Exploring the Efficacy of ChatGPT Integration on EFL Writing: A Study with Vietnamese Undergraduate Students

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Research exploring the integration of ChatGPT in L2 teaching and learning has proliferated. As technology continues to shape language education, there is a growing need to critically examine how innovative tools like ChatGPT contribute to the linguistic development of L2 learners. While existing studies have offered insights into learners' perceptions of ChatGPT in writing classrooms (e.g., Yan, 2023; Kwon et al., 2023), questions persist regarding concrete assessments of its impact on L2 writing development. To fill this gap, this study aims to investigate how ChatGPT enhances EFL undergraduate students' academic writing abilities at a university in Central Vietnam.

A mixed-methods quasi-experimental study (Creswell & Clark, 2011) with the pretest, posttest, and delayed posttest design, involving 60 Vietnamese undergraduate students, was conducted to explore the impact of using ChatGPT 3.5 for feedback and revision on their writing performance. Two intact classes were randomly assigned to a control and a treatment group who received identical writing instructions, with the latter being trained in ChatGPT use for seven weeks, focusing on the feedback they received for vocabulary and grammar of their essays, using the prompt provided. Screen recordings of students interacting with ChatGPT for feedback and revision were also documented.

Writing development was measured by syntactic and lexical complexity and fluency in EFL learners'writings over three stages. Repeated measures ANOVA was used for quantitative analysis. Furthermore, a questionnaire examining the participants'perceptions of ChatGPT was conducted. Semi-structured interviews and screen recordings of students' interaction with ChatGPT were analyzed for qualitative data.

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