

Analyzing ChatGPT's Sustainability as a Language Learning Tool: Saudi EFL Learners' Perspectives, Problems and Pedagogical Prospects

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Abstract—The study assessed Saudi EFL students' perspectives on ChatGPT's incorporation into EFL classrooms for language acquisition and instruction, challenges and barriers, and pedagogical prospects. 212 respondents were randomly selected from different stages of the undergraduate programs at the College of Business Administration and College of Science & Humanities, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, KSA. A questionnaire with self-designed and partially incorporated items from existing studies was utilised to collect the data from the respondents. The data was analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics. It was found that Saudi EFL learners held an immensely favorable perspective on the efficacy of ChatGPT incorporation into EFL classrooms. It was also found that ChatGPT-powered classrooms posed certain challenges such as erroneous results, plagiarism and reproduction, professional integrity, listening and speaking, failure to think critically, and incapability to understand cultural and psychological contexts embedded in idioms and language expressions. However, it was also found that ChatGPT, despite its limitations, offers significant educational implications as it can satisfy learners' specific needs better than conventional language learning and teaching methods.

Index Terms—conventional language learning, cultural and psychological contexts, learners' specific needs, professional and academic integrity

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's technology-driven digital age, technology advances and automates every aspect of our lives. Given technological advancement, innovative tools are increasingly being used in different areas of education. In education, new technologies are being utilized to reinforce and improve our intellectual and academic skills (Raja & Nagasubramani, 2018; Stošić, 2015). We can see how AI-powered language learning tools have significantly altered the English language learning and teaching landscape. Effective instructors use technology to help students succeed professionally while maximizing their potential. In multiple ways, artificial intelligence-enabled technology can promote innovation and advancement in educational institutions (Zhai, 2022). Technology enables access to instructional resources, customized instruction, and collaboration and interaction among teachers, students, and parents (Limna et al., 2023). As a result, effective teaching, student growth, and innovation constitute essentials for a successful education as today's tech-savvy learners weary of traditional modes of learning and teaching respond more enthusiastically to technology-enabled instructions. Technology advancements, including artificial intelligence, have led to significant developments in methods of instruction in the 21st century. Innovations in machine learning have resulted in advanced digital content-generating technologies, including generative artificial intelligence.

Innovative ways of learning and using the English language have been made possible by the integration of technology-enhanced language instruction (TELL) and artificial intelligence (AI) into the instruction of the language (Bin-Hady et al., 2023). In recent years, there has been growing interest in employing AI and the processing of natural

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languages to enhance language learning. OpenAI's AI language model, ChatGPT, is a common application of this new technology. ChatGPT may assist learners in enhancing their English language skills by offering human-like responses in conversation contexts. For example, ChatGPT not only enables users to develop and answer an array of questions, summarize documents, and communicate with it like peers but it also aids in the creation of tests, essay generation, and translating languages.

Using artificial intelligence (AI) tools including ChatGPT in EFL classes in Saudi Arabia represents a significant departure from conventional teaching approaches. The cultural and linguistic environment of Saudi Arabia, where English is taught and learned as a foreign language, could impact how students perceive AI-driven acquisition of languages. With its advanced technology-enabled infrastructure and tech-savvy young generation, Saudi Arabia offers wonderful opportunities and prospects for ChatGPT integration into EFL classrooms to enhance the English language skills of Saudi EFL learners. Many studies have been conducted examining the learners' responses and attitudes toward utilising ChatGPT for language acquisition and teaching. For example, Alnaim et al. (2024) examined ChatGPT's remote learning efficacy for medical students. The cross-sectional study found that, despite multiple issues and gendered and education-based perception differences, ChatGPT is widely recognized as an efficient medical instruction tool. Faisal (2024) analyzed ChatGPT's potential advantages in higher education. It was found that ChatGPT integration promoted students' engagement, and language acquisition, besides empowering students and instructors, enhancing Saudi education and employment generation.

A. Research Problem

The level of awareness of information and social perceptions defines one's attitudes and motivation for learning and mastering a language. A certain understanding of Saudi EFL learners' perceptions of ChatGPT's positive and negative aspects, including its advantages (such as immediate feedback and limitless practice chances) and the potential drawbacks (such as the likelihood of biased or incorrect answers), challenges, and the pedagogical prospects is required. Therefore, this study seeks to understand their perspectives to create technologically sophisticated and pedagogically successful educational ChatGPT interventions in Saudi EFL classrooms.

B. Research Purpose

This study investigates Saudi EFL learners' perspectives, the problems the use of ChatGPT poses, and the pedagogical prospects of ChatGPT integration in EFL classrooms for enhancing the English language skills of the language learners.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

ChatGPT, an indispensable teaching tool, corresponds to the theory of constructivism, social structuralism, cognitive burden, and data assessment theories. Bruner (1996) argued that active engagement with new material and building on knowledge helped learners construct their learning. As social constructivist learning requires collaboration and engagement (Vygotsky, 1980), ChatGPT's conversational interface encourages student collaboration, socialization, and participatory learning. ChatGPT promotes interaction with others by offering a conversational interface that enables learners to work together in a natural setting (Punar Özçelik & Yangın Ekşi, 2024). As ChatGPT offers students guidance and feedback based on their skills, deficiencies, and educational style, multiple studies have been conducted to investigate the pedagogical implications and opportunities of using ESL/EFL classrooms. For example, Limna et al. (2023) explored how the students and teachers viewed ChatGPT usage for instructional purposes. Purposive sampling was employed to interview 15 students and 10 instructors comprehensively. The data was analyzed qualitatively. It was found that both students and teachers held positive attitudes towards ChatGPT for instant feedback and answering questions with some concerns regarding accuracy and secrecy. The study could help teachers and administrators make use of ChatGPT in education. Mabuan (2024) analyzed the English language instructors' perspectives on ChatGPT's utilization in ELT. A blended approach study used focus group talks and a web-based survey to collect responses from 115 instructors of English in Metro Manila, Philippines. The result revealed that instructors' opinions on ChatGPT's potential usage in ELT (e.g., improving vocabulary, writing practice, language fluency, and communication) were highly positive. The study holds significance as it enhances AI in ELT and provides practical guidance for ChatGPT instructors. Fontenelle-Tereshchuk (2024) examined educators' perspectives on the difficult transition that takes place when recent high school graduates enter university education without learning academic writing requirements in 2024. It also investigates ways students adapt their writing skills to academic requirements across courses. The study contributes to educational discussions on AI in the classroom and how to help beginning writers. Phuong (2024) investigated English language learners' ChatGPT use, perspectives, and opinions. The data, using a questionnaire and interviews, was collected from 120 non-specialized English learners studying at the Korea University of Information and Communication Technology and the University of Da Nang. The students had a positive perception of ChatGPT as it helped students acquire ESP vocabulary, translate, check grammar, and paraphrase. The study suggests additional plagiarism-detecting technology research.

Yuan et al. (2024) investigated the impact of ChatGPT on academic writing, revealing both challenges and potential benefits. The present qualitative research utilized partially structured and unstructured interviews. Research revealed

that EFL students utilize ChatGPT for academic English writing simply because of its practicality along with its capacity to meet their requirements. The study also suggested that English learners should consider implementing this AI-powered tool, particularly for written assignments. Alsaedi (2024) examined ChatGPT's beneficial effects and constraints in EFL/ESL language. The data was collected from Science Direct, Web of Science, and ERIC databases from November 2022 to January 2024. The PRISMA flowchart was used to identify the 15 most relevant articles from 182 publications using exact keywords. It was found that ChatGPT despite potential advantages posed serious challenges such as decreased motivation, learning loss, academic integrity, and issues of originality. The study holds implications for addressing the challenges and effective integration of ChatGPT into ESL/EFL classrooms. Teng (2024) examined the effect of ChatGPT on English writing through an in-depth examination of the 20 pertinent articles. PRISMA standards were employed to determine the inclusion and exclusion of references. It was found that the integration of AI into EFL classrooms dramatically impacted EFL students' writing skills. It was also found that ChatGPT offered both advantages and negatives for EFL writing. The study advocates a community of practice and an integrated strategy to incorporating AI tools including ChatGPT into instructional resources. Meniado (2023) examined how ChatGPT affected English language instruction and assessment. PRISMA-guided rapid literature review found that ChatGPT provided meaning-focused inputs, scaffoldings, feedback on language output accuracy, and extensive language practice to support and improve English language learning. However, the study revealed issues with intellectual dishonesty, copied information, incorrect responses, competency decline, and general responses.

Rasul et al. (2023) explored both the positive and negative aspects of ChatGPT, a framework for innovative AI in higher learning, using the constructivist theory of learning. It was found that ChatGPT offered adaptive learning, automated services, creative assessment, and personalized feedback while also highlighting certain challenges such as bias, misbehavior, erroneous information, and inadequate assessment. The study suggests a fine balance for using it as a supplement tool for enhancing English skills. Orrù et al. (2023) tested ChatGPT's skills in problem-solving making use of two sets of linguistic understanding questions and human respondents' performance levels. ChatGPT addressed 30 practice and transfer problems scoring. ChatGPT scores were assigned as "0" for incorrect answers and "1" for correct answers. The findings demonstrated that ChatGPT did fairly well on each set of problems, approximating the mean success rate of human subjects. The study suggested that further research to fully understand AI's benefits and drawbacks particularly when it involves addressing verbal problems. Kayali et al. (2023) examined university students' ChatGPT experiences in online classes. The sample comprised 84 Turkish state university students pursuing an associate degree. A multi-method approach was chosen. While the semi-structured interview form obtained qualitative data, the Chatbot Usability Scale collected quantitative data which were analyzed utilizing qualitative and content analysis. The findings revealed that ChatGPT provided a simple UI and timely, meaningful responses. Grassini (2023) examined the positive and negative implications of using sophisticated models of artificial intelligence for application in educational settings. It builds on earlier studies and helps explain how these advanced technologies change the standards of education in today's revolutionized educational settings. The study asserts how some educators welcomed its advantageous effect on education, while others cautioned that it might undermine analytical abilities and promote dishonesty. Baidoo-Anu and Ansah (2023) synthesized current research to investigate ChatGPT's practical advantages and disadvantages for teaching and learning. ChatGPT's educational advantages were investigated utilizing an exploratory method. It was found that ChatGPT offered personalized, informal assessment notifications, interactive learning, and feedback for teaching and learning. The study implies that policymakers, scholars, instructors, and technology professionals could improve education and student learning via generative AI. Adiguzel (2023) discussed how AI can be successfully incorporated into education to benefit both educators and learners while promoting ethical use. The study, by carrying out an in-depth overview, examined AI technology, its educational applications, and its problems. The findings revealed that chatbots and algorithms simulated human conversation and produced human language-based writing. It was also found that ChatGPT offered benefits with many ethical and practical challenges. Islam and Islam (2023) analyzed ChatGPT's academic promise and disadvantages. Data were gathered from internet sources and analyzed using the noticing-collecting-thinking approach. The findings revealed that ChatGPT provided both challenges and opportunities for social, education, research, and personal development skills.

Research Questions

1. How do Saudi EFL students perceive ChatGPT in EFL classrooms?
2. What are the problems with ChatGPT integration in EFL classrooms?
3. What are the pedagogical prospects of ChatGPT integrations?

III. METHODOLOGY

A. *Research Design*

The study utilized a descriptive quantitative approach to understand the perspectives of Saudi learners, obstacles, and educational opportunities of ChatGPT incorporation in EFL classrooms. Creswell and Creswell (2017) recommend utilizing a quantitative approach when evaluating data comprising statistics and numbers.

B. *Participants' Description*

The study encompasses undergraduate learners from the College of Science & Humanities and College of Business Administration, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, KSA. They are in various stages of their undergraduate program. They have been studying English as one of the compulsory subjects in their school education. The study participants study English as a foreign language as they are native learners of the Arabic language. A simple random selection process was used to choose 212 students for the study.

TABLE 1
DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 120 | 56.6% |
| Female | 89 | 42% |
| Others | 3 | 1.4 % |
| Level/Year of Study | | |
| 6th to 8 th Level | 19 | 19.9% |
| 4th to 5th Level | 24 | 11.3% |
| 1st to 3 rd Level | 169 | 79.7% |
| Parents' education | | |
| Postgraduate+ | 63 | 29.7% |
| Intermediate + | 128 | 60.4% |
| Middle school+ | 14 | 6.6% |
| No education | 7 | 3.3% |

C. Data Collection Tools

Before developing the questionnaire, earlier studies were thoroughly examined. As a result, a questionnaire was prepared. While certain elements/items were self-developed, others were taken from the existing studies (Ajilouni et al., 2023; Al-khresheh, 2024). The first section of the questionnaire comprising six questions deals with respondents' demographic profile. In the second section of the questionnaire, the first nine items examine Saudi EFL learners' perspectives on ChatGPT integration into EFL classrooms. The next 5 items assess the problems and challenges, and the last 5 items deal with the pedagogical prospects of ChatGPT in Saudi EFL classrooms. The respondents were requested to rate their responses on a 5-point Likert scale (5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree).

D. Validity

Considering the low English competency of the study participants, the questionnaire items were provided both in Arabic and English. The translation has been verified by two experts fluent in Arabic and English. Confirming the questionnaire and its elements was done through a pilot study. The questionnaire finally included ideas and professional opinions.

E. Method for Data Collection

The data was collected from the study participants using a questionnaire. The link to the questionnaire was sent to both the course instructors and the learners. The respondents were supplied with the Arabic translation along with the English content to facilitate a better expression of their opinions. They were asked to carefully study the instructions for each section. The respondents felt confident in communicating their choices as they had the assurance that their responses were to remain strictly private and used for research and education.

F. Data Interpretation and Analysis

After we received adequate responses, we moved the data from a Google Form into an Excel spreadsheet. After assigning numeric codes to the responses (5= strongly agree, 4= agree, 3= neutral, 2= disagree, and 1= strongly disagree), the data was transferred to SPSS. Given that the questionnaire solely contained closed-ended questions, the collected data was carefully organized and examined using qualitative techniques. The most recent version of SPSS was used to conduct statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to determine the means of the data, frequency, and standard deviation. The researchers employed one-way ANOVA to identify differences among the participants based on differences in their demographic profiles. The following criteria were established for understanding and categorizing the degree/level of perceptions/perspectives.

TABLE 2
THE SCALE/CRITERIA ASSUMED FOR MEASURING THE DEGREE/LEVEL OF PERSPECTIVE

| Mean Square | Level |
|-------------|----------|
| 3.1 – 4.50 | High |
| 1.51 – 3.00 | Moderate |
| 1.00 – 1.50 | Low |

IV. RESULT AND FINDINGS

TABLE 3
SAUDI LEARNERS' PERSPECTIVES ON CHATGPT'S EFFICACY, PROBLEMS, AND PEDAGOGICAL PROSPECTS

| Questions/items | Overall means |
|--|---------------|
| 1. Representing learners' perspective on ChatGPT integration into EFL classrooms | 3.83 |
| 2. Representing the problems with ChatGPT integration in EFL classrooms | 3.62 |
| 3. Representing pedagogical prospects of ChatGPT integration into EFL classrooms | 3.75 |

Table 3 revealed that Saudi students held favorable perspectives on the efficacy of ChatGPT integration in EFL classrooms. It was also found that ChatGPT incorporation posed certain challenges and problems such as failure to comprehend the social context of idioms, human emotions, articulation and listening, and hindering problem-solving and critical thought skills. The result also found that Saudi Arabia's advanced technological and digital infrastructure coupled with tech-savvy young generations offered high pedagogical prospects for ChatGPT incorporation into Saudi EFL classrooms. Thus, a powered classroom can assist students meet their individual needs, help them overcome their problems and obstacles, can transform them into independent learners, and assist them achieve their learning goals more efficiently and effectively.

TABLE 4
REPRESENTING SAUDI LEARNERS' PERSPECTIVE ON CHATGPT INTEGRATION INTO EFL CLASSROOMS

| Questions | SA | A | N | D | SD | Mean | Level |
|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|------|----------|
| 7 | 83(39.12%) | 82(38.7%) | 38(17.9%) | 6(2.8%) | 3(1.4%) | 4.11 | High |
| 8 | 28(13.2%) | 77(36.3%) | 75(35.4%) | 25(11.8%) | 7(3.3%) | 3.44 | Moderate |
| 9 | 51(24.1%) | 65(30.7%) | 69(32.5%) | 22(10.4%) | 5(2.4%) | 3.63 | High |
| 10 | 71(33.5%) | 97(45.8%) | 34(16%) | 7(3.3%) | 3(1.4%) | 4.06 | High |
| 11 | 51(24.1%) | 80(37.7%) | 55(25.9%) | 23(10.8%) | 3(1.4%) | 3.72 | High |
| 12 | 54(25.5%) | 94(44.3%) | 50(23.6%) | 9(4.2%) | 5(2.4%) | 3.86 | High |
| 13 | 46(21.7%) | 92(43.4%) | 59(27.8%) | 12(5.7%) | 3(1.4%) | 3.78 | High |
| 14 | 56(26.4%) | 88(41.5%) | 52(24.5%) | 11(5.2%) | 5(2.4%) | 3.84 | High |
| 15 | 62(29.2%) | 91(38.2%) | 60(28.3%) | 6(2.8%) | 3(1.4%) | 4.09 | High |

Table 4 shows the results of Saudi EFL students' perspectives on the efficacy of ChatGPT as an important tool for language acquisition and instruction. The average mean for the items/questions included in the table is 3.83. Even the individual items except item no 8 are classed as high. In item no 7, 77.82% (SA 39.12% & A 38.7) said that they felt comfortable utilizing ChatGPT for learning purposes. While 17.9 stayed neutral, 2.8% disliked it and 1.4%) strongly opposed the message. The mean score is 4.11, which is thought of as high. In item no. 8, 49.5 (SA 13.2% & A 36.3%) stated that ChatGPT worried them due to potential erroneous outcomes. 35.4% were neutral, 11.8% differed, and 3.3% strongly opposed the opinion. The mean score is 3.44, which is thought of as high. This statement shows that there are many students who have certain reservations regarding ChatGPT efficacy as an important tool of learning. Concerning item no. 9, 54.8% (SA 24.1% & A 30.7%) of respondents claimed that they enjoyed employing ChatGPT throughout the learning process. While 32.5 % remained neutral, 10.4% differed, and 2.4% strongly rejected the opinion. The mean score is 3.63, which is thought of as high. In the next item, 10, 79.3% (SA 33.5% & A 45.8%) respondents said that ChatGPT simplified the learning process. 16% maintained neutrality, 3.3% disagreed, and 1.4% strongly disregarded the opinion. The mean score is 4.06, which is thought of as high. Concerning item 11, 61.8 % (SA 24.1% & A 37.7%) of respondents stated that ChatGPT strengthened a person's academic confidence. While 25.9% were neutral, 10.8% differed, and 1.4% strongly opposed the opinion. The mean score is 3.72, which is thought of as high. Concerning item no 12, 69.8% (SA 25.5% & A 44.3%) of the participants said that ChatGPT addressed students' specific requirements for learning. 23.6% chose neutrality, 4.2% disagreed, and 2.4% expressed a strong rejection. The mean score is 3.86 which is classified as high. Concerning item no. 13, 65.1% (SA 21.7% & A 43.4%) of the learners agreed that they would prefer using ChatGPT to achieve their learning objectives. While 27.8% were neutral, 5.7% differed, and 1.4% completely rejected the opinion. The mean score is 3.78, which is thought of as high. In item no. 14, 67.9% (SA 26.4% & 41.5%) of the respondents said that they would utilize ChatGPT to summarize and analyze educational material. 24.5% expressed neutrality, 5.2% disagreed, and 2.4% expressed strong disapproval of the statement. The mean is 3.84 which is classed as high. In item no. 15, 67.4 % (SA 29.2% & A 38.2%) of the respondents said that they would inform others about ChatGPT's learning benefits. While 28.3% stayed neutral, 2.8% differed, and 1.4% completely disregarded the opinion. The mean score is 4.09, which is thought of as high. The overall mean for all items under this category is 3.83 which shows that students rated it highly suggesting that they held highly positive perspectives on ChatGPT integration into EFL classrooms. This analysis addressed the first research question of the study.

TABLE 5
REPRESENTING PROBLEMS OF CHATGPT INTEGRATION INTO EFL CLASSROOMS

| Questions | SA | A | N | D | SD | Mean | Level |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|------|----------|
| 16 | 29(13.7%) | 64(30.2%) | 94(44.3%) | 23(10.8%) | 2(0.9%) | 3.44 | Moderate |
| 17 | 41(19.3%) | 77(36.3%) | 83(39.2%) | 8(3.8%) | 3(1.4%) | 3.28 | Moderate |
| 18 | 36(17%) | 94(45.3%) | 70(33%) | 8(3.8%) | 2(0.9%) | 3.69 | High |
| 19 | 58(27.4%) | 84(39.6%) | 52(24.5%) | 17(8%) | 1(0.5%) | 3.85 | High |
| 20 | 76(35.8%) | 60(28.3%) | 54(25.5%) | 15(7.1%) | 7(3.3%) | 3.86 | High |

Table 5 shows the problems and difficulties of ChatGPT integration into EFL classrooms. In item 16 which is the first item of this category, 43.9% (SA 13.7% & A 30.2%) of the respondents said that ChatGPT could capture the cultural context behind certain idioms or phrases. 44.3% stayed neutral, 10.8 disagreed, and 0.9% strongly opposed the statement. The mean is 3.44 which is moderately rated. There are many students who have certain reservations regarding ChatGPT's inability to comprehend the cultural contexts embedded in words/ phrases. Similarly, a large number of the participants also expressed neutrality which revealed that a large number of students are not familiar with this aspect of ChatGPT. In the next item no. 17, 55.6 % (SA 19.3% & 36%) of the respondents agreed that articulation and listening were major challenges to ChatGPT's integration into EFL classrooms. While 39.2% stayed neutral, 3.8% disagreed, and 1.4% strongly opposed the opinion. The mean is 3.28 which is again moderately rated. Regarding item no. 18, 62.3% (SA 17% & A 45.3%) of the respondents agreed that aligning ChatGPT interactions with curricular benchmarks posed a serious challenge. 33% did not express their opinion, 3.8% differed, and 0.9% expressed rejection of the statement. The mean is 3.69 which is classed high. In the next item no. 19, 67% (SA 27.4% & 39.6%) of the candidates agreed that ChatGPT could not imitate human emotion, culture, or compassion. While 24.5% stayed neutral, 8% differed, and 0.5% strongly opposed the statement. The mean is 3.85 which is categorized as high. In item no. 20, which is the last item of this category, 64.1 % (SA 35.8% & A 28.3%) of the statements concurred that over-reliance on ChatGPT for answers could hinder students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. 25.5 chose neutrality, 7.1 disagreed, and 3.3% expressed strong disapproval of the statement. The mean is 3.86 which is categorized as high. The highly rated statements in the last three statements indicate that students are familiar with ChatGPT's limitations as a tool of learning and instruction. The average score for all items in this group is 3.62, indicating that students strongly appreciated it and perceived ChatGPT integration in EFL instruction positively. This analysis addressed the study's second research question.

TABLE 6
REPRESENTING PEDAGOGICAL PROSPECTS OF CHATGPT INTEGRATION INTO EFL CLASSROOMS

| Questions | SA | A | N | D | SD | Mean | Level |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|---------|------|-------|
| 21 | 55(29.9%) | 71(33.5%) | 75(35.4%) | 9(4.2%) | 2(0.9%) | 3.79 | High |
| 22 | 39(18.4%) | 74(34.9%) | 85(40.1%) | 10(4.7%) | 4(1.9%) | 3.63 | High |
| 23 | 44(20.8%) | 83(39.2%) | 72(34%) | 10(4.7%) | 3(1.4%) | 3.73 | High |
| 24 | 49(23.1%) | 91(42.9%) | 62(29.2%) | 4(1.9%) | 6(2.8%) | 3.81 | High |
| 25 | 59(27.8%) | 83(39.2%) | 51(24.1%) | 14(6.6%) | 5(2.4%) | 3.83 | High |

Table 6 represents the pedagogical prospects of ChatGPT integration into EFL classrooms. The highly rated items in this category demonstrate that ChatGPT offered great pedagogical implications. In item no. 21 which is the first item of this category, 63.4 % (SA 29.9% & A 33.5%) of the respondents accepted that ChatGPT had the potential to revolutionize the digital transformation of English language teaching. 35.4% stayed neutral, 4.2 differed, and 0.9 strongly rejected the statement. The statement is highly rated. In the next item no. 22, 52.9% (SA 18.4% & A 34.9%) of the participants stated ChatGPT students studied at their level and with culturally relevant material. While 40.1% were neutral, 4.7% differed, and 1.9% strongly opposed the opinion. The mean is 3.63 which is classed as high. The high level of students staying neutral shows that students had a low level of familiarity with this aspect/usage of ChatGPT. Regarding item no 23, 60% (SA 20.8% & A 39.8%) of the respondents said that the adaptable nature of ChatGPT engaged students and improved language retention and application. 34% stayed neutral, 4.7% disagreed, and 1.4% expressed strong disapproval of the statement. The mean is 3.73 which suggests that learners highly rated it. In the next item no. 24, 66 % (SA 23.1% & A 42.9%) of the respondents concurred that ChatGPT could create personalized learning resources and offered immediate feedback. While 29.2% were neutral, 1.9% differed, and 2.8% strongly opposed the statement. The mean is 3.81 which is categorized as high. In the last item of this category, 67% (SA 27.8% & A 39.2%) of the respondents agreed that ChatGPT increased classroom confidence and engagement, increasing individual and group interactions. While 24.1% stayed neutral, 6.6% differed, and 2.4% strongly rejected the opinion. The category mean is 3.83, indicating that students highly rated it and had favorable opinions regarding ChatGPT's pedagogical prospects. This analysis answered the study's third research question.

V. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The study was conducted to understand the perspectives of Saudi EFL students on the efficacy of ChatGPT in EFL classrooms, the challenges and difficulties, and the pedagogical prospects for both language acquisition and instruction. The highly rated responses revealed that Saudi EFL respondents had a highly positive perspective on the efficacy of ChatGPT as an important AI-powered tool for language learning and teaching. This finding is consistent with multiple studies (Kiryakova & Angelova, 2023; Limna et al., 2023; Mabuan, 2024; Phuong, 2024; Rasul et al., 2023; Yilmaz et al., 2023; Yuan et al., 2024) as all of them found positive perspectives among the language learners regarding ChatGPT as a tool of learning. However, these studies also raised certain concerns regarding the ChatGPT's efficacy and advised to use it as an augmented tool not as a substitute for a human language instructor. The study also investigated the difficulties and challenges of ChatGPT as a tool of both language acquisition and instruction. It was found that ChatGPT integration posed certain serious challenges and difficulties such as erroneous outcomes, dishonesty and plagiarism, academic integrity, articulation and listening, impairing critical ability, and its failure to imbibe cultural and emotional connotations embedded in words. This finding aligns with multiple studies (Alsaedi, 2024; Harunasari, 2023; Irzawati et al., 2024; Kayali et al., 2023; Limna et al., 2023; Meniado, 2023; Sok & Heng, 2023; Teng, 2024). All these studies underscored multiple challenges of ChatGPT integration into EFL classrooms. The study also revealed that ChatGPT-powered acquisition and instructions offered great prospects for technology and AI-powered classrooms and today's tech-savvy young generation. This finding is consistent with multiple previous studies (Adiguzel et al., 2023; Ali et al., 2023; Teng, 2024). These studies emphasized that ChatGPT offered great scope for both language acquisition and instruction. However, all suggest that it can be used as an additional tool that frees the learners from many restrictions in conventional learning. This is no substitute for human teachers as its uncontrolled and unsupervised usage entails many unpredictable challenges, particularly for new language learners.

VI. CONCLUSION

The study examined the perspectives of Saudi EFL students on the efficacy of ChatGPT incorporation for both language acquisition and instruction, the problems and challenges its integration poses, and the pedagogical prospects it offers. The findings revealed that Saudi learners held a highly positive perspective on the efficacy of ChatGPT as an important tool of learning and teaching. It also found that ChatGPT incorporation posed serious challenges such as erroneous results intellectual dishonesty, poor listening and speaking skills, inability to think critically, and failure to understand the cultural and psychological implications of words. The study also found that ChatGPT, despite the limitation involved, offered great pedagogical implications as it is more capable of fulfilling the individual and specific requirements of learners which are missing in conventional methods of language learning and teaching.

Implications and Suggestions

This study on ChatGPT's efficiency as a language learning and teaching tool, Saudi EFL students' challenges, and ChatGPT's instructional role in EFL classrooms offers instructors and students multiple pedagogical and educational opportunities. More individuals and Arab regions could be examined to establish reliability and legitimacy of the study.

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