidou, 2004).

The cultural model requires students to investigate and analyze the social, political, literary, and historical background of a particular literary text (Carter & Long, 1991). The language model employs a variety of language activities to comprehend key linguistic properties of a literary text (Carter & Long, 1991). The personal growth model emphasizes how language is used in a literary work, situates it in a particular cultural context, and encourages students to articulate their thoughts, feelings, and connections to their own personal and cultural experiences (Carter & Long, 1991). In the study of Yimwilai (2015), in the language model, literary texts are employed as a point of emphasis for grammar, while the language model is used as cultural objects in the cultural model, and as a springboard for personal development

activities in the personal growth model. Each of the models has its own strengths and weaknesses. However, researchers tend to agree that the combination of the three models is beneficial for teaching literature in language classrooms (Adeyemi, 2010; 2015; Atek et al., 2020; Khatib et al., 2011; Savvidou, 2004). For instance, Adeyemi (2010) discovered that instructors of social studies who employed the integrated method for teaching literature outperformed other social studies educators. The outcomes of this study also show that the integrated model of teaching literature outperforms the traditional technique. Therefore, researchers suggested implementing an integrated model for teaching literature that combines linguistic, methodological, and motivational elements (Adeyemi, 2010; 2015; Savvidou, 2004). Such an integrated model uses a wide range of authentic texts to introduce students to a variety of English language types and difficulties, sensitizes them to the processes of reading, and prioritizes the enjoyment of reading by touching on significant and engaging themes. This model, which is adaptable for all levels, incorporates linguistic description with textual analysis (Savvidou, 2004).

In the present study, the researcher adapts the integrated model of teaching literature proposed by Savvidou (2004) to analyze and interpret the obtained data to gain insight into the perceptions of Vietnamese EFL students towards the teaching of literature courses in their studies through three aspects: Linguistics development, cultural awareness and personal growth.

### *Research Questions*

The present study was seeking to address the following research question:

*How do Vietnamese EFL students perceive literature courses in English Studies programs?*

## **Methods**

### *Pedagogical Setting & Participants*

The study selected 77 participants (12 males and 65 females) who were in the final year of their English Studies program at a university in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam. Their ages ranged from 22 to 24 years old. The participants were selected using a convenience sampling method. All the participants have experienced two courses of British literature and one American literature. In their process of learning, they were given the literary texts selected to reach the course objectives and learning outcomes.

### *Design of the Study*

A quantitative research design was employed to address the research question, and a questionnaire was used as the data collection instrument. The questionnaire was designed based on the integrated model of teaching literature (Savvidou, 2004). The Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, was used to collect the participants' responses, which allowed for the collection of numerical data that could be analyzed statistically. In a relatively short amount of time, the use of a questionnaire in this study for data collection is appropriate because it allows the researcher to collect large amounts of data from a diverse sample of participants.

The questionnaire consisted of two main sections. The first section was to collect some demographic information about the participants, such as gender, age, and the number of literature courses they have taken part in. The second section aimed to identify their perceptions towards the importance (one item), benefits (20 items) and challenges (6 items) when enrolling in literature courses in their English Studies Program.

### *Pilot study*

After developing the questionnaire's content, the researcher conducted a pilot to measure its validity and reliability by asking 18 participants who shared common characteristics with the main participants. They were all fourth-year students who were studying the same English Studies program. They were required to thoroughly read each item to measure the content validity and provide their best responses to evaluate the internal reliability. The research used SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software version 25 to run the reliability test, and the result was 0.72, which shows an acceptable reliability coefficient. This means that the questionnaire used in this study was reliable and efficient in collecting data about Vietnamese EFL students' perceptions of literature courses in the English Studies program.

### *Data collection & analysis*

After the survey questionnaire was tested to measure validity and reliability, the researcher asked permission from the participants' management leaders to meet them face-to-face in their classrooms. The researcher introduced the objective of the survey questionnaire to collect information related to their perceptions of the importance of literature learning in the English Studies program and the benefits and limitations in the process of reading literary works. They received the questionnaire and completed it voluntarily in 15 minutes. Then, the researcher collected the filled questionnaire and entered the data into the computer, using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software version 25 for analysis. The results of the questionnaire were run using a descriptive statistical test.

## **Results/ Findings**

The questionnaire was completed by 77 participants and computed into the SPSS software to measure the reliability, which was illustrated by Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.740, as stated in Table 1.

**Table 1.**

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.740	26

It indicated that the questionnaire has a fairly high level of internal consistency.

### *Importance of literature in their English learning*

With respect to the participants' perceptions of the role of literature, the majority of the respondents revealed that integrating literature courses is essential in their studies, as illustrated

in Table 2.

**Table 2.**

Participants' belief about the importance of literature in their English learning

Not important	Slightly important	Fairly important	Important	Very important
0%	0%	18.2%	53.2%	28.6%

According to the data in Table 2, literature is considered an important aspect of learning English. Out of the 77 participants surveyed, 18.2% rated literature as quite important, 53.2% rated it as important, and 28.6% rated it as very important. These findings suggested that incorporating literature into English language learning can be beneficial for students.

#### *Participants' perception of language development through learning literature*

Regarding participants' perceptions of language benefits when learning literature courses, the result of the descriptive statistical test showed a high overall mean score. As illustrated in Table 3, the descriptive statistic test result indicated that literature courses are beneficial to participants' language development (4.03. SD=.38).

**Table 3.**

Participants' perception of language benefits of learning literature

	n	M	S.D.
1. Studying literature has exposed me to a variety of English sentence structures.	77	4.18	.66
2. Reading literature has broadened my vocabulary.	77	4.00	.76
3. Discussing literary works with others has enhanced my communication abilities in English.	77	4.25	.63
4. Literary texts serve as authentic materials that help me understand the context in which the language is used.	77	3.94	.84
5. Studying literature has improved my writing skills in English.	77	4.12	.72
6. Literary works have provided a foundation for understanding and producing idiomatic expressions.	77	4.00	.82
7. Literature has helped me understand different ways of expression in English.	77	4.08	.79
8. Literature has improved my reading skills.	77	3.74	.88
Overall mean score	77	<b>4.03</b>	<b>.38</b>

As can be seen, most of the participants believed that their communication skills have been increased thanks to the discussion activities about the literary works with others (M=4.25. SD=.63). Moreover, learning English through literature helps them exposure to a variety of sentence structures (M=4.18. SD=.66) and improve their writing skills (M=4.12. SD=.72). They also value the merits of reading skills development and exposure to a variety of vocabulary and different ways of expression in English with mean scores around 4.00.

#### *Participants' perception of cultural understanding through learning literature*

Regarding the attitude of the participants towards the cultural benefits of learning literature, the results of the descriptive statistic test indicated that generally, the participants hold a positive attitude towards learning literature in their English studies program, with an overall mean score of 4.06 (as can be seen in Table 4).

**Table 4.**

Participants' perception of cultural benefits of learning literature

	n	M	S.D.
9. Literature helps me to understand some lifestyles and perspectives of the people.	77	4.08	.75
10. Through literature, I am better able to understand the historical and cultural backgrounds of English-speaking countries.	77	4.17	.71
11. Literature encourages me to explore the beauty of the English language.	77	3.99	.86
12. Through literature, I have developed a deeper appreciation for the English language.	77	4.01	.76
Overall mean score	77	4.06	.52

The finding suggested that literature can make a big contribution to promoting cross-cultural understanding and appreciation for the English language. First, literature can enhance their understanding of English-speaking countries' historical and cultural backgrounds, with a mean score of 4.17. The second highest mean score was 4.08, indicating that participants also strongly agreed that literature can help them understand some lifestyles and perspectives of the people. The third highest mean score (M=4.01) means participants deeply appreciated the English language. The item with the lowest mean score was that participants are encouraged to explore the beauty of the English language, with a mean score of 3.99. While this score is still relatively high, it suggested that participants are slightly less enthusiastic about the idea that literature can inspire them to explore the beauty of the English language. Overall, the survey results suggested that participants perceive literature as having significant cultural benefits, particularly in terms of broadening their understanding of different cultures and historical contexts.

#### *Participants' perception of personal growth through learning literature*

Table 5 shows the results of participants' perception of their personal development after experiencing the literature courses in their program. With an average mean score of 4.00, participants agreed that literature courses can help them develop their different personal skills, motivation, and interests.

**Table 5.**

Participants' perception of personal growth benefits of learning literature

	n	M	S.D.
13. Analyzing literary texts has improved my critical thinking skills.	77	3.94	.92
14. Engaging with literature has developed my ability to interpret and analyze texts in English.	77	3.87	.86
15. Literature enhances my motivation to learn English.	77	4.05	.74
16. Literature offers a creative and enjoyable way to learn English.	77	4.10	.82
17. Studying literature has fostered my empathy and understanding of human emotions and experiences.	77	4.08	.77
18. Engaging with literature has improved my problem-solving and decision-making abilities.	77	4.05	.75
19. Studying literature has had a positive impact on my self-confidence in using English.	77	3.99	.91
20. Studying literary texts has enabled me to make connections with other academic subjects.	77	3.94	.71
Overall mean score	77	4.00	.39

As can be seen, literature offers a creative and enjoyable way to learn English ( $M=4.10$ ,  $SD=.77$ ), hence increasing their motivation in learning English ( $M=4.05$ ,  $SD=.74$ ). They also develop their empathy and understanding of human emotions and experiences with a mean score of 4.08. Participants can gain various skills, including problem-solving, decision-making, interpreting, analyzing, and critical thinking, with mean scores ranging from 3.87 to 4.05.

### *Participants' perception of challenges when learning literature*

As for difficulties faced by participants when learning literature in their English studies courses, results of descriptive statistics (as illustrated in Table 6) showed that respondents of this study partly agree that they had challenges when learning English with literature input ( $M=3.26$ ,  $SD=.27$ ).

**Table 6.**

Participants' perception of challenges of learning literature

	n	M	S.D.
21. My level of language proficiency is not high enough to understand the literary texts.	77	3.01	.73
22. Literary devices such as metaphors and symbolism are challenging for me.	77	4.23	.66
23. Cultural differences provided in literary texts can be a barrier for me.	77	2.83	.71
24. The length and complexity of literary texts can make me demotivated.	77	3.88	.70
25. I have difficulty identifying the main themes and messages in literary works.	77	2.81	.67
26. I am not critical enough to analyze literary works.	77	2.84	.54
Overall mean score	77	3.26	.27

In particular, the biggest challenge they experienced was understanding literary devices such as metaphors and symbolism in the works ( $M=4.23$ ,  $SD=.66$ ). The second most difficult was participants demotivated feeling due to the length and complexity of the works with a mean score of 3.88. The other challenges related to their English proficiency level, cultural differences, and identifying the main ideas and messages in the works seem insignificant, with relatively low mean scores of approximately 3.00.

In conclusion, participants positively perceived the benefits of literature integration into the English Studies Program regarding language development, cultural understanding, and personal growth. However, they might experience some challenges in gaining the literary devices.

## **Discussion**

As mentioned in the research results section, the importance of integrating the teaching of literary works in the English language training program has been highly appreciated by students. This is demonstrated through the results in terms of the benefits and limitations of this course for EFL students.

The results of the present study show that students have a very positive assessment of the role of literature in language development, including knowledge of structure, vocabulary, and speaking, reading, and writing skills. These findings further support the studies of Karakaya

and Kahraman (2013), Zakarneh and Mahmoud (2021), and Shtokhman (2022). Students are provided with literary works and then read, research, analyze, and evaluate works at the request of lecturers. During that process, students are exposed to a large amount of vocabulary and structure in the work and learn the content of the passage, such as the main idea of the lesson, the events taking place in the work, the characteristics of the characters, and then draw meaningful lessons for themselves and those around them. Throughout the process, the lecturer organizes a variety of activities for students, such as discussions, debates, plays, presentations, etc. Finally, students are asked to produce essays, speeches, or create video clips about that work. It can be seen that bringing literature into the English classroom plays an important role in language development for students.

In terms of cultural awareness, the results of this study are similar to those of Zakarneh and Mahmoud (2021) and Cheung and Hennebry-Leung (2023). These studies all show that studying literature can help students develop cultural awareness, including understanding the history and society of some English-speaking countries. However, the results of the present study also indicate some specific aspects related to culture that have not been mentioned in previous studies. Those results are literary works that can help students better understand the lifestyle and views of people in some countries through analyzing the behavior, attitudes, and actions of the characters in the work. At the same time, students raise awareness of the importance of English and the beauty of English through language expressions in each work. This can be explained through the selection of literary works in accordance with the teaching objectives in the program, which is to help students both learn the language and have a basic understanding of historical and social characteristics, culture, and people's way of life in the UK and US, raising awareness of the need for English to meet professional requirements after graduation.

The next highlight is that literature creates an interesting, dynamic and creative language learning environment for students, making students more motivated in the process of learning English. This result is consistent with the results from the study of Ilyas and Afzal (2021) and Verhovtsova et al. (2022). This can be explained by the discussions, debates, presentations, plays, or video clips that the lecturer organizes during the literature class. Students can interact with the lecturer with their classmates when performing the required tasks. For example, they are free to express their opinions on specific issues, such as women's rights, the consequences of war, the pain of enslaved people, racial discrimination, etc., and learn meaningful experiences in life. Since then, students have also develop a very prominent quality of empathizing with the experiences and emotions of those around them. This is considered one of the remarkable results of this study because this quality is essential for students in work as well as in life. In addition, exposure to literary works helps students develop soft skills such as analytical skills, thinking skills, problem-solving, and decision making. This result clarifies the results of Aydin and Sariçoban (2022), and Golkowska (2011). All belong to the group of personal development competencies, which are extremely important in students' professional work and life. That is because students must think to understand, analyze, and evaluate information in works, to answer questions, or to solve requested situations or tasks.

Regarding the difficulty in using literary works to develop English for students, the biggest problem is that the work is too long or too complicated with literary devices such as metaphors, similes, symbolism, etc. This result corresponds to what Macalister and Nation (2019) mentioned. Literary works often use more complex and abstract rhetorical devices than language in everyday communication. On the contrary, the results of this study also found that the student's English level is sufficient to understand the main idea, plot or information that the author wants to convey. This is not consistent with the opinion that Leki (1991) and Lazar (1993) mentioned. One possible explanation for this is that students begin to study literature in the program's third year, at which their language proficiency is around intermediate or beyond.

### Conclusion

The findings of the study contribute to the literature on the usefulness of literature courses in learning English as a foreign language. The findings of this study will also be useful for English studies program administrators and instructors in Vietnam to improve the quality of literature courses and enhance the learning experience of Vietnamese EFL students. Despite the limitations of understanding literary rhetoric, this study shows that English language students receive more benefits in terms of language development, cultural understanding, and personal capacity development. Specifically, students expand their knowledge of vocabulary and grammatical structures, and improve speaking and writing skills, which are considered two critical productive skills. In terms of cultural awareness, students also increase their understanding of the history, society and people of some English-speaking countries, raising their understanding and awareness to a new horizon. At the same time, it is to develop some necessary skills such as analysis, critical thinking, problem-solving, etc., and some valuable qualities that help them adapt to different contexts ranging from daily life to future professional expertise.

Due to time constraints, the current study only focuses on analyzing quantitative data through a survey questionnaire, lacking qualitative data analysis to gain a deeper understanding of students' perceptions. Therefore, the researcher expects that there will be more qualitative data analysis from interview questions or can directly do experiments in teaching literature courses to compare and contrast the differences before and after students join the course in future studies. Or the research will follow the case study method to explore in more detail the changes in language, cultural understanding and personal development of EFL students.

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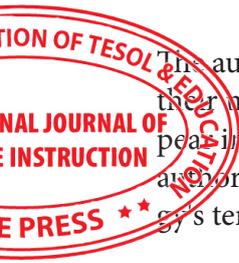
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