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Hasan Özdal, Bursa Uludağ University, Bursa, Türkiye, 802493008@ogr.uludag.edu.tr
Levent Uzun, Bursa Uludağ University, Bursa, Türkiye, ulevent@uludag.edu.tr

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ChatGPT as a Language Learning Tool: Perceptions of Turkish EFL Teachers and Students

Hasan Özdal¹, Levent Uzun²

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ABSTRACT

While previous studies emphasize the benefits of ChatGPT in the education of language, few studies have included the perceptions of Turkish English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers and students towards using ChatGPT in a language learning context. This study aimed to fill this gap by involving the opinions of 35 EFL teachers and 36 learners towards using ChatGPT as a language learning assistant. The study included two separate questionnaires, both for EFL teachers and students. In addition, reflections of 5 EFL teachers and 4 learners were obtained. The results showed that while both EFL teachers and students acknowledged the benefits of ChatGPT in enhancing language learning engagement, autonomous learning, and access to authentic resources, they also expressed concerns regarding its accuracy, reliability, and suitability for different learning styles. The study demonstrates ChatGPT's increasing importance in EFL instruction, highlighting the necessity for appropriate supervision and training.

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¹Hasan Özdal, English Language Teaching, Bursa Uludağ University, Bursa, Türkiye, 802493008@ogr.uludag.edu.tr

²Levent Uzun, English Language Teaching, Bursa Uludağ University, Bursa, Türkiye, ulevent@uludag.edu.tr

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Education is undergoing an enormous shift with technology at the center of it (Al-khresheh, 2024). AI technology has been steadily advancing in education in recent years, despite conservative skepticism and doubts (Tlili et al., 2023). In this shift, it is possible to see new technology tools. This development has also been seen in language learning technologies, with ChatGPT leading the way (Glaser, 2023). ChatGPT, also known as Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer, was introduced by OpenAI in November 2022, and it can reply to questions and prompts and engage in discussion with users (OpenAI, 2025).

The possible effect of this AI tool can be seen in second language (L2) education. Correspondingly, Aljanabi et al. (2023) state that ChatGPT is regarded as an influential tool that has made it possible to pursue new research directions on the incorporation of AI and technology in English language instruction. It works well for enhancing the scaffolded learning, language use, and proficiency of EFL learners (Bin-Hady et al., 2023). Besides, its potential in language acquisition is demonstrated by its capacity to offer individualized learning experiences and promote interactions in a meaningful way (Klayklung et al., 2023). It may be helpful in terms of providing learners with feedback that is produced in a very short period of time. In addition to giving students a virtual assistant, the real-time support may help them feel engaged (Chiu et al., 2023).

ChatGPT has been a research area in the language learning context. However, there are few studies investigating ChatGPT's potential in language learning in the Turkish context. Moreover, the studies generally focused on one research method and participant group, such as qualitative-teachers (Orhan & Yagci, 2026), qualitative-students (Gokturk-Saglam, 2026; Karatas et al., 2024) or qualitative-teachers-students (Hiniz, 2026). This study aims to fill this gap by including both EFL students and teachers and a mixed-methods research design. Gathering the perspectives of EFL teachers about ChatGPT in their language education environment may be helpful in terms of comprehending how they perceive the tool related to language learning in different ways. In addition,

gaining direct understanding from the perspectives of learners may reveal important details about how ChatGPT meets or falls short of meeting the demands, choices, and difficulties of learners (Xiao & Zhi, 2023). Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by reaching the diversified opinions of both EFL teachers and students. The study has the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of EFL teachers towards using ChatGPT as a language learning assistant?

Research Question 2: What are the perceptions of EFL students towards using ChatGPT as a language learning assistant?

Research Question 3: What are the EFL teachers' reflections on ChatGPT as a digital language learning assistant?

Research Question 4: What are the EFL learners' reflections on ChatGPT as a digital language learning assistant?

2. Literature Review

ChatGPT in Language Learning

The potential positive effects of ChatGPT can be seen in the field of language learning. It may serve as a personal tutor or learning assistant by offering customized, readily available, and flexible feedback (Baskara, 2023; Kohnke, 2023; Mohammed et al., 2023; Xiao & Zhi, 2023). ChatGPT has the potential to improve student involvement (Ali et al., 2023; Baskara, 2023) and potentially speed up language acquisition (Baskara, 2023). Its efficiency can be seen in terms of how fast it can give feedback to the learner. It can be beneficial in giving students immediate, focused feedback, so they do not have to wait for adjustments (Barrot, 2024). Moqbel and Al-Kadi (2023) state that it is more than providing the fixed output of the mistakes in the actual time; it is also about giving students a mirror of their linguistic thinking so that they can understand context, details, and the complicated nature of language processes. It is also possible to say that ChatGPT may be helpful for autonomous learning experience without having the teacher as a sole option to conduct and get feedback. It may increase

the autonomy of the learners when learning a language (Fauzi et al., 2023; Agustini, 2023).

While the benefits of ChatGPT can be in different ways, it also has some potential risks in language learning as Derakhshan and Ghiasvand (2024) said, “Like other forms of technology, ChatGPT has been regarded as a double-edged sword in education, in general, and in L2 education, in particular” (p. 1249). Since the tool gives preset answers, it may cause learners to trust its outputs frequently and undermine thinking critically and creatively (Susnjak, 2022; Buriak et al., 2023). As ChatGPT warns its users that it may make mistakes, a similar issue can take place when language learners receive input from it. It may give students biased, erroneous, and untrustworthy information (Adiguzel et al., 2023; Zhai, 2022). Since there may be serious issues with ChatGPT interactions not matching up with the current curriculum standards (Kostka & Toncelli, 2023), they need to be reassessed (Al-khresheh, 2024). A new tool can be incorporated, but it is also important to make sure that all interactions and feedback processes support the broader educational objectives (ibid.). Although ChatGPT and other AI tools can enhance some aspects of language education, they are unable to replace the emotional richness, cultural variations, and sensitivity that characterize human communication (Ulla et al., 2023). These findings suggest that while ChatGPT has the potential to improve students’ language learning development, involvement, and autonomy with its individualized answers, it also has drawbacks in terms of possible inaccurate answers, harming creativity, and the difficulty of its integration into the curriculum.

Perspectives of EFL Teachers and Students towards ChatGPT in Language Learning

Al-khresheh (2024) attempted to understand how English language instructors view the pedagogical advantages and difficulties of using ChatGPT in ELT and determine possible directions for these digital advancements. Mohamed (2024) examined the opinions of ten Northern Border University EFL faculty members about how well ChatGPT supports their students’ English language

learning. Derakhshan and Ghiasvand (2024) investigated 30 Iranian research-active EFL teachers’ perceptions of ChatGPT related to its benefits and drawbacks for L2 instruction, learning, evaluation, and research by utilizing a phenomenographic investigation. In the study of Slamet (2024), one of the objectives was to find out how 80 EFL teachers in East Java, Indonesia, felt about utilizing ChatGPT in a language learning environment. The studies highlighted both advantages and disadvantages. The studies’ findings expressed ChatGPT’s learner-centered role. For instance, teachers stated that ChatGPT plays an important role in helping EFL students experience more dynamic and personalized learning opportunities and improve their autonomy (Al-khresheh, 2024; Derakhshan & Ghiasvand, 2024). Besides, they also state that this learning environment helps teachers lessen their workload. Thus, the results imply that students may find themselves in more flexible and learner-centered language learning experiences. Similarly, thanks to receiving quick and precise answers (Mohamed, 2024), students do not have to focus only on the materials that are presented in the classroom. Instead, they can express their specific demands and needs to ChatGPT and see answers that are more suitable for their own learning experience. Thanks to this experience, it was expressed that students’ engagement and motivation level may increase (Slamet, 2024). However, findings also highlighted the accuracy and reliability level of ChatGPT in language learning. For example, teachers emphasized that the answers of ChatGPT may not be correct and thus may not be reliable (Al-khresheh, 2024; Mohamed, 2024; Slamet, 2024). In the academic context, faculty members stated that relying excessively on ChatGPT may lead to the dissemination of false information and plagiarism (Derakhshan & Ghiasvand, 2024). Therefore, it may be useful for language learners to check the answers of ChatGPT by consulting other resources. In this way, they can take a safer step in their process of language learning. Besides, the scientific community may check if the resource recommended by ChatGPT is relevant so that they can conduct their research effectively. Another

concern was expressed in terms of students' cognitive development. Teachers stated that the overuse of ChatGPT may hinder students' creativity and critical thinking skills. (Al-khresheh, 2024; Mohamed, 2024). Similarly, using only ChatGPT may lower academic innovation (Derakhshan & Ghasvand, 2024).

Some research has also included the opinions of EFL learners related to using ChatGPT in their process of language learning. Xiao and Zhi (2023) attempted to understand how five undergraduate students from a prestigious international institution in China experienced ChatGPT and their opinions about its use in language learning. Karatas et al. (2024) examined how ChatGPT affected 13 students from A2 to B2 proficiency levels at a preparatory course at a Turkish university's School of Foreign Languages. Alharti (2024) examined the opinions of 299 EFL students at three Saudi Arabian Western universities. Slamet (2024) looked into the opinions and preferences of 46 EFL students in East Java, Indonesia, as one of the aims of the research. Some of the findings were related to students' language learning development and producing output in the target language. For instance, they found ChatGPT helpful thanks to the activities that it presents (Karataş et al., 2024; Slamet, 2024; Xiao & Zhi, 2023). Therefore, it was seen as a tool that helps them improve their language learning development (Karataş et al., 2024; Slamet, 2024) and also their communication skills (Alharti, 2024). The findings also stated students' affective involvement, rather than just improvement in language learning. Accordingly, students emphasized increased motivation and engagement while using ChatGPT for language learning (Karataş et al., 2024; Slamet, 2024). Likewise, they expressed ChatGPT's assistance in adaptable and individualized learning like the teachers supported the same idea (Karataş et al., 2024; Slamet, 2024). However, the findings also stated the accuracy and reliability level of ChatGPT. For example, they stated that the given answers may not be true and reliable (Xiao & Zhi, 2023; Karatas et al., 2024; Slamet, 2024). They also explained that speaking skills may not show effective development (Karatas et al., 2024). Therefore, students may need guidance in terms of

using it in a better way (Slamet, 2024). By discussing the changing role of AI in language education, the research that has been done until recently highlights the capacity of ChatGPT while emphasizing its challenges that may arise. In other words, ChatGPT may help students experience student-centered learning with additional examples that it presents. However, it can also negatively impact them when considering the reliability of the answers and the possible negative effects on critical thinking skills.

3. Method

Participants

Both EFL instructors and students took part in this study. 36 students and 35 teachers made up the total of 71 participants in the study. All of the teachers had a master's degree in language education or a similar discipline, and their ages ranged from 25 to 34. The participants were 18–23-year-old students participating in a preparatory English language course at a university in Bursa. Students who successfully finish this program and pass their English classes are able to pursue further education in their major fields. The student group had a balanced gender representation, with both male and female participation as the teachers. The proficiency level of the students in the current study is B2. Participants in both groups were already familiar with ChatGPT. Convenience sampling was used to select the participants (Dörnyei, 2007), which involves having participants for the study based on their availability or desire to participate. The accessible number of participants in qualitative data was chosen based on their availability to contribute rich and different insights for the study regardless of the representativeness of the sample, which may be helpful for the qualitative method (Dörnyei, 2007). Both EFL professors and students were chosen from the university's language programs. In this study, ethical considerations were closely provided. All participants gave their informed consent, confirming their understanding of the study's objectives, their voluntary involvement, and the procedures that were used to maintain their anonymity and confidentiality.

Instrument

The data collection tools that were used in the study are two questionnaires, including 14 Likert scale items from 1 to 5. The questionnaires (see Appendix A and B) were designed by Slamet (2024) for the purpose of gaining perspectives from EFL teachers and students about the use of ChatGPT in language learning. Content validity of the questionnaires was assured. It was reported that two Ph.D. researchers with experience in language acquisition with technology were asked to provide opinions. They offered insightful comments on the survey's first draft, emphasizing the 14 closed-ended questionnaires' consistency, relevance, and clarity for both EFL teachers and students. It was claimed that the instrument's high Cronbach's Alpha coefficient ($\alpha=0.842$) indicated its high level of reliability. The current study's Cronbach Alpha value was ,825 for EFL students, which shows a high reliability. As for EFL teachers, this value was ,673. Hinton et al. (2004) state that Cronbach Alpha value between 0,50 and 0,70 is in the acceptable range. To understand more about the participants' thoughts on ChatGPT as a language learning assistance, semi-structured interviews (see Appendix C and D) were held with 5 EFL teachers and 4 learners in addition to the questionnaire.

Procedures

Data Collection

Convenience sampling was used to choose participants from the preparatory programs of two universities located in Bursa. Ethics approval was obtained from the university's research ethics committee before participation. Departmental announcements and emails were used to send invitations to participate. The questionnaire for both participant groups was shared online. After the completion, the data were stored safely. Participants were given a thorough explanation of the study's purpose prior to receiving the questionnaires. They were then instructed on the purpose of the instrument and how to answer the scale. They were also informed that the scale's

responses would remain private. Participants in the study received questionnaires only once without being exposed to the pre- or post-test. To reduce distractions, the questionnaire was given out in a quiet classroom setting at the end of class. The whole data was gathered in the spring of 2025. It took the participants about fifteen minutes to finish the scale. Then, qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews from EFL teachers and learners who volunteered to participate after completing the quantitative phase of the data collection. Each semi-structured interview lasted approximately 30 to 40 minutes and was conducted in English. For the scheduling flexibility, they were conducted via Microsoft Teams. With the participants' permission, each session was audio recorded, and the verbatim transcriptions were then used for content analysis. Every participant was given a unique code, and all data were anonymized.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data from the scale were analyzed using a program known as the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). For every questionnaire item, descriptive statistics were calculated to provide an overview of the responses, including percentages. As for the analysis of the qualitative data, content analysis was used.

4. Results

EFL Teachers' Perspectives towards ChatGPT as a Digital Language Learning Assistant

The mean score of EFL teachers is 4.00 (SD = ,35). Table 1 shows the responses of EFL teachers about their perceptions of ChatGPT as a digital language learning assistant.

Table 1
Perspectives of EFL Teachers towards ChatGPT as a Digital Language Learning Assistant

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
Utilizing ChatGPT can benefit EFL students in terms of language acquisition and proficiency	0	2.9	14.3	57.1	25.7
ChatGPT can enhance EFL students' engagement and motivation in language learning activities	0	5.7	8.6	45.7	40
ChatGPT can facilitate EFL students' access to authentic language resources and knowledge	0	11.4	14.3	45.7	28,6
Integrating ChatGPT can promote autonomous learning and self-directed language practice among EFL students	0	5.7	17.1	34.3	42.9
EFL students may face challenges or limitations when using ChatGPT as a language learning assistant	2.9	22.9	25.7	40	8.6
There may be concerns regarding the accuracy and reliability of language generated by ChatGPT for EFL students' learning purposes	2.9	14.3	20	51.4	11.4
Potential challenges or obstacles can arise in integrating ChatGPT into EFL curricula	0	11.4	28.6	54.3	5.7
EFL teachers may lack the necessary training and skills to effectively incorporate ChatGPT into their teaching practices	0	11.4	2.9	57.1	28.6
ChatGPT may not be suitable for all EFL students with varying learning styles and preferences	0	20.6	20.6	44.1	14.7
Proper training and support can help EFL teachers and students effectively utilize ChatGPT as a language learning assistant	0	0	2.9	48.6	48.6
Developing clear guidelines and expectations for using ChatGPT can enhance its effectiveness in EFL classrooms	0	0	5.7	31.4	62.9
Collaborative learning activities that involve ChatGPT can promote peer interaction and language practice among EFL students	0	2.9	17.1	48.6	31.4
Customizing ChatGPT to meet the specific language learning needs and goals of EFL students can enhance its usefulness and relevance	0	0	5.7	57.1	37.1
Providing timely and constructive feedback on EFL students' interaction with ChatGPT can improve their learning outcomes and performance	0	0	8.6	57.1	34.3

SD: Strongly disagree, D: Disagree, N: Neutral, A: Agree, SA: Strongly agree

The teachers stated that ChatGPT may boost language acquisition and competency (82.8%), improve student motivation and engagement (85.7%), and make authentic language materials

more accessible (74.3%). Strong consensus was also found on the tool's ability to facilitate peer interaction (80%), encourage independent study (77.2%), and allow for personalized language learning experiences (94.2%).

Concerns were also acknowledged in the study. The participants stated that students may face challenges or limitations when using ChatGPT (48.6%). Additionally, respondents expressed some concerns regarding the accuracy and reliability of ChatGPT-generated language (62.8%), challenges related to integrating ChatGPT into curricula (60%), and teacher preparedness (85.7%). Some participants disagreed that ChatGPT suits all learning styles (20.6%), indicating variability in acceptance based on individual preferences.

Participants supported the creation of explicit usage guidelines (94.3%) and appropriate training

(97.2%). Similarly, more than 91% of respondents thought it was helpful to provide feedback on how students were interacting with ChatGPT.

EFL Students' Perspectives towards ChatGPT as a Digital Language Learning Assistant

The mean score of EFL students is 3.68 (SD = ,50). Table 2 shows the opinions expressed by EFL students regarding ChatGPT's use as a digital language learning assistant.

Table 2
Perspectives of EFL Students towards ChatGPT as a Digital Language Learning Assistant

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
Utilizing ChatGPT can benefit my language acquisition and proficiency in English	0	0	8.3	61.1	30.6
ChatGPT can enhance my engagement and motivation in language learning activities	2.8	0	27.8	44.4	25
Using ChatGPT for personalized feedback and individualized instruction can be helpful in my EFL learning	0	2.8	13.9	44.4	38.9
ChatGPT can facilitate my access to authentic language resources and knowledge	2.9	2.9	14.3	57.1	22.9
Integrating ChatGPT can promote my autonomous learning and self-directed language practice in EFL	2.9	0	34.3	51.4	11.4
I may face challenges or limitations when using ChatGPT as a language learning assistant	2.8	22.2	27.8	30.6	16.7
There may be concerns regarding the accuracy and reliability of language generated by ChatGPT for my learning purposes	0	5.6	38.9	41.7	13.9
Potential challenges or obstacles can arise in using ChatGPT for my EFL learning	0	8.3	36.1	41.7	13.9
I may require additional support and guidance to effectively use ChatGPT as a language learning assistant	0	19.4	22.2	38.9	19.4
ChatGPT may not be suitable for my learning style and preferences	16.7	50	11.1	11.1	11.1
Proper training and support can help me effectively utilize ChatGPT as a language learning assistant	5.6	5.6	25	50	13.9
Having clear guidelines and expectations for using ChatGPT would enhance its effectiveness in my language learning	5.6	5.6	13.9	55.6	19.4
Engaging in collaborative learning activities that involve ChatGPT would promote peer interaction and language practice and relevance	2.8	2.8	41.7	44.4	41.7
Receiving timely and constructive feedback on my interaction with ChatGPT would improve my learning outcomes and performance	2.8	2.8	13.9	47.2	33.3

The majority of respondents stated that ChatGPT may help with accessing authentic language materials (80%), boost motivation and involvement

in learning activities (69.4%), and enhance language acquisition and proficiency (91.7%). Additionally, many participants thought that the technology

enables autonomous learning (62.8%), fosters peer engagement through collaborative activities (86.1%), and promotes individualized feedback and tailored instruction (83.3%). In addition, receiving timely and helpful feedback based on their use of ChatGPT will improve their performance and learning outcomes, according to more than 80% of participants.

However, there were some noted issues about the potential of ChatGPT. When using ChatGPT in an EFL context, the participants admitted to having difficulties or limits (47.3%). Concern was shown by the respondents about the accuracy and dependability of the language produced by ChatGPT (55.6%). Most of the participants stated that there should be clear instructions (75%) and more help to use the technology efficiently (58.3%). Additionally, the respondents agreed that adequate training would enhance its integration into educational settings (80.5%).

EFL Teachers' Reflections on ChatGPT as a Digital Language Learning Assistant

Content analysis carried out to investigate how EFL teachers represent opinions on ChatGPT as a digital language learning tool is shown in this section.

1. Benefits of ChatGPT in EFL learning

1.1. Language Practice Opportunities

EFL teachers believe that ChatGPT is a useful tool for improving students' language skills. Besides, they emphasized that students can obtain fast, individualized feedback thanks to the tool's customized responses.

ChatGPT is helpful for EFL learners to practice English language... It gives an answer tailored to everyone (T1).

ChatGPT can help EFL learners by providing immediate, interactive language exposure according to their proficiency levels. It can be used as a supplementary tool for practicing grammar, vocabulary, and speaking skills (T2).

1.2. Autonomous and Flexible Learning

EFL teachers emphasize that ChatGPT helps students study languages on their own with access to individualized practice and feedback. They point out that through flexible, self-directed engagement, the tool helps learners expand their vocabulary while improving their reading and writing abilities.

It is good to have someone they can ask, 'How should I' or 'What should I' questions on their subjects.... It's helpful for both reading and writing skills and maybe directly this is in relation with vocabulary (T1).

AI tools such as ChatGPT can allow EFL learners to manage their second language acquisition process at their own pace. Learners can create personalized materials such as AI-generated quizzes and receive instant feedback outside the classroom (T3).

1.3. Authentic and Contextual Input

The teachers stated that ChatGPT may help EFL learners be exposed to variety of linguistic input, but they recognize some concerns regarding the reliability of AI-generated language. With customized answers, they demonstrate its capacity to generate idiomatic and contextually relevant responses. Additionally, they claimed that ChatGPT assists learners in accessing relevant and important language use by producing content based on real-world suggestions.

Since it's AI, how authentic the language it produces is the question... But thinking in general, I will say ChatGPT answers are helpful to access more input (T1).

ChatGPT can provide dialogues and respond to questions with idiomatic and contextually appropriate language. Unlike textbooks, it can generate diverse examples quickly depending on learners' interests and proficiency levels (T2).

2. Concerns and Limitations

2.1. Over-reliance and Passive Use

EFL teachers are also concerned about ChatGPT's possible disadvantages. They warn that relying too much on the technology could result in

less critical thinking, ethical issues, and superficial learning.

Students might also misuse it, such as having it complete assignments for them, which is not true learning (T2).

ChatGPT can cause some ethical concerns as students tend to rely on it much more than they should. This aspect can also lead to overdependence and a lack of critical thinking (T3).

2.2. Accuracy and Reliability

The teachers are aware that ChatGPT has limitations, even though it frequently offers useful and accurate information. They note that higher academic levels raise the possibility of receiving inaccurate or deceptive content, which could provide difficulties for students in higher education who depend on the tool.

There is a little chance that ChatGPT will provide the wrong information especially for high school or below grades... but for university or MA or PhD level... there is more chance that ChatGPT will provide false information (T1).

I think ChatGPT usually provides accurate and helpful information, but it is not infallible. Occasionally, it can provide EFL learners with outdated, misleading, or incorrect content (T2).

3. Teacher and Student Readiness

3.1. Need for Training

Teachers emphasize the significance of appropriate training and awareness with ChatGPT. They point out that although the tool might facilitate the generation of materials, it frequently produces complex or general information. They also highlighted both technical expertise and pedagogical approaches for effective utilization.

Last year I conducted a study about how English teachers interact with ChatGPT to create teaching materials... most of them said it creates higher levels of reading materials or too general activities. Higher schools should train teachers and teachers should train students and raise their students' awareness on how to use it as well as the risks and the credibility of ChatGPT (T1).

Teachers need both technical training and pedagogical strategies to use ChatGPT effectively. Professional development sessions and actively using the sources available can help educators feel more confident (T2).

3.2. Individual Differences

The teachers highlighted students' learning styles, personality traits, and their degrees of autonomy when using ChatGPT. They claim that it might be especially beneficial for visual and reading/writing learners, kinesthetic or auditory learners might need more assistance. Besides, technology proficiency and self-directed learning are other important factors in how well students use the tool.

Students with visual or reading/writing learning styles may find ChatGPT useful, while auditory or kinesthetic learners might need additional tools. Learners with higher autonomy are more likely to benefit... Personality traits can affect how each student uses and benefits from the tool (T2).

If the learner feels uncomfortable with learning on his own, this can decrease the use and need of it... If the learner is not into technology, it might be boring (T4).

4. Classroom Integration

4.1. Curricular Fit and Implementation

Since students are already utilizing ChatGPT to help with their coursework, educators feel that it is crucial to set out time in the classroom to show them how to utilize it sensibly and productively. More than access, they argue that meaningful integration of AI tools necessitates critical involvement, teacher readiness, and digital literacy. To guarantee that AI turns into a useful resource rather than an optional shortcut, its adoption also requires curriculum integration and institutional support.

Sometimes teachers should give their five or ten minutes to show how to use ChatGPT because it's the fact now that students actually use it to solve their problems related to school (T1).

The classroom environment must encourage critical engagement with AI rather than passive consumption. Several factors influence its

effectiveness, including student digital literacy, teachers' skills, and how it is integrated into the curriculum (T2).

5. Feedback and Reflective Use

5.1. Providing Comments and Interpreting Them

Teachers advise students to write their own work first, then use specific prompts such as identifying strengths and problems to gain focused comments from ChatGPT. They state that when given the right direction, students can critically interact with the input by turning it into a chance for active learning that promotes reflective thinking, error repair, and ongoing development.

This is the best usage of ChatGPT a student can use...

They should produce first on their own writing and then later they should ask for a feedback from ChatGPT. Even for the feedback, you need a better prompt including like 'Tell me my strengths' or 'my weaknesses.' (T1).

Teachers should guide students in reflecting on what they acquired and questioning the AI's suggestions inside and outside the classroom. AI use can be transformed from a passive experience into an active learning opportunity (T2).

6. Suggestions for Improvement and Guidelines

6.1. Ethical Use and Awareness

Teachers highlight the potential benefit of utilizing ChatGPT as a practice tool. They clarify the importance of critical reading, information verification, and explicit instructions on when and how to utilize the tool.

Establishing clear guidelines about when and how to use ChatGPT can encourage responsible use. Rules for using their content carefully and discussing AI-generated input critically in the classroom can help (T2).

6.2. Tool Enhancement and Adaptation

Teachers believe that by integrating ChatGPT with adaptive learning platforms or adding elements such as voice interaction for speaking practice, it may be tailored to better meet the needs of each individual student. Additionally, they stated that by adding supplementary tools, ChatGPT may be used to create exercises that are suited to the interests of the learners and cover all language skills and competence levels.

ChatGPT can be tailored more closely to learner needs through integration with adaptive learning platforms or by adding features like voice interaction for speaking practice. Educators might also design structured activities, such as role-plays or writing tasks (T2).

ChatGPT could be used to create activities for all skills and levels by asking it to support the activities with visuals, reading texts or videos from YouTube according to the learners' interests (T4).

EFL Students' Reflections on ChatGPT as a Digital Language Learning Assistant

This section summarizes the results of a content analysis that was conducted to investigate how EFL students view ChatGPT as a language-learning tool.

1. Benefits of ChatGPT in EFL learning

1.1. Lexical, Grammatical, and Writing Support

Students state that ChatGPT can help with language development and simplify difficult subjects. They stress its usefulness for clarifying grammar and vocabulary, and for assignments such as writing practice and test preparation.

It instantly breaks down any complex topic I'm looking for (S1).

First of all, it's a highly practical tool for explaining unclear sentences and words. It helps with grammar, vocabulary, and correcting mistakes (S2).

1.2. Personalized Language Input and Feedback

Students highlight the potential usefulness of ChatGPT for fostering individualized and effective learning experiences. They highlight its capacity to accommodate different learning preferences, create customized study plans, and deliver targeted feedback.

Everyone has a different way of learning, and I believe that with ChatGPT, people can learn more effectively through personalized learning. It gets to know me and explains the next steps accordingly (S1).

Depending on the method that works best for you, it can create a study plan tailored to your needs (S2).

2. Learner Autonomy and Accessibility

2.1. Flexible and Independent Learning Opportunities

Students believe that by providing instant assistance and lowering dependency on others, ChatGPT can improve autonomous learning. They think it can be particularly useful for independent learners who want to improve their language skills or study for tests without outside assistance.

I believe that for individuals who can plan professionally, identify their own weaknesses, and work to address them, it may even be sufficient to prepare for an exam or learn a language without professional support (S3).

2.2. Multifunctionality and Skill Integration

Students emphasize ChatGPT's potential benefits over conventional language assistance by including its help with pronunciation through its voice tool, useful vocabulary suggestions, and clearer explanations.

I've started using ChatGPT instead of translation tools or other apps... It's more explanatory (S1).

Thanks to its voice feature, it can also assist with pronunciation. It can comfortably offer suggestions on the vocabulary you should use (S2).

3. Language Authenticity

3.1. Exposure to Natural and Contextualized Language

Students value ChatGPT because it provides examples of common language. They point out that as these examples appear to come from outside sources, they might not be unique. When a user requests more unique content, ChatGPT adapts by offering examples that support their requests.

I can access the most current and everyday language use as well (S1).

I generally find the examples it provides to be natural. I think it's careful in this regard and shows the most common usage of a word in those cultures. However, I don't believe the examples are original. In my opinion, they come from its memory, which includes content from other sources. So, a sentence it gives as an example might actually come from a foreign magazine or article (S2).

When I specify that I want something more original and natural, it provides examples in that style (S3).

4. Concerns and Limitations

4.1. Reliability and Accuracy Concerns

Students admit that ChatGPT has certain drawbacks by including the requirement for verification because of response modifications, occasional confusion, and excessively complicated translations.

Sometimes I doubt the accuracy of what I've learned because it can get confused (S1).

Sometimes it tends to give translations in a longer way by using unnecessary words (S2).

Sometimes I believe my own answers are correct and think that GPT has made a mistake. There have been situations where it changed its responses when I asked, 'Are you sure?', so I think it's impossible to fully trust it. I don't completely rely on ChatGPT, but I also can't do without it (S3).

4.2. Limited Effectiveness for Oral Communication and Individual Differences

Although ChatGPT is helpful, students understand that it might not completely replace the advantages of in-person interaction for improving speaking skills. Individual learning preferences may also affect its effectiveness, especially for people who prefer visual and auditory methods.

However, when it comes to speaking practice, it may not be as effective as a classroom setting. Direct, face-to-face communication in class is more beneficial for developing speaking skills (S2).

It can vary from person to person, and I don't think those who prefer visual and auditory learning methods would use it much (S4).

5. Discussion

A sizable portion of the participants said that the tool was beneficial for enhancing language learning, participation, and access to real resources. These results are also consistent with earlier studies that highlight ChatGPT's potential pedagogical benefits, including enhanced motivation and tailored learning experiences (Baskara, 2023; Bin-Hady et al., 2023; Derakhshan & Ghiasvand, 2024; Karataş et al., 2024; Klayklung et al., 2023; Xia & Zhi, 2023). This suggests that ChatGPT may play a supportive role for language learners in many ways. For instance, students may not be satisfied with the answers that they receive in the classroom. However, their engagement level may increase thanks to ChatGPT's answers based on students' specific learning needs. ChatGPT may also be helpful for students to develop their learning outcomes, thanks to receiving many language examples that are limited in the language classroom environment. According to the second research question, EFL students also had a favorable opinion of ChatGPT for encouraging self-directed learning and providing quick feedback. These answers support the findings of Agustini (2023), Barrot (2024), Chiu et al. (2023), Derakhshan and Ghiasvand (2024), and Fauzi et al. (2023). Students may not always have the opportunity to ask questions for a variety of reasons such as the large class size. However, students can

direct their own language learning experience by interacting with ChatGPT and receiving quick answers without spending time to wait. In addition, using ChatGPT helped them develop their writing skills, which aligns with the findings of Song and Song (2023) and Yan (2023), who reported that EFL learners' writing abilities improved with ChatGPT. This suggests that students may not only follow their teachers' instructions on how to write better in the target language, but also develop these skills by considering ChatGPT's suggestions.

There were concerns about content reliability, accuracy, and possible integration challenges with the curriculum. These issues are similar to those noted by Mohamed (2024), Zhai (2022), Adiguzel et al. (2023), and Kostka and Toncelli (2023), who questioned whether ChatGPT's content was appropriate and in line with pedagogical standards. This suggests that students can verify their learning by consulting their teachers or other resources, since ChatGPT acknowledges that it may make mistakes. When considering the situations in which individuals can receive different answers to the same question in ChatGPT, it may be useful not to accept its answers without probing them. In addition, concerns about overreliance on ChatGPT were expressed, as it was thought to undermine learners' critical thinking. This aligns with the findings of Susnjak (2022) and Buriak et al. (2023), who reported that using AI tools like ChatGPT can lead students to regularly believe its findings, which reduces critical and creative thinking. This suggests that students may try to spend a certain amount of time to find answers to their problems faced in the language learning process instead of directly consulting ChatGPT. When students activate their critical or creative thinking skills, they may save time in terms of finding answers. Furthermore, highlighting the individual variance in technology acceptability, some participants questioned whether ChatGPT is appropriate for all learning styles. Although the findings show the potential usefulness of ChatGPT, they also highlight the need for curriculum modifications, teacher preparation, and critical engagement. Interaction between ChatGPT and the curriculum may be considered, as its mentioned possible benefits can enhance

learning outcomes. In addition, teachers may play an important role in making students' learning experiences better when they have ideas about how to use ChatGPT in a language learning classroom. In both teachers' and students' narratives, shared advantages were the improvement of language skills, individualized feedback, autonomy, and additional materials. Besides, overlapping disadvantages were reliability and inefficiency for various learning styles. Hence, the findings align with the study of Derakhshan and Ghiasvand (2024), stating that ChatGPT is a "double-edged sword" in L2 instruction (p. 1249).

6. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine how Turkish EFL teachers and students felt about using ChatGPT as a digital language learning assistant. According to the findings, both groups viewed the tool very positively, emphasizing its advantages in boosting learner engagement, encouraging self-directed learning, offering tailored feedback, and expanding access to real language resources. These results support ChatGPT's possible applicability in educational settings. The study also has limitations despite its contributions. The generalizability of the findings is limited by the comparatively small sample size. Future research could also enhance the findings with a strong reliability result for the teacher scale. The study also used data from Likert-scale questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. By including performance-based measures, using longitudinal designs, and involving more participants, future research could overcome these constraints. The results suggest the potential value of carefully and strategically incorporating ChatGPT into language instruction from a pedagogical perspective. The findings indicate that in developing curriculum and teacher training may be helpful to give teachers the abilities and information that they need to help students use ChatGPT efficiently. Furthermore, the educational potential of ChatGPT may be seen while reducing threats such as overreliance or misinformation by providing clear standards for appropriate use,

promoting critical digital literacy, and encouraging reflective learning. The study provides empirical evidence on how teachers and students perceive ChatGPT, which adds to the growing research on AI in language instruction. It highlights ChatGPT's potential as a helpful alternative to conventional teaching, facilitating more adaptable, learner-centered, and engaging language learning opportunities. The way that ChatGPT is accepted and used in actual classrooms may play an important role in determining how language teaching develops in the future, although more research is required for this aspect.

Declaration

We would like to thank the participants for their cooperation.

Ethical Statement

Ethical approval for this study was granted by the Bursa Uludag University Social and Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee on 21 March 2025 (Session No. 2025-03, Decision No. 54).

AI Disclosure Statement

During the preparation of this work, the corresponding author Hasan Özdal used Quillbot for paraphrasing. After using this tool, the author reviewed and edited the content as needed and takes full responsibility for the content of the published article.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Perceptions of EFL teachers on ChatGPT as a digital language learning assistant

Below is a series of statements concerning the use of ChatGPT as a digital language learning assistant. Record your first impression by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement. Thank you for your cooperation. 5 = strongly agree 4 = agree 3 = uncertain 2 = disagree 1 = strongly disagree

Please put the number corresponding to your answer in the blank before the statements

- _____ 1. Utilizing ChatGPT can benefit EFL students in terms of language acquisition and proficiency
- _____ 2. ChatGPT can enhance EFL students' engagement and motivation in language learning activities
- _____ 3. ChatGPT can facilitate EFL students' access to authentic language resources and knowledge
- _____ 4. Integrating ChatGPT can promote autonomous learning and self-directed language practice among EFL students
- _____ 5. EFL students may face challenges or limitations when using ChatGPT as a language learning assistant
- _____ 6. There may be concerns regarding the accuracy and reliability of language generated by ChatGPT for EFL students' learning purposes
- _____ 7. Potential challenges or obstacles can arise in integrating ChatGPT into EFL curricula
- _____ 8. EFL teachers may lack the necessary training and skills to effectively incorporate ChatGPT into their teaching practices
- _____ 9. ChatGPT may not be suitable for all EFL students with varying learning styles and preferences
- _____ 10. Proper training and support can help EFL teachers and students effectively utilize ChatGPT as a language learning assistant
- _____ 11. Developing clear guidelines and expectations for using ChatGPT can enhance its effectiveness in EFL classrooms
- _____ 12. Collaborative learning activities that involve ChatGPT can promote peer interaction and language practice among EFL students
- _____ 13. Customizing ChatGPT to meet the specific language learning needs and goals of EFL students can enhance its usefulness and relevance
- _____ 14. Providing timely and constructive feedback on EFL students' interaction with ChatGPT can improve their learning outcomes and performance

Appendix B

Perceptions of EFL students on ChatGPT as a digital language learning assistant

Below is a series of statements concerning the use of ChatGPT as a digital language learning assistant. Please record your first impression by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement. Thank you for your cooperation.

5 = strongly agree 4 = agree 3 = uncertain 2 = disagree 1 = strongly disagree

Please put the number corresponding to your answer in the blank before the statements

- _____ 1. Utilizing ChatGPT can benefit my language acquisition and proficiency in English.
- _____ 2. ChatGPT can enhance my engagement and motivation in language learning activities.
- _____ 3. Using ChatGPT for personalized feedback and individualized instruction can be helpful in my EFL learning.
- _____ 4. ChatGPT can facilitate my access to authentic language resources and knowledge.
- _____ 5. Integrating ChatGPT can promote my autonomous learning and self-directed language practice in EFL.
- _____ 6. I may face challenges or limitations when using ChatGPT as a language learning assistant.
- _____ 7. There may be concerns regarding the accuracy and reliability of language generated by ChatGPT for my learning purposes.
- _____ 8. Potential challenges or obstacles can arise in using ChatGPT for my EFL learning.
- _____ 9. I may require additional support and guidance to effectively use ChatGPT as a language learning assistant.
- _____ 10. ChatGPT may not be suitable for my learning style and preferences.
- _____ 11. Proper training and support can help me effectively utilize ChatGPT as a language learning assistant.
- _____ 12. Having clear guidelines and expectations for using ChatGPT would enhance its effectiveness in my language learning.
- _____ 13. Engaging in collaborative learning activities that involve ChatGPT would promote peer interaction and language practice. and relevance.
- _____ 14. Receiving timely and constructive feedback on my interaction with ChatGPT would improve my learning outcomes and performance.

Appendix C

Interview questions for EFL teachers regarding ChatGPT as a digital language learning assistant

1. Can you describe your opinions of use of ChatGPT by EFL learners for language learning? / of the possibility of ChatGPT in helping EFL learners in terms of acquisition and proficiency?
2. What opportunities or benefits, if any, are there for EFL learners while using ChatGPT?
3. How do you think ChatGPT might help EFL students access more authentic or useful language input?
4. In what ways do you think ChatGPT might influence how students manage their own learning outside the classroom?
5. Are there any difficulties or concerns when students use ChatGPT to support their learning?
6. How do you feel about the reliability of the information or language that students get from ChatGPT?
7. What factors do you think affect how successfully ChatGPT can be used in an EFL classroom?
8. What kinds of support or preparation do you think are important for teachers who want to integrate ChatGPT into their teaching?
9. In your view, how might students' individual differences (like learning styles or preferences) impact their use of ChatGPT?
10. What kinds of training or support do you think might help EFL teachers and students use ChatGPT more effectively?
11. In your opinion, what kind of guidelines or expectations could be useful when using ChatGPT in EFL classrooms?
12. What role, if any, do you think peer collaboration could play when students use ChatGPT as part of their language learning activities?
13. Can you think of ways ChatGPT could be adapted or used differently to better fit the needs of language learners?
14. What role do you think feedback should play when students use ChatGPT for language learning?

Appendix D

Interview questions for EFL students regarding ChatGPT as a digital language learning assistant

1. Can you describe your opinions of use of ChatGPT for language learning? / of the possibility of ChatGPT in helping you in terms of acquisition and proficiency?
2. What opportunities or benefits, if any, are there for you while using ChatGPT?
3. In what ways, if any, has ChatGPT helped you receive more personalized or targeted support in your language learning?
4. Do you think ChatGPT helps you access more authentic or natural examples of English? If so, how?
5. In what ways do you think ChatGPT might influence your own learning outside the classroom?
6. Are there any difficulties or concerns when you use ChatGPT to support your language learning?
7. How do you feel about the reliability of the information or language that you get from ChatGPT?
8. What factors do you think affect how successfully ChatGPT can be used in your language learning process?
9. What kind of help or support do you think students need to use ChatGPT effectively for language learning?
10. In your view, how might students' individual differences (like learning styles or preferences) impact their use of ChatGPT?
11. What kinds of training or preparation would help you make better use of ChatGPT in your learning?
12. What kind of rules or expectations do you think would help you use ChatGPT more effectively in your studies?
13. What role, if any, do you think peer collaboration could play when students use ChatGPT as part of their language learning activities?
14. Can you think of ways ChatGPT could be adapted or used differently to better fit the needs of language learners?