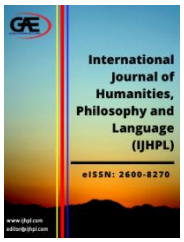
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LECTURERS' PERCEPTIONS OF CHATGPT USE IN MALAYSIAN POLYTECHNIC ESL CLASSROOMS: AN EXPLORATORY DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

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Abstract:

Studies exploring perceptions on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in higher education have increased significantly in recent years. However, less attention has been given to lecturers' own use of ChatGPT within Malaysian TVET institutions, particularly among English as a Second Language (ESL) lecturers whose teaching practices involve communicative and workplace-oriented language instruction. This study explores Malaysian polytechnic ESL lecturers' perceptions of the integration of ChatGPT into classroom teaching. Adopting an exploratory descriptive design, the study employs the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT2) model developed by Venkatesh et al. (2012), extended with Trust, Perceived Risks, and Attitude towards ChatGPT. Since ChatGPT also introduces concerns about reliability, integrity, and trustworthiness, extending UTAUT2 with constructs such as 'trust' and 'perceived risk' is necessary. A total of 40 ESL lecturers nationwide participated in the study. Data were collected using a questionnaire comprising 32 five-point Likert-scale items and an open-ended response section distributed online. The constructs measuring perceptions were analysed using descriptive statistics, while thematic analysis was applied to qualitative feedback. The findings generally reveal a high level of acceptance of ChatGPT as a pedagogical support tool in ESL classrooms, particularly for lesson preparation and the development of instructional materials. Effort expectancy and facilitating conditions emerged as strong factors, indicating that lecturers perceive ChatGPT as easy to use and accessible. Nevertheless, lecturers expressed concerns regarding academic integrity and overdependence, particularly in relation to its potential effects on teaching practices and critical thinking skills. Qualitative insights further highlight that lecturer's position ChatGPT as a supportive instructional tool rather than a replacement for pedagogical expertise. Overall, the study provides early educator-

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focused insights into AI-assisted language teaching and underlines the need for responsible pedagogical integration of generative AI in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) ESL contexts.

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Keywords:

AI In Education, ChatGPT, ESL Teaching, Technology Acceptance and Use, UTAUT2, Malaysian Polytechnics.

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Introduction

In the Malaysian context, the growing shift toward embracing Artificial Intelligence (AI) reflects more than the adoption of new technology; it represents an effort to enhance work efficiency and creativity in response to a rapidly evolving world (Kim, 2026). The use of AI is no longer limited to data-driven or industrial fields but has increasingly extended into educational settings, including classrooms. As a result, contemporary teaching and learning practices in higher education are closely associated with advances in AI tools. In language education, generative AI applications such as ChatGPT are widely perceived as beneficial in supporting instructional practices, material development, and student engagement.

Despite this growing presence, it remains important to examine how stakeholders adopt and integrate such technologies into their daily teaching and learning practices. While research in higher education has predominantly examined students' acceptance and use of ChatGPT (e.g., Shuhaiber et al., 2025; Subramaniam, 2025), some studies have targeted the students' perceptions of ChatGPT use, highlighting its benefits in writing (Abd Rahim et al., 2023) and speaking tasks (Muniandy & Selvanathan, 2024).

Though the presence of studies exploring the lecturers' perceptions of the use of ChatGPT in teaching and learning is inevitable (e.g., Azmi & Hashim, 2025; Mutanga et al., 2024; Othman et al., 2024), the English as a Second Language (ESL) lecturers' perspectives, particularly within the Malaysian Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) context, remain underexplored. This gap is significant, as these contexts emphasise communicative and workplace-oriented language skills, where concerns related to academic integrity and overdependence are especially salient among educators. Furthermore, it is important to highlight that, as far as the researcher is concerned, existing studies on lecturers' perceptions of ChatGPT use have mostly discussed the educators' view of students' use of this generative AI tool in the process of learning and achieving the output. To ensure novelty, in this study,

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the researcher investigates the lecturers' perceptions of their own use of ChatGPT in teaching and learning in ESL classrooms.

Hence, this study aims to examine Malaysian polytechnic ESL lecturers' perceptions of ChatGPT use in classrooms. This study explores key factors influencing acceptance alongside lecturers' reflections on the practical and ethical implications of using generative AI in ESL classrooms, using the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2) model (Venkatesh et al., 2012). The findings contribute to emerging discussions on responsible AI integration in TVET ESL contexts.

Literature Review

This section reviews relevant literature on artificial intelligence in higher education, the benefits and challenges of the use of ChatGPT in ESL teaching and learning, and the UTAUT2 framework in ChatGPT adoption.

Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education

The shift to Artificial Intelligence nationwide is reflected in national-level efforts to guide responsible and ethical adoption of AI systems. Malaysia's National Guidelines on AI Governance and Ethics (AIGE) emphasise responsible AI principles and risk management to reduce potential harms while promoting innovation (Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, 2024). Malaysian universities, at the same time, have begun developing their own structured guidance. Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), for example, issued formal guidelines on the use of generative AI in teaching, learning, research, and academic integrity, highlighting the need for transparency, ethical disclosure, and assessment practices that reflect genuine student mastery (Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 2024).

The integration of AI in higher education has transformed teaching and learning practices, making them more interactive and enjoyable by providing student-tailored resources and immediate feedback (Mutanga et al., 2024). Despite these advantages, the adoption of AI in educational contexts is not without challenges. While many recognise its potential to enhance teaching practices, concerns related to ethical issues and the role of educators remain questionable (Mutanga et al., 2024). Despite positive results in relation to usefulness (performance expectancy) and ease of use (effort expectancy), concerns were also raised regarding overreliance, plagiarism, reduced student engagement, and the potential decline in critical thinking, suggesting the need for careful and balanced integration in classroom practices (Othman et al., 2024).

At the TVET level, educator readiness is a particularly important concern because lecturers are key decision-makers in whether and how AI tools are integrated into classroom practice. A Malaysian polytechnic and community college study reported that lecturers generally recognise both the potential benefits and challenges of AI tools and recommended targeted professional development to support inclusive adoption across disciplines (Ahmad et al., 2025). This indicates that AI adoption is not just about access to technology but also about building confidence, competence, and ethical clarity among educators.

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ChatGPT in ESL Teaching and Learning: Benefits and Challenges

In ESL contexts, ChatGPT has emerged as a valuable asset for language teaching and learning. In a qualitative study conducted among 28 Vietnamese lecturers, the findings indicate generally positive acceptance of the use of ChatGPT in different stages of the writing process, as it saves time and provides instant feedback that helps in enhancing students' writing skills (Nguyen et al., 2025). Nevertheless, concerns over the accuracy of information, students' overreliance, academic dishonesty, and reduced critical thinking and creativity among the students were also raised (Nguyen et al., 2025).

Studying the lecturers' perceptions of undergraduate students' overreliance on ChatGPT in academic writing, Azmi and Hashim (2025) highlight that while it is useful as a linguistic support tool, ChatGPT reliance may reduce authentic writing practices. The study further reports that lecturers adopt strategies such as in-class writing and oral verification while emphasising the need for clearer institutional guidelines and improved AI literacy to support responsible integration (Azmi & Hashim, 2025). There are also studies that indicate AI-generated output, while linguistically correct, may not be original or deep, and thus affect students' learning outcomes (Espartinez, 2024). There is also concern regarding the accuracy and reliability of AI-generated content, as responses may contain misleading or incorrect information (Espartinez, 2024).

Looking at Malaysian polytechnic setting, Lam and Abdul Rahim (2025) report that diploma-level students frequently use ChatGPT for writing assistance, grammar correction and vocabulary development, and generally consider it as a useful tool that enhances learning quality and motivation. At the same time, the rapid growth of ChatGPT use has raised educator concerns about student overreliance, plagiarism risks, and whether assessment outputs truly reflect students' own competence. These concerns also appear in Malaysian institutional guidelines, which suggest assessment designs that emphasise demonstrations, presentations, interviews and real performance evidence, as written work can be easily AI-assisted (Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 2024).

UTAUT2 Framework in ChatGPT Adoption

Technology acceptance in educational settings is often examined using established adoption frameworks. One widely used model is the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2) (Venkatesh et al., 2012), which explains adoption through constructs such as performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, hedonic motivation, habit, and behavioural intention. In recent ChatGPT-related research, UTAUT2 has continued to show relevance because AI adoption involves both practical benefits (such as usefulness and ease) and contextual influences (such as institutional support, norms, and user habits) (e.g., Almogren et al., 2024; Kaya & Adıgüzel, 2025; Mutanga et al., 2024; Shuhaiber et al., 2025; Subramaniam, 2025).

Recent higher education research applying UTAUT2 to ChatGPT indicates that adoption drivers may differ across user groups and that instructor adoption deserves separate attention. Kaya and Adıgüzel (2025), for example, examined both students and instructors from various disciplines and used UTAUT2 to identify key factors shaping behavioural intention to use ChatGPT. This supports the argument that educator adoption should not be assumed to mirror student adoption because lecturers are influenced by pedagogical responsibilities, assessment

accountability, and professional ethics. The findings show that the educators demonstrated a higher intention to use ChatGPT compared to students, likely due to greater technological experience. However, despite its strong potential to enhance teaching and learning, the study highlights that habitual use is still not fully established, indicating the need for institutional support and training to encourage sustained adoption (Kaya & Adıgüzel, 2025).

Mutanga et al.'s (2024) research shows that lecturers' attitudes towards AI integration are mixed based on perceived usefulness, ease of use, institutional support, and ethics. While many lecturers appreciate the benefits of AI to improve teaching efficiency and student engagement, their adoption is moderated by concerns on academic integrity, reliability of information, and student overreliance. This suggests that the intention of behaviour is not driven solely by technological affordances but is closely linked to the professional judgement and pedagogical priorities of lecturers.

In the ESL context, a qualitative study conducted among Malaysian university language lecturers indicates that lecturers generally perceive ChatGPT as useful, particularly in supporting material development, providing immediate feedback, and promoting independent learning among students. In terms of ease of use, although the tool is considered user-friendly, concerns were raised regarding plagiarism, information accuracy, and students' overreliance, which may affect engagement and critical thinking. Despite these challenges, lecturers demonstrate a positive attitude towards ChatGPT, viewing it as a complementary tool that enhances teaching and learning rather than replacing traditional instruction. Additionally, most lecturers express a willingness to integrate ChatGPT into their practices, especially as a supplementary resource, with prior experience in educational technology further influencing their confidence and readiness to adopt the tool (Othman et al., 2024).

Evidence also suggests that lecturer readiness and adoption experiences vary across disciplinary backgrounds, underlining the need to understand adoption patterns within local institutional contexts (Ahmad et al., 2025). Since ChatGPT also introduces concerns about reliability, integrity, and trustworthiness, extending UTAUT2 with constructs such as 'trust' and 'perceived risk' is increasingly appropriate, especially for educator-focused studies where ethical judgement is central.

In summary, existing literature supports the growing relevance of ChatGPT in ESL teaching and learning, but more educator-focused research is needed, particularly within Malaysian polytechnic TVET contexts. Guided by UTAUT2 and extended constructs, the present study addresses this gap by examining lecturers' perceptions of ChatGPT integration and the concerns they attach to its classroom use.

Methodology

This section outlines the research design, sampling approach, data collection procedure, and methods of data analysis.

Research Design and Instruments

This study employed an exploratory descriptive survey design to examine Malaysian polytechnic ESL lecturers' perceptions of ChatGPT integration in teaching and learning. The study was guided by the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT2)

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model (Venkatesh et al., 2012), extended with additional constructs relevant to emerging AI technologies in education. Since the purpose of the study was to provide an overview of lecturers' acceptance and concerns rather than the relationship between the variables (i.e., how the UTAUT2 factors influence the attitude or behavioural intention to use ChatGPT), the analysis focused on descriptive patterns rather than structural model testing. Moreover, given the exploratory nature of the study and limited sample size (n=40), descriptive statistics were deemed more appropriate than structural modelling.

A mixed-method approach was adopted to provide a more comprehensive understanding of lecturers' views. Quantitative data captured overall acceptance levels across technology adoption constructs, while qualitative feedback offered contextual explanations of how lecturers perceive ChatGPT in real classroom practice.

The survey instrument was adapted from established UTAUT2 measures and modified to suit the context of ChatGPT in ESL instruction. The questionnaire consisted of 32 items measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The instrument measured Performance Expectancy (PE), Effort Expectancy (EE), Facilitating Conditions (FC), Social Influence (SI), Habit (H), Hedonic Motivation (HM), Trust (T), Perceived Risks (PR), Attitude toward ChatGPT (ATT) and Behavioural Intention (BI).

Each construct was measured using multiple items to ensure internal consistency. In addition, an open-ended item invited lecturers to share their reflections on the benefits and challenges of ChatGPT use in their teaching. Reliability analysis indicated acceptable internal consistency for exploratory research purposes.

Sampling and Participants

The participants comprised 40 English language lecturers from Malaysian polytechnics nationwide. A purposive sampling approach was used to reach lecturers currently teaching ESL courses within the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector. Participation was voluntary, and responses were collected anonymously through an online survey platform. Although the sample size was relatively small, the study was exploratory in nature and intended to provide preliminary insights. Hence, the findings should be interpreted as indicative rather than representative of all Malaysian polytechnic ESL lecturers.

Data Collection Procedure

The survey link was distributed through emails and WhatsApp groups. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and assured that all responses would remain confidential. Data collection was conducted over two weeks.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were computed to summarize lecturers' perceptions at the construct level. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Qualitative responses were analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Responses were coded to identify recurring themes related to instructional benefits, ethical concerns, and pedagogical

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implications of ChatGPT integration. The qualitative findings were used to support and enrich the quantitative results.

Results

Due to the exploratory nature of the study and the small lecturer sample (n = 40), the analysis focused on descriptive statistics and internal consistency reliability rather than full structural validation.

Participant Demographics

The study surveyed a total of 40 Malaysian Polytechnic ESL lecturers nationwide. The demographic analysis indicates 33 female respondents (82.5%) and 7 male respondents (17.5%) (see Table 1). In terms of familiarity with ChatGPT, nearly half of the lecturers (n = 19, 47.5%) reported being somewhat familiar with the tool, while 18 lecturers (45.0%) indicated that they were very familiar with it. Only a small number of respondents (n = 3, 7.5%) reported not being familiar with ChatGPT (see Table 1). This suggests that awareness of generative AI tools is already widespread among ESL lecturers, although varying levels of practical exposure remain.

The respondents also represented a wide range of teaching experience. The largest group consisted of lecturers with 16–20 years of teaching experience (n = 17), followed by those with 11–15 years of experience (n = 15). Smaller proportions were observed among lecturers with 21–25 years (n = 3), 1–5 years (n = 2), and 26–30 years of experience (n = 2), while only one respondent reported 6–10 years of experience (see Table 1). This distribution indicates that the sample was largely composed of mid- to senior-level educators, suggesting that perceptions of ChatGPT were shaped by substantial professional teaching experience rather than novice experimentation.

Overall, the demographic profile reflects a mature and experienced lecturer population with growing familiarity with AI tools, providing a meaningful foundation for interpreting the findings of this exploratory study.

Table 1: Demographic Data of Lecturer Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	7	17.5
	Female	33	82.5
Familiarity with ChatGPT	Not familiar	3	7.5
	Somewhat familiar	19	47.5
	Very familiar	18	45.0
Teaching Experience	1-5 years	2	5.0
	6-10 years	1	2.5
	11-15 years	15	37.5
	16-20 years	17	42.5
	21-25 years	3	7.5
	26-30 years	2	5.0

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Reliability Analysis

Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Most constructs demonstrated acceptable reliability for exploratory research purposes ($\alpha \geq .70$). However, the Price Value construct showed unstable reliability indicators and was therefore excluded from further analysis. The removal of this construct ensured the integrity of the measurement model and did not affect the study's primary focus, which centres on lecturers' pedagogical perceptions of ChatGPT. Table 2 presents the reliability coefficients for the retained constructs.

Table 2: Constructs' Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
ATTITUDE	0.868	0.907	0.911	0.722
BI	0.922	0.922	0.950	0.864
EE	0.858	0.862	0.904	0.701
FC	0.521	0.883	0.740	0.560
HABIT	0.799	0.959	0.869	0.698
HM	0.890	0.915	0.931	0.818
PE	0.861	0.870	0.906	0.706
PR	0.722	0.757	0.841	0.640
SI	0.710	0.643	0.770	0.548
TRUST	0.774	0.823	0.867	0.685

Descriptive Findings

The descriptive analysis reveals generally positive lecturer perceptions toward ChatGPT integration in ESL instruction (see Table 3). Across most constructs, mean scores fall within the upper range of the five-point scale, indicating favourable acceptance patterns with relatively low dispersion, suggesting consistent agreement among respondents.

Performance Expectancy

Lecturers reported high performance expectancy across all items, with means ranging from 3.93 to 4.45 and standard deviations between 0.56 and 0.88. The strongest agreement was observed for the statement that ChatGPT helps in preparing teaching materials (M = 4.45, SD = 0.68), followed closely by its role in enhancing lesson preparation (M = 4.30, SD = 0.56). The relatively small standard deviations indicate consistent perceptions among lecturers. These findings suggest that ChatGPT is widely viewed as a productivity-enhancing instructional assistant.

Effort Expectancy

Effort expectancy recorded similarly high mean values (M = 4.23–4.45) with moderate variability (SD = 0.55–0.75), indicating that lecturers generally find ChatGPT easy to use.

Respondents agreed that the interface is user-friendly and that information can be accessed quickly. The narrow spread of responses suggests a shared perception of technological accessibility, reinforcing that usability is not a significant barrier to adoption.

Social Influence

Social influence scores were comparatively moderate (M = 3.25–4.20, SD = 0.65–0.85). While lecturers acknowledged that ChatGPT use is becoming more common in teaching (M = 4.20, SD = 0.65), encouragement from colleagues and institutional expectations appeared less influential (M = 3.25–3.70, SD = 0.81–0.85). The greater variability within this construct reflects differing levels of social reinforcement across institutions, suggesting that adoption remains largely individual-driven.

Facilitating Conditions

Facilitating conditions recorded some of the highest mean scores in the dataset, particularly access to devices and internet connectivity (M = 4.63, SD = 0.59). Lecturers also reported confidence in their technical skills (M = 4.18, SD = 0.81). The strong means coupled with moderate dispersion indicate that infrastructural readiness is generally stable across respondents, supporting AI integration within the polytechnic environment.

Hedonic Motivation and Habit

Lecturers expressed positive enjoyment in exploring ChatGPT (M = 4.18–4.23, SD = 0.68–0.75), suggesting that AI interaction is perceived as engaging rather than burdensome. Habit-related items showed more variation. While routine use recorded moderate agreement (M = 3.78, SD = 0.83), discomfort when unable to use the tool recorded a mean below 3.00 (M = 2.85) with a standard deviation exceeding 1.00 (SD = 1.03). This indicates divided perceptions regarding dependency. The lower mean suggests that lecturers do not feel reliant on ChatGPT, while the higher dispersion reflects differing degrees of habitual integration across individuals.

Trust and Perceived Risks

Trust in ChatGPT recorded moderate levels (M = 3.33–3.60, SD = 0.76–0.84), reflecting cautious optimism. Lecturers acknowledge the tool's usefulness while remaining aware of its limitations. Perceived risk items displayed notable variability. While plagiarism concerns recorded a relatively high mean (M = 3.90, SD = 0.74), two items showed standard deviations exceeding 1.00: concern about negative impact on critical thinking (M = 3.65, SD = 1.17) and over-reliance affecting teaching skills (M = 3.18, SD = 1.15). The elevated dispersion indicates divided opinions, suggesting that lecturers differ in the extent to which they perceive ChatGPT as academically risky.

Attitude and Behavioural Intention

Attitude toward ChatGPT was strongly positive (M = 3.98–4.45, SD = 0.62–0.80), with relatively low dispersion. Lecturers agreed that ChatGPT should function as a supportive instructional tool rather than a replacement for teachers. (M = 4.45, SD = 0.50). Behavioral intention scores indicate willingness to continue using and recommending ChatGPT (M =

3.88–4.05) with moderate variability (SD = 0.72–0.86). These findings suggest that lecturers intend to continue using ChatGPT, though integration levels may vary across individuals.

Summary of Descriptive Findings

Overall, the findings indicate a high level of acceptance of ChatGPT among Malaysian Polytechnic ESL lecturers, accompanied by a strong awareness of its ethical and pedagogical implications. Among the constructs examined, Facilitating Conditions and Effort Expectancy emerged as the strongest factors, indicating that lecturers perceive ChatGPT as both accessible and easy to use. In contrast, Perceived Risk demonstrated greater variability, reflecting differing views regarding overreliance and its potential impact on teaching and critical thinking.

ChatGPT is widely perceived as easy to use, accessible, and pedagogically beneficial. Effort expectancy emerged as one of the most consistent and strongest constructs, with all items recording high mean values above 4.20 and relatively low standard deviations. This indicates that lecturers experience minimal technical difficulty when using ChatGPT, which aligns with previous findings that ease of use is a key driver of AI adoption in educational contexts (Kaya & Adıgüzel, 2025; Mutanga et al., 2024). Facilitating conditions further strengthened this pattern, particularly in terms of access to devices and connectivity, which recorded the highest mean score in the dataset (M = 4.63). These findings suggest that both usability and infrastructural readiness strongly support AI adoption within the polytechnic ESL context.

Performance expectancy also recorded high agreement, confirming that lecturers perceive ChatGPT as enhancing lesson preparation and instructional efficiency, consistent with studies highlighting its role in supporting teaching and material development (Nguyen et al., 2025). However, lecturers' adoption of ChatGPT remains reflective and professionally grounded rather than unquestioned. Habit-related dependence showed a mean below 3.00 for discomfort when unable to use ChatGPT (M = 2.85), suggesting that lecturers do not perceive the tool as indispensable. In addition, several perceived risk items displayed standard deviations above 1.00, indicating divided opinions regarding over-reliance and its potential impact on respondents' critical thinking and teaching practices, which echoes concerns raised in prior studies (Espartinez, 2024; Othman et al., 2024).

Attitude toward ChatGPT was strongly positive, indicating that lecturers view the tool as a valuable instructional aid that complements rather than replaces their teaching role. This reflects a clear and grounded perception of AI as a supportive technology, consistent with prior studies suggesting that educators are more willing to adopt AI when it enhances, rather than disrupts, pedagogical practices (Nguyen et al., 2025; Mutanga et al., 2024). Behavioural intention findings further suggest that lecturers are willing to continue using and recommending ChatGPT, although the moderate variability indicates that integration may differ across individuals depending on teaching context and readiness. This pattern implies that while acceptance is high, usage remains selective and context-dependent (Mutanga et al., 2024).

Taken together, the findings reflect a balanced adoption mindset. Lecturers recognise the instructional value and ease of ChatGPT, yet they maintain professional caution regarding dependency and ethical implications. The tool is embraced as a complementary teaching aid that enhances pedagogical practice without replacing educator expertise.

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Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Lecturers' Perceptions toward ChatGPT Integration

Construct Categories	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
Performance Expectancy (PE)	A1. ChatGPT helps me teach English more efficiently.	4.0000	0.87706
	A2. ChatGPT helps me prepare teaching materials and activities more effectively.	4.4500	0.67748
	A3. ChatGPT enhances my ability to prepare lessons.	4.3000	0.56387
	A4. Using ChatGPT improves my teaching performance.	3.9250	0.72986
Effort Expectancy (EE)	B1. It is easy to use ChatGPT for teaching.	4.2250	0.65974
	B2. The interface of ChatGPT is user-friendly.	4.2750	0.64001
	B3. I feel comfortable using ChatGPT without assistance.	4.2750	0.75064
	B4. I can quickly find the information I need using ChatGPT.	4.4500	0.55238
Social Influence (SI)	L_C1. The use of ChatGPT is becoming common among my colleagues.	4.2000	0.64847
	L_C2. My colleagues encourage me to use ChatGPT in Communicative English classrooms.	3.7000	0.85335
	L_C3. The use of ChatGPT in English teaching is encouraged by my institution.	3.2500	0.80861
Facilitating Conditions	L_D1. I have access to the necessary devices (smartphone, laptop, internet) to use ChatGPT.	4.6250	0.58562
	L_D2. I can get help from my colleagues if I have trouble using ChatGPT.	4.0500	0.71432
	L_D3. I have the skills required to use ChatGPT effectively (i.e., prompting the ChatGPT to get responses).	4.1750	0.81296
Hedonic Motivation (HM)	L_E1. I use ChatGPT because it is fun to interact with.	4.1750	0.67511
	L_E2. I enjoy exploring new English teaching methods using ChatGPT.	4.1750	0.74722
	L_E3. The variety of output from ChatGPT makes my English teaching experience very entertaining.	4.2250	0.69752
Habit (H)	L_F1. Using ChatGPT has become a routine part of my English teaching.	3.7750	0.83166
	L_F2. I automatically turn to ChatGPT when I need help with English-teaching tasks.	3.6250	0.89693
	L_F3. I feel uncomfortable if I cannot use ChatGPT when needed.	2.8500	1.02657

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Trust	L_H1. I believe ChatGPT is a reliable teaching tool.	3.6000	0.84124
	L_H2. I trust the accuracy of the information provided by ChatGPT.	3.4500	0.78283
Perceived Risks (PR)	L_I1. Using ChatGPT would involve teaching and learning risks, such as providing wrong, inaccurate or inconsistent answers.	3.3250	0.76418
	L_I2. Using ChatGPT would involve plagiarism risks, such as similarity rates.	3.6250	0.77418
	L_I3. I am concerned that using ChatGPT too much may reduce my critical thinking skills.	3.9000	0.74421
	L_I4. I think over-reliance on ChatGPT could negatively affect my English language teaching.	3.6500	1.16685
Attitude (ATT)	L_J1. I have a positive attitude toward using ChatGPT in Communicative English classrooms.	3.1750	1.15220
	L_J2. I feel that using ChatGPT would be beneficial for me in teaching.	4.0250	0.76753
	L_J3. I feel comfortable integrating ChatGPT into my daily teaching routine.	4.2250	0.61966
	L_J4. I think ChatGPT should be used as a supplement rather than a replacement for traditional teaching.	3.9750	0.80024
Behavioural Intention (BI)	L_L1. I am likely to use ChatGPT in Communicative English classrooms.	4.4500	0.50383
	L_L2. I am likely to recommend ChatGPT for English teaching and learning.	3.8750	0.72280
	L_L3. I intend to continue using ChatGPT for English teaching in the future.	4.0500	0.74936

Qualitative Findings

The open-ended responses provided deeper insight into how lecturers integrate ChatGPT into ESL teaching. The qualitative data revealed several recurring themes that complement the quantitative findings.

Idea Generation and Instructional Creativity

The most dominant theme across responses was the use of ChatGPT as a source of idea generation. Many lecturers described relying on the tool to "*spark ideas*," particularly for unfamiliar topics or new classroom approaches. Respondents highlighted its usefulness in generating situations for enquiries and complaints, suggesting group discussion topics, and proposing creative language activities and games. Rather than replacing pedagogical planning, ChatGPT appears to function as a brainstorming partner. One lecturer noted that it "*leads me to more possible ways of doing activities and teaching styles*," while another described it as supporting "*authentic lesson planning*" rather than mere copy-and-paste preparation. This

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aligns closely with the strong performance expectancy scores observed in the quantitative findings.

Efficiency in Material Preparation

Time efficiency emerged as another significant theme. Lecturers repeatedly mentioned using ChatGPT to prepare teaching slides, exercises, grammar drills, and formative tests more quickly. Several respondents explicitly stated that the tool "*reduces the time for preparing exercises and notes*" and assists when they are occupied with other institutional responsibilities, such as meetings, audits, or invigilation. ChatGPT is perceived not only as easy to use but as a practical support system that enhances productivity without increasing workload.

Support for Writing and Communication Tasks

A substantial number of lecturers reported using ChatGPT specifically for writing-related instruction. Resume and cover letter preparation, poster presentations, simulations, and oral presentations were frequently mentioned. Respondents described using the tool to generate useful phrases, functional language, and structured scripts to guide students. This suggests that ChatGPT is being integrated into applied, communicative components of ESL instruction, particularly those aligned with workplace communication skills. Its role appears supportive and instructional rather than substitutive.

Access to Information and Text Simplification

Lecturers also valued ChatGPT as an information retrieval tool. Respondents described using it to summarise difficult texts, analyse written materials, and quickly locate reliable references. One lecturer highlighted its usefulness in *"analyzing lengthy and difficult texts,"* while another appreciated that ChatGPT *"provides sources that can be checked for legitimacy."* This reflects moderate trust in the tool's informational capacity, consistent with the survey findings.

Cautious and Selective Adoption

While most responses were positive, a smaller subset of lecturers expressed hesitation or limited use. One lecturer reported not yet integrating ChatGPT into his/her teaching, while another cited platform limitations as a barrier. These responses indicate that adoption is not universal and may be influenced by practical constraints rather than resistance.

Overall, the qualitative responses reinforce the quantitative pattern of strong acceptance paired with professional caution. Lecturers view ChatGPT primarily as a creative assistant and efficiency tool, particularly in lesson preparation and writing instruction. However, adoption remains intentional and selective, with educators positioning AI as a support mechanism rather than a substitute.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that Malaysian polytechnic ESL lecturers are not merely experimenting with ChatGPT; they are integrating it with clarity, purpose, and professional awareness. Interpreted through the UTAUT2 framework (Venkatesh et al., 2012), adoption appears to be strongly supported by effort expectancy and facilitating conditions, reinforced by

performance expectancy, and moderated by perceived risk and professional judgment. This combination suggests that integration is both technically enabled and pedagogically intentional.

Effort expectancy emerged as particularly influential. Lecturers consistently perceived ChatGPT as easy to use, accessible, and manageable within their teaching routines. The high level of agreement across items indicates that technological complexity does not pose a significant barrier. Facilitating conditions further strengthened this pattern, as respondents reported strong access to devices and connectivity. Together, these constructs suggest that the polytechnic environment is structurally prepared for AI integration. In this context, resistance is not rooted in technical limitations but in pedagogical considerations. This finding is consistent with previous studies indicating that facilitating conditions and effort expectancy play a central role in shaping educators' willingness to adopt AI tools (Kaya & Adıgüzel, 2025; Mutanga et al., 2024).

Performance expectancy also played a central role. Lecturers adopt ChatGPT because they see clear instructional value. Quantitative findings were reinforced by qualitative responses describing the tool as useful for generating activities, refining exercises, summarising content, and stimulating lesson ideas. Rather than replacing instructional effort, ChatGPT appears to amplify preparation efficiency and creative exploration. This supports existing literature that frames generative AI as a pedagogical enhancer rather than a disruptive force (Lam & Abdul Rahim, 2025; Nguyen et al., 2025).

However, acceptance remains deliberate rather than unquestioned. Although attitudes toward ChatGPT and behavioural intention to use ChatGPT were positive, lecturers clearly positioned the tool as a complementary instructional resource rather than a substitute for educators. These concerns align with existing literature highlighting risks related to overdependence and reduced critical engagement when using generative AI tools in language learning contexts (Azmi & Hashim, 2025; Espartinez, 2024; Othman et al., 2024). The lower mean for discomfort when unable to use ChatGPT indicates that habitual reliance has not developed. In other words, lecturers retain control over their teaching decisions and practices.

The variability observed in perceived risk items further reveals ongoing professional negotiation. Some lecturers express strong concern about potential impacts on critical thinking and writing development, while others appear less apprehensive. More specifically, concerns related to academic integrity may include plagiarism and unauthorised AI-assisted work, where students submit ChatGPT-generated content as their own without appropriate acknowledgement. Lecturers may also be concerned about the accuracy of information, which could be misleading. In addition, excessive reliance on ChatGPT may diminish learner autonomy and problem-solving abilities if students rely solely on AI-generated responses rather than actively engaging in the learning process. This divergence suggests that AI integration is still evolving, with lecturers actively forming positions based on classroom experience rather than institutional directives.

Taken together, the findings indicate a reflective stage of AI adoption. ChatGPT is embraced for its efficiency and creative support, yet it is bound by professional ethics and pedagogical responsibility. Lecturers are not passive adopters of technology; they are actively shaping how generative AI fits within established ESL teaching practices. This reflects broader findings that

AI adoption among educators is often shaped by a balance between perceived benefits and professional responsibility (Mutanga et al., 2024).

Implications

Several practical implications emerge from the study. First, professional development should focus less on technical training and more on ethical and pedagogical guidance. Lecturers already demonstrate basic readiness to use AI tools. What is needed is structured support on assessment design, academic integrity, and responsible classroom integration. This is consistent with prior research emphasising the importance of institutional support and pedagogical guidance in facilitating effective AI adoption (Mutanga et al., 2024).

Second, institutions may consider developing clear guidelines on AI-assisted assignments and the use of generative AI in teaching and learning. Such guidance can reduce uncertainty among lecturers and promote consistent teaching practices across programmes. It also helps to provide a clearer framework for addressing issues related to academic integrity and responsible use of AI.

Third, ESL curricula may benefit from explicitly addressing AI literacy. Teaching students how to use ChatGPT responsibly can shift the tool from being a hidden shortcut to a guided learning resource. Lecturers may also play an important role in helping students evaluate AI-generated content critically, verify information accuracy and adopt ethical practices when using AI tools for academic purposes.

Finally, concerns raised regarding plagiarism, overreliance and diminished critical thinking suggest that assessment practices may require further consideration. Curriculum developers may need to explore greater use of authentic assessments, oral presentations and project-based tasks that encourage independent thinking while reducing opportunities for inappropriate AI use. Such approaches may help ensure that assessment outcomes more accurately reflect students' own understanding and abilities.

Limitations and Future Research

This study provides preliminary insights into Malaysian Polytechnic ESL lecturers' perceptions of ChatGPT integration in teaching and learning. However, several limitations are to be acknowledged. Although the study was initially conceptualised using an extended UTAUT2 framework suitable for PLS-SEM analysis, the number of responses obtained was insufficient for robust structural model testing. Consequently, the study adopted an exploratory descriptive approach focusing on descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. Future research involving larger and more diverse samples may employ inferential techniques such as PLS-SEM to examine the relationships among the UTAUT2 constructs. In addition, qualitative interviews may provide deeper insights into lecturers' experiences and concerns regarding the pedagogical use of ChatGPT.

Conclusion

This study contributes to the emerging literature on generative AI in education by highlighting how Malaysian polytechnic ESL lecturers negotiate the pedagogical benefits and ethical risks of ChatGPT within practice-oriented TVET environments. The results indicate strong

acceptance driven by ease of use and accessibility, alongside thoughtful awareness of ethical concerns, reflecting patterns observed in previous studies on ChatGPT integration in education. Lecturers view ChatGPT as a creative assistant and productivity enhancer yet maintain professional caution to preserve academic authenticity. The coexistence of enthusiasm and vigilance suggests that AI adoption in ESL classrooms is entering a reflective stage. Educators are not simply adopting technology; they are shaping its boundaries within responsible pedagogical practice. As generative AI continues to evolve, lecturer perspectives will remain central in ensuring that innovation enhances, rather than displaces, meaningful language education.

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