AI chatbots in Second Language Acquisition and Learning: Teachers' and Students' Perspectives in Higher Education

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AI chatbots in Second Language Acquisition and Learning: Teachers' and Students' Perspectives in Higher Education

Abstract

The emergence of Artificial Intelligence technology has affected most of the fields. The field of education is among them as well. The educators and students have access to artificial intelligence. It can be stated that it is being used for various purposes by educators and students alike. Therefore, there is a need for more research on artificial intelligence in education. This study aimed to investigate the perspectives of second foreign language teachers and students on the use of artificial intelligence chatbots. In order to investigate the perspectives of teachers and students, the study employed a qualitative descriptive research design. The researcher conducted semi – structured interviews and observations. The participants were 24 in total. Participants were seven second language teachers and were five second (18 - 19 year olds), five third (20 - 21 year olds), and seven fourth (21 - 22 year olds) year students. The major of the students were Foreign Language: Two Foreign Languages and Translation Studies. The data collected during the interviews and observations was analyzed thematically. The findings indicated that SFL teachers use AI chatbots such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Deepseek, Groc - 3, and Doubao. As regards to students, they use ChatGPT, Gemini, Deepseek, and Doubao. SFL teachers mostly used AI chatbots to generate tasks for the students and to correct their syllabuses. As per the students, the students used AI chatbots for grammar, vocabulary, speaking practice, preparation for the tests, and feedback. SFL teachers and students acknowledged the challenges of using AI chatbots such as inability to detect pronunciation, mistakes in grammar and identification of the context.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, chatbots, Second Language Acquisition

ЖИ чат - боттарды Екінші Тілді Меңгеруде және Оқуда Қолдану: Жоғарғы Оқу Орнындағы Оқытушылар мен Студенттердің Пікірлері

Аңдатпа

Жасанды Интеллект технологиясының жарыққа шығуы біраз салаларға өз әсерін тигізді. Оның ішінде білім саласы да өзгеріссіз қалған жоқ. Мұғалімдер мен студенттер жасанды интеллектті әртүрлі мақсатта қолданып жатқандығында шүбә жоқ. Сондықтан, қазіргі кезде білім саласында жасанды интеллектті қолдану аясында көбірек зерттеулер жүргізілуі қажет. Осы зерттеу жұмысы екінші шет тілінен сабақ беретін мұғалімдер мен екінші шет тілін оқитын студенттердің жасанды интеллекті бар чат - боттарға деген пікірлерін зерттеуге бағытталып отыр. Осы мақсатты жүзеге асыру үшін сапалық сипаттамалы зерттеу тәсілі қолданылды. Зерттеуші қатысушылардан сұхбат алды. Сонымен қатар мұғалімдердің сабақтарына қатысты. Қатысушылардың жалпы саны 24 адамды құрады. Олардың ішінде жетеуі екінші шет тілінен сабақ беретін мұғалімдер, бесеуі 18 - 19 жас аралығындағы екінші курс студенттері, бесеуі 20 - 21 жас аралығындағы үшінші курс студенттері және жетеуі 21 - 22 жас аралығындағы төртінші курс студенттері болды. Студенттер Шет тілі: Екі Шетел тілі және Аударма ісі мамандықтары бойынша оқыды. Жиналған ақпараттар тематикалық анализден өтті. Нәтижелерге сүйенсек, мұғалімдер ChatGPT, Gemini, Deepseek, Groc - 3 және Doubao атты чат - боттарды қолданады екен. Ал студенттер ChatGPT, Gemini, Deepseek және Doubao атты чат - боттарды қолданады екен. Екінші шет тілінен сабақ беретін мұғалімдер чат - боттарды көбінесе тапсырмалар құрастыру үшін және силлабустарын жөндеу үшін қолданады екен. Ал студенттер грамматикаға байланысты сұрақтар сұрауға, сөздік қорын кеңейтуге, айтылым дағдысын дамытуға, тесттерге дайындалуға және кері байланыс алуға қолданады екен. Мұғалімдер мен студенттер чат - боттарды қолдану кезіндегі қиыншылықтарын да тілге тиек етті. Атап өтсек, олар - сөзді және дыбыстардың айтылуын қабылдай алмау, грамматикалық қателер жіберу және контекстте қателесу.

Түйін сөздер: Жасанды Интеллект, чат – боттар, Екінші Тілді Меңгеру

Чат - боты с ИИ в Освоении и Изучении Второго Языка: Точки Зрения Преподователей и Студентов в Высшем Образовании

Аннотация

Появление технологий искусственного интеллекта затронуло большинство областей, включая образование. Преподаватели и студенты имеют доступ к искусственному интеллекту. Можно утверждать, что он используется в различных целях как преподавателями, так и студентами. Поэтому существует необходимость в дополнительных исследованиях искусственного интеллекта в образовании. Целью данного исследования было изучение взглядов преподавателей и студентов, изучающих второй иностранный язык, на использование чат-ботов с искусственным интеллектом. Для изучения взглядов преподавателей и студентов в исследовании использовался качественный описательный метод. Исследователь проводил полуструктурированные интервью и наблюдения. В исследовании приняли участие 24 человека. Семь участников были преподавателями второго языка, а также пять студентов второго (18-19 лет), пять студентов третьего (20-21 год) и семь студентов четвертого (21-22 года) курсов. Специальности студентов: иностранные языки: два иностранных языка и переводческое дело. Собранные в ходе интервью и наблюдений данные были проанализированы тематически. Результаты исследования показали, что преподаватели английского как иностранного языка используют чат-боты на основе ИИ, такие как ChatGPT, Gemini, Deepseek, Groc-3 и Doubao. Что касается студентов, они используют ChatGPT, Gemini, Deepseek и Doubao. Преподаватели английского как иностранного языка в основном используют чат-боты на основе ИИ для создания заданий для студентов и для проверки учебных планов. По словам студентов, они используют чат-боты на основе ИИ для отработки грамматики, лексики, разговорной практики, подготовки к тестам и получения обратной связи. Преподаватели и студенты английского как иностранного языка признали наличие трудностей в использовании чат-ботов на основе ИИ, таких как неспособность распознавать произношение, грамматические ошибки и определять контекст.

Ключевые слова: ИИ, чат – боты, Освоение Второго Языка

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) started rapidly affecting educational settings. AI technology became developed in aspects such as “machine learning, neural network, natural language processing (NLP) with automatic speech recognition (ASR), and advanced image processing” (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019 as cited in Ji et al., 2023). Furthermore, AI became easily accessible to millions of people worldwide. Due to this, the usage of AI applications increased in many educational organizations (Ji et al., 2023).

Among the recent developments in the field of AI, the appearance of chat robots can be noted (Adamopoulou & Moussiades, 2020). The chatbot is an application that allows the people to use them to interact in the text or audio formats (Hsu et al., 2021). Additionally, it can be called an intelligent and conversational agent (Pérez et al., 2020; Yin et al., 2021 as cited in Alemdag, 2023). According to Ji et al. (2023), they can be the users’ “conversational partner, feedback provider, resource provider, and needs analyst” (p. 57).

Many advantages of chatbots were mentioned in several studies. It is widely known in the language learning setting that students often feel nervous in speaking activities. Lowering the anxiety level of students was mentioned as one of the benefits of using chatbots (Ericsson et al., 2024; Ji et al., 2023). In a certain study, it was determined that the experimental group that interacted with a chatbot used more words than the control group that did not interact with the chatbot (Lin & Mubarok, 2021). This can also serve as a support for the previous study as the students are more responsive when using chatbots.

There were studies that presented contradicting points towards the aforementioned benefits as well. El Shazly (2021) argues that the anxiety levels were not affected when the chatbots were introduced to students.

1.1. Problem statement

According to Ji et al. (2023), the application of “conversational AIs in language learning is still a nascent field of inquiry” (p. 59). In light of the current research and in light of the fact that AI is advancing rapidly, there is a need for constant research regarding AI and the field of language education. According to Huang et al. (2022), the “future studies could explore teachers' perceptions of the chatbots implementation in language learning” (p. 254). Based on the literature, it can be stated that more research needs to be done regarding the use of AI chatbots in language education. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the perspectives of SFL teachers and students regarding the usage of chatbot.

1.2 Significance of the study

Concerning the theoretical significance of the study, it will provide insight into the AI chatbots and its functions based on experiences of SFL teachers and students. This is needed due to the fact that it will help future educators and researchers to identify up - to - date information about AI chatbots in second language acquisition and learning.

Regarding the practical significance of the study, it is based on the insights gathered from the teachers and students, the designated institutions might be able to create educational policies.

The aim of this research is to investigate the perspectives of SFL teachers and students on the use of AI chatbots.

1.3. Research questions

Main research question: What are the perspectives of SFL teachers and students on using AI chatbots in second language learning?

Sub - research questions

1. What are the opportunities and challenges of using chatbots according to students?
2. What are the opportunities and challenges of using chatbots according to teachers?

The current thesis paper has six chapters. The first chapter, introduction, provides background information on AI and its usage in language education, problem statement, aim, and research questions. The literature review contains information about the components of AI technology, definitions of essential terms, information about the current usage of AI technology in language education, and theoretical framework. Regarding the methodology, it presents the research process in detail by providing information about the research design, participants, ethics, instruments, data analysis, limitations, validity, reliability. The results and findings chapter presents the data collected during the one on one interviews with SFL teachers and students. The next chapter, discussion, presents the analysis of the findings by comparing them to that of other researchers' in the designated area of research. The last chapter, conclusion, provides a summary of the research.

CHAPTER 2

Literature review

This chapter clarifies the main terminology used in the current research. Furthermore, this chapter presents the overview of how AI chatbots were used in higher educational institutions in the field of language teaching and learning. Lastly, the literature review provides information concerning the implemented theoretical framework.

2.1 Second Language Acquisition and Learning

As it is evident, Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is the field that is primarily concerned with language. This section sheds light on a short history of SLA, definition of SLA, the difference between *acquisition* and *learning,* and the definition that is used for this research.

According to Kramsch (2003), SLA was "born at the confluence of linguistics, psychology, and education [and], started making its appearance" in the 1970s (p. 66). It emerged from the need to teach the English language to learners of English that were growing in numbers and study foreign languages in the educational context. In addition, SLA was considered to be useful for teaching and learning other second languages (Ellis, 1990 as cited in Kramsch, 2003). Furthermore, thanks to SLA, various state - of - the - art pedagogical methods and new understandings regarding the student's learning of foreign languages at school and the university emerged (Kramsch, 2003). However, it is important to note that SLA is not solely concerned with education. According to Larson - Freeman (2000), SLA relies on disciplines such as "first language acquisition, linguistics (e.g., issues of language transfer, UG), psychology (e.g., information processing, skill-learning, connectionism), and sociolinguistics (e.g., variation, pragmatics, sociocultural theory)" (p. 166). The current research is solely connected to the educational field.

Regarding the definition of SLA, SLA is concerned with learning the non - native language in a natural environment or a classroom when the L1 is already learned (Miao, 2015). This might be the definition that is known by the majority of educators and researchers. Furthermore, According to Kramsch (2003), SLA takes into account "the acquisitional aspect of language learning and teaching, both inside and outside the classroom" (p. 67). However, SLA scholars discriminate between the terms "acquisition" and "learning" (Miao, 2015). The former refers to learning a non - native language in the natural setting of that language while the latter refers to learning a non - native language in an environment where the non - native language is not spoken as L1 (Miao, 2015). This research adopts the definition provided by Miao (2015) that states that "the term 'second language acquisition' is used to refer to the learning of any nonnative language, regardless of the sociocultural nature of the learning environment (second vs foreign) and the order in which the language is learned (second vs third, or fourth)" (pp. 360 - 367). As SLA refers to learning, acquisition, and teaching of a second language, the adopted definition seems reasonable and well - grounded.

2.2 Artificial Intelligence and Chatbots

Firstly, there is a need to clearly define and explain the counterparts that comprise AI. Therefore, this section presents the definition of AI, and a brief overview of its nature. AI is defined as a computer system that has the abilities to such as interpreting and producing language, recognizing and creating images, and learning from data (Cambridge Dictionary, n. d.). However, AI is a collection of several technologies such as Machine Learning (ML), Deep Learning (DL), Generative AI (GenAI), Large Language Models (LLMs), and Chatbots (IBM Technology, 2024).

As it is evident currently, AI chatbots have many capabilities. Those capabilities are presented in the following section. However, the limitations of this new technology needs to be mentioned as well. Hannigan et al. (2024) stated that the chatbots may have hallucinations. By hallucinations, it is meant that the chatbot may generate completely false information. Researchers state that the responses generated by chatbots must be accepted as provisional knowledge. The provisional knowledge is defined as the innovative idea that is put under dispute. It is not the validated knowledge that is taken from legitimate sources (Hannigan et al., 2024). Another study used AI chatbots and assessed their classifications of foods based on their oxalate content, the most important aspect is that the foods were written in Turkish language (Kaya Kaçar, 2025). The chatbots could not classify the foods with 100% accuracy. The reason might be because of words being in Turkish.

2.3 Application of AI chatbots in higher education: advantages and disadvantages

This section is dedicated to analyzing and evaluating the use of AI chatbots in higher education, more specifically in the language learning area.

Regarding the receptive skills, interactivity and individualized support by the GenAI powered platform had a positive effect on the SRL reading strategy use (Pan et al., 2025). In this study, in SRL training, GenAI chatbots were added based on their interactional feature to see how effective it is in improving the students' reading strategy use and engagement in reading. This was a quasi - experimental study. They collected data through pre - and post - questionnaire, log data, and semi - structured interviews. The study continued for 12 weeks. The researchers created a GenAI - supported SRL approach. In addition, they created a specific online reading platform for students. It was called ReadMate. The platform has two functions such as recommending reading articles to the students according to their levels and providing guidance

to the students (Pan et al., 2025). There were 31 participants who were Chinese university students. They majored in English. They were 18 - 20 years olds. Their reading proficiency was measured by TOEFL. According to TOEFL, their reading level was low - intermediate. However, there might not have been much effect on the cognitive dimension of self - regulated learning (Pan et al., 2025). This finding might be supported by another study where the researchers found confirmation for their concerns regarding critical thinking due to the implementation of AI in education (Al-Zahrani, 2024).

In terms of the listening skill, the chatbots might not be widely implemented in order to practice listening skills (Wu & Yu, 2024). According to Wu and Yu (2024), the reason is “that the listening practice does not need much interaction” (p. 12).

Regarding productive skills, concerning speaking, one study states that the chatbot is advantageous in offering a variety of topics for discussion and they state that it improves the lexical capacity (Kemelbekova et al., 2024). The study delved into the issue of AI by investigating the perceptions of EFL students and teachers regarding the impact of AI technologies at Abai University. The AI technologies in question are Text Cortex (AI tool with a chatbot for enriching vocabulary in the language), Elsa Speak, and Grammarly. The researchers conducted a quasi - experimental study. There was a control group and an experimental group. For the latter, the researchers prepared learning and teaching materials that covered 12 weeks of topics studied by the 1st year students in the discipline titled “Foreign Language“. The aforementioned AI tools are claimed to have been used (Kemelbekova et al., 2024). Furthermore, personalization and feedback in real time are mentioned as another advantage of using AI chatbots. In addition, aiding in the accuracy of pronunciation is mentioned as another advantage. On the contrary, in the similar study, it was revealed that even though there were improvements

in fluency, there were only mild improvements in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation (Zhou et al., 2025). The purpose of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of AI chatbot in assisting Chinese undergraduate students in improving their oral proficiency in English with the help of authentic, interactive practice opportunities and immediate feedback. In addition, the study aimed to explore students' perceptions and experiences regarding the implementation of the AI chatbot in improving their oral proficiency in English in mobile - assisted blended learning (MABL) framework (Zhou et al., 2025). This is the combination of mobile - assisted language learning (MALL) and blended learning (BL) (Zhou et al., 2025). They used a quasi - experimental design. To the experimental group, they introduced the mobile application (Chaoxing) and ChatGPT4. The app is a mobile learning management system. The students were specifically trained to create successful prompts. This is claimed to enhance speaking skills as it was focused on the enhancement of linguistic quality of interactions. The students practiced their speaking in groups and in one to one sessions by using the chatbot. The instructor was the one who offered assistance to students in using the app and the chatbot. In addition, the instructors assisted by providing feedback on common errors such as issues regarding grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. Consequently, there was a pre - and post - test before and after the intervention. Furthermore, there was a questionnaire intended to gather their perceptions of using the mobile app and ChatGPT4. In addition, a pilot study was conducted to ensure the validity and reliability of the research with 20 students with a similar background to the participants of the study

(Zhou et al., 2025). Still, it needs to be noted that there were advantages such as interactivity, immediacy, and personalization that assisted students in their speaking skills (Zhou et al., 2025). The perceptions were overall positive regarding using AI chatbots with the mobile application.

A certain study explored the abilities of large language models (LLMs) such as imitating language and being able to respond immediately (Zhang & Huang, 2024). The research paper implemented a mixed methods approach. In this research, firstly, the students had to complete the test. The test was administered to assess whether the students had the lexical resources required for the intermediate level of proficiency. The experimental and control groups completed the same learning tasks. However, chatbots were used by the students in the experimental group. During the period of eight weeks, researchers observed how frequently the students in the experimental group interacted with the chatbots. After this period, the groups took the vocabulary test again. Furthermore, another test, which was called a delay test, was taken by the students to see how well the students retained the vocabulary (Zhang & Huang, 2024). It was found that the students who used chatbots showed higher results in the receptive and productive vocabulary tests than the students who did not. In addition to this, chatbots were stated to assist in learning incidental vocabulary (Zhang & Huang, 2024). Another study aimed to investigate the use of AI chatbots and its benefits as well as challenges in enhancing speaking and engagement in language education (Taeza, 2025). This was a mixed - methods research. The study employed both the quantitative quasi - experimental approach and qualitative feedback to investigate the perceptions of the participants. Participants in the experimental group were instructed on how to use the chatbot. The chatbot that was used was not named. However, it was stated to be on par with the GPT - 3.5. The chatbot was loaded with educational mode beforehand. The participants used the mobile application of the chatbot that acted as a conversational partner. In addition, if the student seemed stuck during the interaction, the chatbot was programmed to offer hints to the user. There was a pre - test to measure the speaking skills of participants. The intervention period was about 5 weeks. As the participants conversed with

the chatbot, the chatbot kept a log of the conversations which later on was analyzed by the researchers. After that, there was the post - test that was similar to the pre - test. Then, the interviews were conducted with 10 students from the experimental group and 5 students from the control group (Taeza, 2025). The participants were 60 ESL undergraduate students. Their proficiency level was intermediate. According to the results of the post - test, the students in the experimental group showed greater improvement in speaking skills compared to the control group. This might be due to the more opportunities for speaking provided by the chatbot. With the chatbot, the students could speak continuously. Their speech was smoother during the post - test interviews. Furthermore, the immediate feedback provided by the AI chatbot is another major advantage of it. Moreover, the interaction with the chatbot lowers the affective filter in students and encourages them to converse more. The gamification and notion on speaking with AI increased the motivation of students and kept them engaged (Taeza, 2025). However, some students indicated that the dialogues became repetitive over time which might have hindered engagement of the students. Concerning the limitations of the chatbot, firstly it lacked deep understanding and nuance of cultural topics. Furthermore, the AI chatbot cannot yet imitate the real feeling in conversations which is felt through humor and narration of the personal experiences. In this regard, AI still is in its infancy. In addition, the rigorous explanation of grammar aspects and nuanced feedback that were given by the teachers were reported to be favored by the students over the AI chatbot’s responses (Taeza, 2025). Another paper presented the results of two longitudinal studies. The aim of the studies were to explore how effective ChatGPT and GPT - 4 are in providing feedback on compositions written by students and discover whether students prefer the human feedback or the AI generated one (Escalante et al., 2023). The first paper conducted an experiment that lasted six weeks where students in the

experimental group received feedback from the AI chatbot while the control group received only from the human teacher. Weekly, students had to compose essays that consisted of 300 words on various academic topics. Before the treatment, there was a pre - test and after the end of the experiment, there was a post - test (Escalante et al., 2023). In the second study, the students received feedback from the AI and the teacher. In addition, to identify the preferences of the students, the researchers administered a questionnaire with the Likert scale items and open - ended questions. The feedback generated by AI was sent to the students via email. ChatGPT was primed by two experienced language teachers as a professional language instructor. Then, the weekly tasks were fed to the chatbot (Escalante et al., 2023). According to Escalante et al., 2023, the criteria that included "the topic sentence, the development of ideas, language that lowers the academic quality of the writing, the use of transitional phrases, the use of sources and evidence, and the grammatical accuracy of the language of the writing" (p. 7). Through these processes, the feedback was generated on the students' essays. The participants were 91 university students who were English as new language (ENL) students who had the B1 level in English. In the study 1, instant feedback was regarded as the major benefit of using AI chatbots. However, according to the result of the post - test, the experimental and control did not differ in terms of growth in writing. In the study 2, it was found that those who preferred the feedback generated by AI commented on how clear and detailed the feedback was. Here, there were students who preferred the feedback provided by teachers to the one provided by AI. They expressed likeness to the emotional aspect of the real human feedback. Mainly, they were more engaged during individual face to face sessions with the teacher. One student stated that interaction with the teacher and precise feedback provided by the teacher helped them to improve their writing. This means the

feedback from both the instructor and the AI is superior to only one source of the feedback (Escalante et al., 2023).

Regarding instructors, a study conducted by Sayici and Aydin (2025), seven EFL instructors were interviewed. They reported that EFL teachers used AI chatbots such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and AI - based chatbots. EFL teachers stated they used AI tools to generate lesson plans and quizzes and tasks for the lessons (Sayici & Aydin, 2025). In addition, the teacher reported that they used AI tools to receive feedback on their lesson plans and materials. The teachers also mentioned that AI tools were useful for engaging students and gamifying the lessons. Furthermore, it was stated that certain teachers wanted students to use AI tools in activities and assignments (Sayici & Aydin, 2025). However, they also acknowledged that AI tools can also make mistakes such as providing incorrect answers to the prompts, mistakes in the materials for the lessons or make corrections on the students' writing despite them being correct (Sayici & Aydin, 2025). In another study conducted by Yuan (2024), the researcher conducted interviews with two English teachers. According to their findings, one teacher stated that chatbots help students use the vocabulary they learned. Furthermore, another teacher stated that integrating chatbots positively affected the willingness of students to answer the questions during the class (Yuan, 2024).

As per the languages other than English, Kim and Su's (2024) study covered the topic of Chatbots and willingness to communicate (WTC) in L2, namely Korean. The researchers' purpose was to identify how AI Chatbots influence university students' WTC in Korean language. It was a quasi - experimental study. The study employed the WTC questionnaire and semi - structured interviews to collect data from 65 students who were enrolled in a Korean language course (Kim & Su, 2024). 20 students were in the experimental group and 45 students

were in the control group. The Chatbot was developed by the Danbee AI platform that is widely used in Korea. The results indicated that students felt more confident with practicing their Korean using the chatbot and did not feel anxious compared to interactions in the conventional setting. Some students stated in the interviews that it helped them to be more confident without the fear of making a mistake. They also reported that the chatbot treated them kindly and that helped them with confidence. Furthermore, it was stated to provide authentic expressions (Kim & Su, 2024).

2.4 Theoretical framework

In this section, the theoretical framework that is implemented in the current research to see the scope, guide the data collection process, and interpret the findings is presented.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is a framework that was developed to predict how likely the technology is accepted by individuals or the organization. It was designed by Fred Davis in the 1980s (EBSCO Research, n.d. -a). According to Xu et al. (2024), TAM "builds on Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)" (p. 3). It means that TRA is used as a basis for the TAM. TRA states that a person's intention to engage in a certain behavior is essentially impacted by their attitudes and subjective norms regarding that behavior (EBSCO Research, n.d. -b). According to Xu et al., (2024), based on TAM, a person's utilization "of information systems is mainly influenced by two variables: Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)" (pp. 3 - 4). It is also clear that the PEOU affects PU (Xu et al., 2024). When the technology can be easily used by individuals, it is most of the time deemed useful. According to Xu et al. (2024), the model "extends TRA's principle that behavior is a result of behavioral intentions, which are in turn influenced by attitudes and subjective norms" (p. 4). It means that the attitudes in other words perspectives are influenced by PU and PEOU. PU alludes to the

belief about the technology's capabilities to enhance work performance and PEOU refers to how easily the technology can be used. TAM is used in the research to gather data based on these two variables that are reflected in the interview questions to gather data about the usage of the new technology - AI chatbots. This theory helps to guide the interview questions by focusing on the experiences of using AI chatbots. TAM was identified as one of the theoretical lenses and models that can be used to understand AI (Mariani et al., 2022).

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

3.1 Research design

The study is qualitative in nature. The study employs a descriptive research design. According to Dulock (1993), the aim of the descriptive research is “to describe systematically and accurately the facts and characteristics of a given population or area of interest” (p. 154). In addition, according to Johnston and Dowling (2023), descriptive qualitative research is “the method of choice when straight descriptions of phenomena are desired, especially useful for researchers wanting to know the who, what, and where of events” (p. 2). By using this design, the researcher will identify the perspectives of SFL teachers and students on the use of AI chatbots .

3.2 Participants

The overall number of participants is 24. Participants are seven second language teachers and are five second (18 - 19 year olds), five third (20 - 21 year olds), and seven fourth (21 - 22 year olds) year students. The major of the students were Foreign Language: Two Foreign Languages and Translation Studies.

The overall number of participants was determined through the process of saturation (Creswell, 2013). The sampling method was purposive sampling and snowball sampling. The researcher distributed consent forms to all the participants through email so that they would familiarize themselves with the research and confirmed their participation in the research. After the participants agreed to participate in my research the researcher started conducting interviews. Then, after finishing the interviews, the researcher started observations where they participated in the lessons of the two second language teachers as a passive observer. The consent form was

sent to the teachers and teachers were asked to distribute the consent form with the students. The participants were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time without further consequences. Alongside the purposive sampling, snowball sampling was implemented. The researcher contacted the students and asked them to share the consent letter with their fellow students.

3.3 Ethics

This section discusses the ethical consideration issues. Prior to the start of the data collection process, the researcher filled the ethics self - assessment form. After the completion of the self - assessment form, the results indicated the need for obtaining permission from the ethical committee. Therefore, the researcher sent the application form to the ethical committee and the permission was obtained.

The participants' identities will not be disclosed to the third parties. Only the researcher and his supervisor have access to the raw data. The participants were coded in the research paper. The data is kept secure in a password protected folder.

All associated risks were kept to a minimum. The only foreseen risk is in teachers' emotional state during observations. Therefore, the teachers were allowed to withdraw from the research at any point during the observation.

3.4 Instruments

This section discusses the data collection tools that are to be utilized in the research. The semi - structured interview and observation were conducted to collect data from the participants. The interview questions were taken and adapted from Xu et al. (2024) and modified based on the analysis of the literature on AI chatbots and the theoretical framework. The interview was conducted face to face and recorded as an audio-file. The observation protocol was used. The observation protocol was based on Creswell (2013). The researcher was a non -

participant observer at the research site (teachers' lessons). The researcher observed the lessons of second language teachers in order to see how the teachers implemented the AI chatbots in their lessons if they did so. In addition, the researcher observed how students were engaged through using AI chatbots.

3.5 Data analysis

This section describes the data analysis method. As a method of data analysis, thematic analysis was chosen. Thematic analysis consists of six steps such as familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The recorded data was analyzed thematically. The code generation process was inductive.

3. 6 Limitations

The limitation might be in terms of responses based on gender as the researcher could not recruit an equal number of male and female participants for each second language. In addition, the generalizability of the results might be another limitation of the study.

3.7 Validity and reliability

The data collection tools were created with the assistance of the supervisor. The interview questions were taken and adapted from Xu et al. (2024) and modified based on the analysis of the literature on AI chatbots and the theoretical framework. The observation protocol was used. The observation protocol was based on Creswell (2013). The data collection tools were further reviewed by the supervisor.

CHAPTER 4

Results and Findings

This chapter presents the findings that were identified during the data collection process. The data is presented according to themes. The themes were generated inductively. First, SFL teachers' responses and data collected during the observation are presented and then the students'responses.

4.1. SFL teachers

4.1.1. Generating tasks and explanations of grammar for the students

As per the findings, most of the teachers use AI chatbots to generate tasks for the students.

> *"Бірақ мен ChatGPT қолданамын. Өзіме кей – кейде бір, сабаққа дайындалғанда, не болмаса студенттерде қандай да бір дағдыларды, іскерліктерді жаттықққан кезде, тапсырма ретінде емес, иә? Жаттығу үшін, егер ол бағаланбайтын тапсырмалар болса қолданамын [But I use ChatGPT, sometimes, when I prepare for the classes, or when I want students to practice the skills only when the tasks are not graded]" (German language teacher 1)*
>
> *"Ал Doubao деген, ол AI - ді көбінесе Powerpoint слайд жасағанда, кейбір материалдарды, оқыту материалдарына, яғни саясаттық темаларға қатысты емес нәрселерге ғана Doubao жақсы… Gemini – ді көбінесе студенттерге сұрақ шығарғанға қолданамын. Практикалық сұрақтар шығарғанға [When it comes to Doubao, that AI is good for making slides, some materials for classes, meaning it is good for the topics that are not related to political ones. I use Gemini, most of the time, to*

create questions for the students, practical questions, I mean]" (Chinese language teacher 1)

"Тез сұрақтар шығарып береді, мен өткен тақырыбым бойынша жазсам. Тесттер жасап береді, куиздар жасап береді… Listening сұрақтарын AI арқылы жасадық [It quickly creates the questions if I write about the topics that I covered. It creates tests, quizzes… We created listening questions with the help of AI]" (Chinese language teacher 2)

"Мысалы, қытай тілінде шылаулар бар. Шылауларды қандай орында қолданады деген сияқты… Сосын, бір, әрі етістік, әрі жалғау болып кететін сөздер болады да, бір сөз болады, кейде етістік ретінде қолданылады, кейде жалғау ретінде қолданылады. Солардың айырмашылығын айыру үшін деген сияқты әртүрлі сөйлемдер құрап, сол бос орын толтыру… [For example, in Chinese language, there are conjunctions, where these conjunctions are used. Then, there are words that can be used as a verb and as an ending. There will be fill in the gap tasks where the students need to use the words according to the difference]" (Chinese language teacher 3)

"Жаттығуларды жасауға… Мысалы мен бір жаттығуды мінекей мынадай үлгіде, тағы да қосымша бес - алты вариантын, нұсқасын жасап бер деп, мысалы жасап, сол кезде басқа сөздермен, басқа мысалдармен, мысалы Корей тілі бойынша жаттығуларды жасауға да, әртүрлі варианттарын, нұсқаларын алуға солай көбінесе қолданамын [To create exercises, for example, I mostly use it to ask about create exercises with additional variants, other examples including other words]" (Korean Language teacher)

“Мысалы, бір текстқа мысалы иә, жоқ деген, текст, сұрақтар қойып берші деймін. Текст бойынша multiple choice сұрақтар қоюға, содан кейін true / false дейді ғой сондай тапсырмалар… [For example, for one text, I ask it to create yes or no questions and to create multiple choice questions, then true or false tasks]” (German language teacher 2)

In addition, among SFL teachers, there was a teacher who used the AI chatbot to check the tasks. However, the chatbot would state that the correct answers in the task to be incorrect.

“Төртінші курстың студенттерінде біраз қиын, жоғарғы деңгейдің, advanced деңгейдің сөздері өте көп кездеседі. Сол кезде де бос орынға, мысалы сөздерді қойып шығу дегендей тапсырмалар болса, сол дұрыс қойылғандарын кейде қате деп көрсетіп береді [In the fourth year, some advanced appear frequently. In those cases, where the sentences need to completed with the words, even if the words were used correctly, it states that it was used incorrectly]” (Korean language teacher)

Furthermore, one Chinese language teacher stated that they asked for the explanation of the differences between pronouns.

“Мен деген сөзде екі синоним бар, қытай тілінде… Соны мен қалай айырмашылығын білдіремін… [There are two synonyms that mean “I”. How do I differentiate them…]” (Chinese language teacher 2)

4.1.2. Creating a syllabus for the course

Furthermore, SFL teachers stated that they used AI chatbots to check and receive feedback about syllabuses for their courses.

“*Мысалы, өзіміз бір силлабус жасап боп, соны Grok - 3 - ге салып, қосатыны бар ма, толықтыратыны бар ма немесе түзететін жерлері бар ма деп сұраймыз [For*

example, after finishing the syllabus ourselves, we upload it to Grok - 3 and ask whether it needs to be corrected or some things need to be added into it" *(Chinese language teacher 1)*

"Оны силлабус жасауға мәселен пайдалануға болады [it can be used to create, for example, a syllabus]" (French Language teacher)

4.1.3. Speaking and pronunciation

SFL teachers also stated that they used ChatGPT to practice speaking. However, students experienced difficulties while interacting with ChatGPT.

"ChatGPT - ді біз тек практикаға қолдандық, ауыз екі практикаға. ChatGPT анандай өзара сөйлесетін функция қосты ғой. Біз сонымен студенттерге ChatGPT - дан сұрақ қойдырамыз, одарға сөйлеткіземіз. ChatGPT оған жауап береді, бірағында жауап бергенде кейде студенттердің акцентін түсінбей қала ма, сөзін түсіне алмай қала ма, ChatGPT - дің өзі қабілеті жетілмеген ба, ода қуып кетеді, басқа бір жауап беріп кетеді [We used ChatGPT for conversational practice. ChatGPT has a function where it can be used to converse with. We make ChatGPT ask questions from the students and make students interact with it. ChatGPT answers them but it lags maybe because it does not understand the students' accents, or the ability of ChatGPT is not yet developed]" (Chinese language teacher 1)

"Айтылымға сол бағанағындай айтқан суретті көрсетіп, сөйлем құрап айту деген сияқты [For speaking, the aforementioned pictures are presented and they are asked to create sentences based on them]" (Chinese language teacher 3)

However, a Chinese language teacher reported that ChatGPT might make mistakes regarding the tones in Chinese.

“Кейде сондай тонтардың өзгерістерін байқамай қалады. Кейбір ерекше мысалдарға, ерекше жағдайларға келгенде, тондардың өзгерісін байқамай қалады [Sometimes, it does not notice the how the tones change. When it comes to some certain examples, it does not notice the changes in tones]” (Chinese language teacher 1)

4.1.4. Differentiation and individual work

A Turkish language teacher expressed concerns regarding the differentiation in using AI chatbots.

“Жеке студенттің жағдайы ескерілмейді ол жерді [The individual situations of students are not considered]” (Turkish language teacher)

Furthermore, the rise of AI chatbots led to the elimination of hometasks by the Turkish language teacher.

“Мен де үй тапсырмасын… бермейтін болдым. Сабақтың үстінде орындатамын [I stopped giving hometasks. I make them do the tasks during the class]” (Turkish language teacher)

4.2. The observation of teachers’ lessons

As per the observations, only two teachers (One teacher of Chinese language and one teacher of French language) allowed the researcher to participate in their lessons. Below, the descriptive notes and reflective notes are presented.

4.2.1. Use of diagrams generated by the AI chatbot

During the lesson of the Chinese language, the teacher presented the AI generated diagram with the decimal numbers to the students. That was the only use of AI that was observed by the observer.

4.2.2. Assignments concerning AI

During the lesson of the Chinese language, the students presented their slides that were about the integration of AI. That was the only mention of AI use in the class.

4.3. SFL students

4.3.1. Second year students

4.3.1.1. Providing explanations about grammar points

SFL students stated that AI Chatbots (Gemini) helps with the explanations of grammar points

"Больше всего помогает с грамматикой и пиньинь [Most of the time, it helps with grammar and pinyin]" (Chinese language learner 1)

"I use it to grammar. I ask him to, like, explain step by step" (French language learner)

However, they stated that ChatGPT makes grammatical mistakes.

"He confuses the grammar sometimes, he's not fluent. It's still like robotic thing" (French language learner)

"When I don't understand some grammatical structures in Chinese… I ask ChatGPT when we use it, why we use, and the structure of the sentence just to understand the grammatical structure" (Chinese language learner 2)

"It gives me the definition where, in, which context we have to use it, also how we should use it, the forms of this grammar, also with what other grammar we can utter it in sentences and also it gives me examples" (Korean language learner)

"Материалды аламын, оқимын, яғни әрине біріншіліктен ешкім түсінбейді оны. Оны түсіну өте қиын болады. Сондықтан мен ChatGPT - ға сала отырып… оны жақсылап түсініп алуға мүмкіндік береді [I take the materials and first, nobody

understands. It is very difficult to understand. Therefore, I put it in the ChatGPT and it helps me to understand it well]" (Turkish language learner)

A Chinese language learner stated that it is difficult to see how to write the correct version of the characters.

"Sometimes, it gives wrong. On the bottom, it could be just a line but it's not a line it should be another stuff. So, to detect how it is written is hard with ChatGPT" (Chinese language learner)

4.3.1.2. The vocabulary

Some SFL students stated that they do not use AI chatbots to learn vocabulary as the words are provided.

"Я не пополняю словарный запас [I do not expand my vocabulary]" (Chinese language learner 1)

Some SFL students stated that they used ChatGPT to ask for explanations of the vocabulary.

"I ask him specifically to like explain in the sentences… I ask him to divide into мужской и женский [masculine and feminine]" (French language learner)

"I use ChatGPT…to find some vocabulary and then, also, to understand some collocations and so on and also to understand the grammar" (Korean language learner)

4.3.1.3. Preparation for the tests

Some SFL students stated that they used AI chatbots to prepare for the tests and exams.

"I used, the last time I was preparing for my midterm" (French language learner)

"I ask ChatGPT to write me all the, like, word list from HSK 1 and translate them with their pinyins and after that I asked to make some, how to say, questions, from HSK level first to practice that exam with ChatGPT" (Chinese language learner 2)

A Chinese and Korean language learner stated that they used to generate an essay in Chinese. However, it used complex structures there.

"Now, I am preparing to my midterm, so in this case, I was asking to ChatGPT to write me some essay, several essay topics. In that case, it helped me, but it gives very complex structured words from other levels" (Chinese language learner 2)

"And then I ask ChatGPT to give me some practical tasks starting from easy tasks, then middle tasks, and then some hard of course for my level. It make me some practice, then I can use it during my exams" (Korean language learner)

4.3.1.4. Pronunciation and speaking

A Chinese language learner stated that ChatGPT can be used to check pronunciation. However, Korean language learner stated that it could not check the speaking.

"Whenever I need to check whether I am pronouncing some certain tones correctly or not I use the ChatGPT " (Chinese language learner 1)

"It cannot make auditions and it cannot observe your speakings" (Korean language learner)

A Turkish language learner stated that ChatGPT might not understand the informal way of speaking.

"GPT - мен яғни бір өмірдегі досы сияқты сөйлесетін болса, сол кезде GPT, informal way дейді ғой, яғни бір бейресми сөздерді қолдануым мүмкін… Сол кезде дұрыс түсінбей қалуы мүмкін [If you talk with GPT like you talk with a friend… I

might speak in an informal way, using informal words. At that time, it might not understand me correctly]" (Turkish language learner)

4.3.1.5. Issues related to contextual meaning

A Chinese language learner stated that the AI Chatbot cannot comprehend the context where the word is used in at times.

"Он, допустим, порой не чувствует разницы между контекстами [He, sometimes, does not understand the difference between contexts]" (Chinese language learner 1)

4.3.2. Third year students

4.3.2.1. Providing explanations about grammar points

SFL students stated that they used it to ask about the grammar points.

"I think, uh, in my practice, I use it to like to like more deeply understand the grammar rules and if I have some like misunderstandings occur like about some rules, I use AI chatbots (ChatGPT) and it's really useful for me… Specifically, in French, we have a lot of like prepositions, and it's a bit umm, confusing when like in French, it's a bit confusing to use them because they can be like placed in many, many situations and contexts. So, I use ChatGPT and ask him to give me some like similar prepositions in English " (French language learner)

"...Сол грамматика бойынша басында кітапта түсіндіргені бойынша тек қана adjective - ке жаңағыдай алыс - жақын деген сияқты сөздерді қолданды. И мен дәл осылай 500 метр деген сияқтыны жазу структурасы қалай болатыны туралы сұрадым. И қателеспесем, кішкене бір қате болды ғой деймін [According to that grammar point, as it was explained in the book, after words such far and near, it used an

adjective. Then, I asked how I could write 500 metres in this structure. If I am not mistaken, there was a mistake there]" (Chinese language learner 1)

"Just a little bit, like to check my knowledge of the grammar. Well, for example, today, I did my homework in Korean, and I had to use like two grammar parts…So, I saw the examples, and I tried to replicate the examples on my own in other sentences, and I would check if I used the grammar correctly with other words" (Korean language learner)

"Ең бірінші енді, тілді бастап атқан кезде, несіне мән бересің ғой, типа, subject, object, verb қалай тұрады соған мән бересің, лингвистикада өткен тақырыптар бойынша. Сол структурасына қараған кезде, мен осыны немецкийді түсіндіріп берші деген кезде, и қазақша, ағылшынша екеуін түсіндіріп берші деген кезде, ол маған кәдімгідей түсіндіріп бере алды… Ол ағылшыншада солай, қазақшаға келгенде шатастырып алма, қазақшада verb соңында тұрады, етістік соңында тұрады деген сияқты қылып түсіндіріп берді [First of all, when you start learning the language, you pay attention to the subject, object, and verb. You pay attention to their positions in a sentence according to the linguistics course. Looking at that structure, when I asked it to explain the structure in German by comparing it to English and Kazakh, it was able to clearly explain it to me. It stated that in English, it is that way, when it comes to Kazakh, do not make a mistake, in Kazakh, the verb is placed in the end, the verb is placed in the end. In this way, it explained everything]" (German language learner)

"Он мне реально помогает в грамматике. Я ему говорю, вот объясни мне то-то, это. И он мне это объясняет. Допустим, в китайском языке вот так вот

используется для сравнения. Ты можешь использовать этот иероглиф, чтобы вставить его, допустим, после глагола или после существительного понять, что вот в таком-то контексте, в такой-то структуре ты можешь его использовать, чтобы что-то сравнить и, допустим, сказать сравнение на китайском языке. Вот в плане грамматики он помогает даже мне лучше… И были у меня ситуации, когда я ему скидывала, допустим, список иероглифов, и он мог, допустим, не до конца просканировать их. Из-за этого, допустим, он один иероглиф и прописывает, допустим, какой-то другой похожий. Из-за этого это вообще не очень эффективно. А я ему не смогу объяснить то, что нет, ты не прав. [He really helps me with grammar. I ask him, "Explain this or that to me." And he explains it to me. For example, in Chinese, the character is used for comparison like this. You can use this character to insert it, say, after a verb or after a noun to understand that in such-and-such a context, in such-and-such a structure, you can use it to compare something and, say, make a comparison in Chinese. In terms of grammar, he even helps me better… And there were instances, when I sent him, let's say, a list of characters and he could just not scan all of them. Due to this, there is one character and he writes, let's say, the character that is similar to it. Due to this, it is not effective at all. I can't even explain by saying like "you are not right".]" (Chinese language learner 2)

Some SFL students, however, stated that AI chatbots (ChatGPT) make too many mistakes.

"Негізі көп көмектеседі деп ойлаймын. Бірақ дәл осы қытай тілінде жоқ. Себебі қытай тілінде өте көп қателер жібереді [Actually, I think it helps a lot. However, in

this Chinese language, no, because it makes too many mistakes in Chinese]" (Chinese language learner 1)

"Бірақ бұл дәл біздің кітапта берілген грамматиканы дұрыс түсінбей, қытай тілінде басқаша жауап беру мүмкін [However, it does not understand tha grammar given in our textbooks and might answer differently in Chinese]" (Chinese language learner 1)

"Допустим, мне же надо знать, как пишется тот или иной иероглиф. Но именно ChatGPT, он не может мне просто структурировано показать, именно какую, допустим, первую строчку я должна писать, как должна продолжить и так далее. И из-за этого я использую реальные приложения, которые помогают мне подтянуть китайский [Let's say I need to know how to write a particular character. But ChatGPT can't simply show me in a structured way exactly what, say, first line I should write, how I should continue, and so on. And because of this, I use real apps to help me improve my Chinese]" (Chinese language learner 2)

"It's about like the, as I said before, it's about tenses. For example, it says this is goes well" (Turkish language learner)

"There were mistakes like, for example, using, for example, even in the letters, when you write the Korean letter, you have to write one syllable, and in the syllable, there would be a mistake in how the letters are used. For example, it's supposed to be 문 (door), but it says 물 (water) instead" (Korean language learner)

"Тек ағылшынша ғана өте әдемі шығарып береді. Басқа тілдерде сәл, именно ол тілдің өзіндік ережелерін, өзіндік анандай, нелері болады ғой, исключениялары, exception - дары болады ғой. Сондай моменттерді ұмытып кеткен кездерін бір -

екі рет байқап қалған кезім болған [It generates answers in English well. In other languages, it might forget the exceptions and unique grammatical rules. There were moments when I notices that]" (German language learner)

4.3.2.2. The vocabulary

Some SFL students mentioned using AI chatbots to learn about vocabulary.

"Also, like, similarly, like, to the songs, because I don't know the vocabulary, I didn't know, I learned like ten words just from one verse already, so I would also copy-paste and ask for, like, full meaning, and also explain why this specific word is used in this verse, and not, let's say, another version of this word" (Korean language learner)

Some SFL students mentioned using DeepSeek for learning vocabulary.

"I would say, like, yes, it helped, but it couldn't explain us why this is the best option rather than that one. After each unit, we have 10 question tests, just like a multiple choice questions. And most of the time, we just get these tests for our finals, for our midterms. So, yeah, we have to be ready for them, too. And we were just like getting prepared for that one. And sometimes, like, için nad halinde and etc. They're just like the same or synonym sometimes to each other. And while you are asking why this answer is correct, why not this one? it can't explain you. Like, then after this one, oh, yes, you're correct. The B option is correct. However, the previous answer was just like, A is correct. (8:00) You got this? Like, it's just like changing its mind after you're asking for the explanation" (Turkish language learner)

"Ал қазір ChatGPT болғаннан барлығын бір промптпен - ақ істейсің. Мен қазір саған сөз беріп отырамын, соған қазір сен definition, example беріп отыр и менің экзамплдарымды тексеріп бер деген сияқты бір промптпен, бір - екі промптпен

ғана істей аласың да [And now, as there is ChatGPT, you can do everything with just a prompt. I can just ask it like 'Now, I will give you a word and you provide me a definition and an example for it. Also, check my examples']" (German language learner)

"He (ChatGPT) mostly just translates it for me to one goal. Sometimes we have like 30-40 words in one page and he just translates it for me. That's all. I haven't used it like more deeply to learn French" (French language learner)

Some SFL students mentioned that they use ChatGPT but some stated that it can make many mistakes in terms of vocabulary.

"Так как в китайском языке очень много иероглифов, и они все между собой похожи, я иногда присылаю ему фотографии. ...Можешь, пожалуйста, мне объяснить разницу между тем или иным иероглифом. И он мне дает, допустим, конкретные примеры, в каких случаях разница между ними и в каких случаях используется тот или этот иероглиф [Since there are so many characters in Chinese, and they're all similar, I sometimes send him photos. ...Can you please explain the difference between this or that character to me? And he gives me, say, specific examples of when the difference is between them and when this or that character is used]" (Chinese language learner 2)

"There were also mistakes in meaning of the words, and how you use these words in context. There were mistakes like this, and I would have to change it and check it many, many times to make sure that it's correct" (Korean language learner)

4.3.2.3. Pronunciation and speaking

A Turkish language learner stated that they tried using it for speaking practice.

"I mean, like, if you start talking, you know, like, in AI bots, we have the audio, yes. You can talk to them using that one and et cetera. (14:28) So, yeah, we have used that sometimes, like, like, I have to practice my Turkish. Can you ask some of the questions and et cetera? So, you are just, like, having a chat, yes, et cetera. The conversation itself, the interaction. This is pretty good. But after some time, after three or fours, you know, the lines of the dialogue, it just stops because it doesn't have any kind of creativity or about the questions" (Turkish language learner)

"Но у нас, в принципе, не очень сильно развита именно разговорная часть именно во втором иностранном языке, так что, когда я что-то не понимаю, я могу всегда обратиться к искусственному интеллекту [But actually, we don't have a very well-developed spoken language in our second foreign language, so when I don't understand something, I can always turn to artificial intelligence]" (Chinese language learner 2)

However, the Chinese language learner stated that the chatbot might not effective.

"Потом, наверное, произношение, но... Нет, произношение не так эффективно, я использую другое приложение для китайского языка для этого [Then, maybe, for the pronunciation but… No, it's not that effective for practicing the pronunciation. I use other apps for this]" (Chinese language learner 2)

4.3.2.4. Preparation for tests

Some SFL students stated that they used AI chatbots to prepare for the tests such as midterms.

"I use them, I use them especially when I am like studying for my midterm and I am like going through all the grammar and vocabulary I just learnt during the semester" (French language learner)

However, a Turkish language learner stated that it does not work well in Turkish.

"And this is very hard while I'm preparing for my midterms and the finals for my Turkish language using chatgpt or any kind of AI tools. And it gives you very, you know, with many kind of mistakes and it's not precise about the answer. If you say, oh, this is incorrect, it's going to change the answer. And it's really hard to learn or do any kind of exercises with any kind of chatbots… I wouldn't prefer learning any of my Turkish language or preparing for my any kind of examination with this AI chatbots" (Turkish language learner)

4.3.3. Fourth year students

4.3.3.1. Issues related to contextual meaning

Some participants stated that the words provided by the AI chatbot might not adhere to the context.

"Or some words might be, translation is correct, but the usage might be not that well in the context" (Turkish language learner 1)

"Unfortunately, I cannot recall the sentence itself or the characters. But the problem was that there was a misuse of the word. So, it was not appropriately used. You know, in Chinese, it's complicated, right? Because there is one word, you can use it in this context, but you cannot use it in another context, right? So, there was something related to tone, to formality" (Chinese language learner)

Another participant stated that the context might be too weak for the students they teach German to.

"Like, not always, but it may happen that, like, some words may be not in the, like, the context may be too weak for students. Because I know, like, my students can do more, can

do, like, better. And the context is too weak. So, I may change the context, maybe change some words. Yes, or, I don't know, maybe change" (German language learner)

4.3.3.2. The Vocabulary

The SFL students stated how they used AI chatbots to learn vocabulary.

"Mainly to translate. I give the list of words and AI gives me sentences, the usage examples and translation to save time because I don't want to type in every single word, you know. What else? Sometimes I take a photo of the text, ask for translation. So, mainly I use it as a translator" (Turkish language learner 1)

"Because it can provide us with different tasks. Maybe controlled practice, semi-controlled and free practice also give us tasks to practice. Yes, and also teach us new words and vocabulary in an easy way" (German language learner)

"…in German, I used, but I didn't know the definition of the words. And I asked him, the ChatGPT, to give them in the context" (German language learner)

"…in German, I used, but I didn't know the definition of the words. And I asked him, the ChatGPT, to give them in the context" (German language learner)

"At that time, I use ChatGPT. I type the word and ask the meaning. I didn't remember the words, but I used like that… They can... they can... It can give extra informations about the word. Maybe examples or history of the word. How, like, how it was formed, maybe… But sometimes when I need some definitions of the word or some meanings of the word, yes. Or maybe..." (Turkish language learner 2)

"I remember when I had many vocabulary, like a list of words that I had to remember, and I asked them, give me effective ways to remember it quickly or give me exercises. So first, he would give me like practices to learn, then he would actually generate me

exercise that I, was, would actively use these words, like in practice, and I would do that for a week, and I remember all of the words to link them… And for example, for some specific hard words, I asked ChatGPT to help me to learn this one. Give me, give me examples in this, like this on my phone." (Korean language learner)

"I don't remember. I think it was chatbot. To make different kinds of exercises based on those categories of words" (French language learner 1)

"So I just like tell him what kind of vocab. I need to use, this and that grammar structures, and then give me exercises to practice this" (French language learner 2)

4.3.3.3. Feedback

The SFL students stated that AI chatbots help them by providing feedback.

"And then you, whenever I try to write, of course, I do it myself, and then go to GPT and consult. I'm like, what do you say about my writing? Can you rate it? Can you evaluate it? And then I get my weak points, and I try to find out how to improve them. And then I'm not only improving them, but I also ask him about like, what is the rule? What is it about? Why here it's like that? Why here it's like that? So like, I'm kind of not using it as like ready-made homeworks, home tasks, but I'm using it as like, I know the base, but everything else I can learn from it" (French language learner 2)

"So, the, like, the conversation was authentic, realistic, and it, if I made a mistake, it corrected. No, not immediately, but it gave suggestion to me how to, like, pronounce something better or how, which word would be better here" (German language learner)

"And I would ask him to just check if my usage was correct. Just guessing, you know, guessing the context. And he was like, this is actually not natural for French. This idea is better. And I would mainly use it to check if my language is natural or new. If how I use

new words for me in French were natural. Yes, and he gave feedback. And as you were getting the responses, kind of responses from the chatbot… I really like how this cohesion works better in French. Because I see that chatbot keeps reminding me about like, this is unnatural in French. And gives another idea for idioms, you know, or context. A better context to use them. And I'm not very advanced in French yet." (French language learner 1)

4.3.3.4 Preparation for tests

Some of the students mentioned that they used the chatbots to prepare for the exams.

"*And the second way I use it is, of course, preparing for my exams. So I just like tell him what kind of vocab. I need to use, this and that grammar structures, and then give me exercises to practice this, for example, conditional or this tense. And then it gives me the example, like the gaps or something, and I fill them in, and then I ask, like, give me the answers" (French language learner 2)*

"I'm trying to recall some things. Before midterm, before finals, because there are too many grammar topics, and ChatGPT is really good at generating exercises, and when you write your response, he can check it and mention that, you remember, this is actually that, and you should take into consideration that, and I was like, yes, oh, thank you…" (Korean language learner)

4.3.3.5 Providing explanations about grammar points

One student stated that ChatGPT can make mistakes in terms of grammar.

"Okay. So, when it comes to Chinese, whenever I ask a chat GPT, for example, to explain me something or to help me create a sentence or to check my sentence, and after that my teacher checks it, it turns out that it's not that right" (Chinese language learner)

4.3.3.6 Pronunciation and speaking

Among the fourth year students, one student stated that they used one chatbot that was quite helpful for practicing speaking. Unfortunately, the student could not recall how the chatbot was called.

> *"So, the, like, the conversation was authentic, realistic, and it, if I made a mistake, it corrected. No, not immediately, but it gave suggestion to me how to, like, pronounce something better or how, which word would be better here. Yes" (German language learner)*

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

The current research investigated the perspectives of SFL teachers and students on the use of AI chatbots. Thus, this chapter will compare the findings of the study with the results and findings of other researchers in the field of language education. The structure of the chapter will be in accordance with the aim of the study and research questions.

5.1. The opportunities and challenges of using chatbots according to students

The research revealed that students use AI chatbots in a variety of ways. As the research covered, second, third and fourth year students. This part will cover how students in these years used the chatbot.

In a study conducted by Pan et al. (2025), 18 - 20 year old Chinese university students practiced reading in English with the AI chatbot called ReadMate. However, in the current study, almost none of the second year students used AI chatbots to practice their reading skills in the second language. They preferred “real” materials to the texts generated by AI chatbots. The same pattern was observed regarding the listening skill. The second year students did not report using AI chatbots for practicing their listening skills. This finding supports the point made by Wu and Yu (2024) where they stated that chatbots might not be widely used in order to practice listening skills.

Regarding speaking skills, some second year students stated that they used ChatGPT to practice speaking. A second year student who is learning Chinese stated that they used it to check the pronunciation of theirs. A second year student who is learning Korean, however reported that it is inadequate in checking speaking. A second year student who is learning Turkish stated that ChatGPT might not understand the informal speech. These findings

contradicted the results of the study conducted by Kemelbekova et al. (2024) where they stated that AI chatbots aided in checking the accuracy of pronunciation. However, it has to be stated that in that study the target language was English.

However, the findings of the current study support the results of Zhou et al. (2025) where it was stated that AI chatbots yielded mild improvements in pronunciation. Again, it has to be noted that the target language in that study was English as well.

Certain third year students stated that they used AI chatbots to practice speaking. However, they also stated that it stops working after some time.

One German language learner among the fourth year students recalled that they used one chatbot to have conversations.

In a study by Zhang and Huang (2024), it was revealed that chatbots may enrich the productive and receptive vocabulary of students. In addition, chatbots may assist in learning incidental vocabulary as well (Zhang & Huang, 2024). This finding was both supported and contradicted in this current research. In terms of vocabulary, a second year student who is learning Chinese stated that they do not use AI chatbots for vocabulary. However, students who were learning French and Korean stated that they did. A student who is learning Korean stated that they use it to understand the collocations and a student who is learning French reported that they ask ChatGPT to identify how a word is used in feminine and masculine gender based on French grammar.

Junior students reported that they used AI chatbots to ask for definitions of vocabulary and how they are used in different sentences. However, they also acknowledged that AI chatbots can make many mistakes in identifying the right context for the word or how it is written in Chinese language, especially.

Senior students stated that they also used AI chatbots to ask for definitions of the words and how they are used in different contexts.

In terms of grammar, almost all of the students stated that they used AI chatbots for grammar. They used AI chatbots to explain the grammatical rules step by step and how to use it in certain contexts. However, there was a student who indicated that AI chatbots might make a mistake in grammar. This finding might support the results by Zhou et al. (2025) where they saw mild improvements in grammar. One Chinese language learner who was in their fourth year of study mentioned that there were mistakes in the sentences they asked ChatGPT to generate.

Third year students stated that they also used AI chatbots to ask for grammatical explanations. However, the learners of Chinese and Turkish languages expressed negative opinions about its capabilities in explaining grammar rules and spelling.

In terms of vocabulary, a second year student stated that they used the AI chatbot to find words and collocations. This finding supports the finding by Kim and Su (2024). In their study, students stated that it provided authentic expressions.

Regarding the topic of feedback, only fourth year students mentioned that they used AI chatbots to improve their writing and speaking skills and receive feedback on it. This finding coincides with the results of Escalante et al. (2023).

Some new findings were related to preparations for tests and contextual meaning. Here, almost all of the students reported that they used AI chatbots to practice in preparation for the tests. Mostly, the students asked the chatbots to create exercises in their chosen language and stated that it was quite effective to use them in that way. In terms of context, AI chatbots might not understand the difference between different contexts according to some students.

None of the students mentioned using chatbots for having full conversations in their chosen second language. They mainly used it to ask for explanations and corrections.

5.2. The opportunities and challenges of using chatbots according to teachers

SFL teachers reported that they used AI chatbots such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Grok - 3, and Doubao. They used these chatbots mostly to create tasks and activities for the lessons. Furthermore, there were teachers who stated that they used AI chatbots to receive feedback on their syllabuses. In addition, there was a teacher who stated that they used the chatbot to check the tasks. The task was completed correctly. However, the AI chatbot indicated that there were mistakes in the task. SFL teachers expressed their concerns regarding pronunciation and differentiation. They stated that AI chatbots do not understand the pronunciation of the students and make mistakes. In terms of differentiation, one teacher said that AI chatbots are not able to adhere to the individual needs of the students. These findings support the findings by Sayici and Aydin (2025) where they stated that EFL teachers used AI chatbots to create lesson plans and quizzes. They also stated the aforementioned mistakes that are made by AI chatbots such as incorrect assessment of the tasks.

Concerning the results of the observation, only French language teacher and Chinese language teacher allowed the researcher to observe their lessons. Chinese language teacher used AI chatbots to create diagrams to explain the topic and French language teacher required students to do the assignments with AI.

Interpreting the data through the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), while the PU and PEOU were moderately high based on the answers of SFL teachers and students, some expressed the aforementioned challenges of using AI chatbots, namely learners of Chinese and Turkish. This decreased the PU and PEOU regarding these learners. To be more precise,

regarding PU, majority of the students expressed the benefits such as the assistance with grammar and vocabulary based in the interview data. This increases the PU among the students. Regarding the SFL teachers, the PU is high as well based on the advantages they presented. However, the PEOU might be lower based on the challenges both the students and SFL teachers expressed regarding the mistakes the chatbots can make.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

The rise of AI technology has affected many fields. Among those fields, there is a field of language education. Most of the studies focused on how AI chatbots can be used in learning a foreign language: English. AI chatbots were used to improve speaking skills, grammar and vocabulary retention. Among the prevailing studies on the use of AI in foreign language learning, there seems to be little research done in terms of other languages. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the perspectives of SFL students and teachers. The aim of this research paper was to investigate the perspectives of SFL teachers and students on the use of AI chatbots.

The study is qualitative in nature. The study employs a descriptive research design. According to Dulock (1993), the aim of the descriptive research is “to describe systematically and accurately the facts and characteristics of a given population or area of interest” (p. 154).

In the current study, there were 24 participants overall. There were seven SFL teachers and 17 SFL students. The sampling method was both purposive and snowball sampling. The participants were sent consent letters via emails. Regarding the data collection process, the semi - structured interview was conducted with teachers and students. The interviews were conducted face to face. The interviews were analyzed thematically and the themes were generated inductively. Furthermore, observations were conducted. The researcher acted as a passive observer in two lessons.

The limitation might be in terms of responses based on gender as the researcher could not recruit an equal number of male and female participants for each second language. In addition, the generalizability of the results might be another limitation of the study.

According to the major findings, Chinese language teachers use AI chatbots such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Deepseek, Groc - 3, and Doubao. A Korean language teacher implemented ChatGPT. French, German, and Turkish language teachers mentioned ChatGPT. However, they did not actively implement AI chatbots in their practice. As regards to students, they use ChatGPT, Gemini, Deepseek, Doubao, and Claude. SFL teachers mostly used AI chatbots to generate tasks for the students and to correct their syllabuses. As per the students, the students used AI chatbots for grammar, vocabulary, speaking practice, preparation for the tests, and feedback. SFL teachers and students acknowledged the challenges of using AI chatbots such as inability to detect pronunciation, mistakes in grammar and identification of the context.

In summary, it became clear how AI chatbots can be used in learning a second language and the types of limitations that AI chatbots might have. Therefore, it is suggested that AI chatbots need to be used carefully in the second language other than English by considering the advantages and disadvantages of it. The future research could be conducted as both quantitative and qualitative research to widen the scope of the research. Furthermore, it could be more focused on a certain category of languages.

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Appendix A

SDU University

School of Education and Humanities

Interview Participation Consent Form

Consent Form for students' participation in a research study entitled as

"**AI chatbots in Second Language Acquisition and Learning: Teachers' and Students' Perspectives in Higher Education**".

This interview is being conducted as a part of the thesis paper.

Dear participant,

You are cordially invited to participate in this study. This consent form will help you to decide to take part. Please, get familiar with all the information below and feel free to ask any questions.

Purpose: The aim of this research is to identify the perceptions of SFL teachers and students on the use of AI chatbots.

Participant Selection: You were selected as a possible participant in this study because of your status as a SFL teacher/ a student studying a second language.

This consent form is crucial for the researcher to ensure that you understand the purpose of your participation and that you agree to the conditions of the interview. Therefore, please read the following conditions to certify that you approve them:

- the interview will be recorded and a transcript will be produced
- the transcript of the interview will be analyzed by Abykhanov Bagdaulet as the research investigator
- access to the interview transcript will be limited to Abykhanov Bagdaulet

• the actual recording will be kept

• any variation of the conditions above will only occur with your further explicit approval

• you may answer the questions in the language that is the most convenient for you (Kazakh, Russian, or English)

Confidentiality: Any information obtained for this study through which you might be identified will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. Your answers will be anonymized in the reporting of the results. Raw data will be maintained in a password protected folder and no identifying information will be used in the final paper or subsequent publications. No one, other than the researcher, will have access to the raw data. All audio recordings, video recordings, and other documents, with the exception of the consent forms, will not be shared with any third party at the conclusion of this study.

Refusal/Withdrawal: Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time without any further commitments.

Contact: If you have any questions about this study, you can contact me, Primary Researcher(s): Abykhanov Bagdaulet, at 241302002@sdu.edu.kz.

By signing this consent form I certify that I _____ agree to the conditions of the interview.

_____ _____

Signature Date

Appendix B

Interview protocol (one - on - one)

Project: **AI chatbots in Second Language Acquisition and Learning: Teachers' and Students' Perspectives in Higher Education**

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of Interviewee:

The purpose: The aim of this research is to identify the perceptions of SFL teachers and students on the use of AI chatbots.

The data will be collected based on your experience with AI chatbots in second language learning

The audiotaped data will be stored in a password protected folder and only the researcher will have access to that folder

The interview will take 30 minutes

This is the consent form. Please, read it again and sign it.

Turn on the recorder and test it.

Interview questions for students

1) Can you introduce yourself briefly?
2) What is your opinion on AI chatbots?
3) What kind of AI chatbots do you use to practice your second language in your free time?
4) What kind of AI chatbots do you use to practice your second language during the lessons?
5) How did you learn about AI chatbots and why did you choose to use it? Or why not?
6) When using Ai chatbots, do you find its responses reliable and accurate? What incorrect answers or issues have you encountered?
7) What do you think sets the chatbot that you use very often from other similar products or services available on the internet?
8) Can you remember any other particular nuances that you noticed while using the AI chatbot?
9) What kind of impact do you think ChatGPT will have on the future of humanity? Are you optimistic and supportive of ChatGPT's widespread adoption, or are you filled with concerns?

Interview questions for teachers

1) Can you introduce yourself briefly?
2) What is your opinion on AI chatbots?
3) What kind of AI chatbots do you use to practice your second language in your free time?
4) What kind of AI chatbots do you use to make students practice the second language during the lessons?
5) How did you learn about AI chatbots and why did you choose to use it? Or why not?
6) How do you use AI chatbots?
7) When using AI chatbots, do you find its responses reliable and accurate? What incorrect answers or issues have you encountered?
8) Can you remember any other particular nuances that you noticed while using the AI chatbot?
9) What kind of impact do you think ChatGPT will have on the future of humanity? Are you optimistic and supportive of ChatGPT's widespread adoption, or are you filled with concerns?

Appendix C

Observational field notes

Setting:

Observer:

Role of an observer:

Time:

Length of observation:

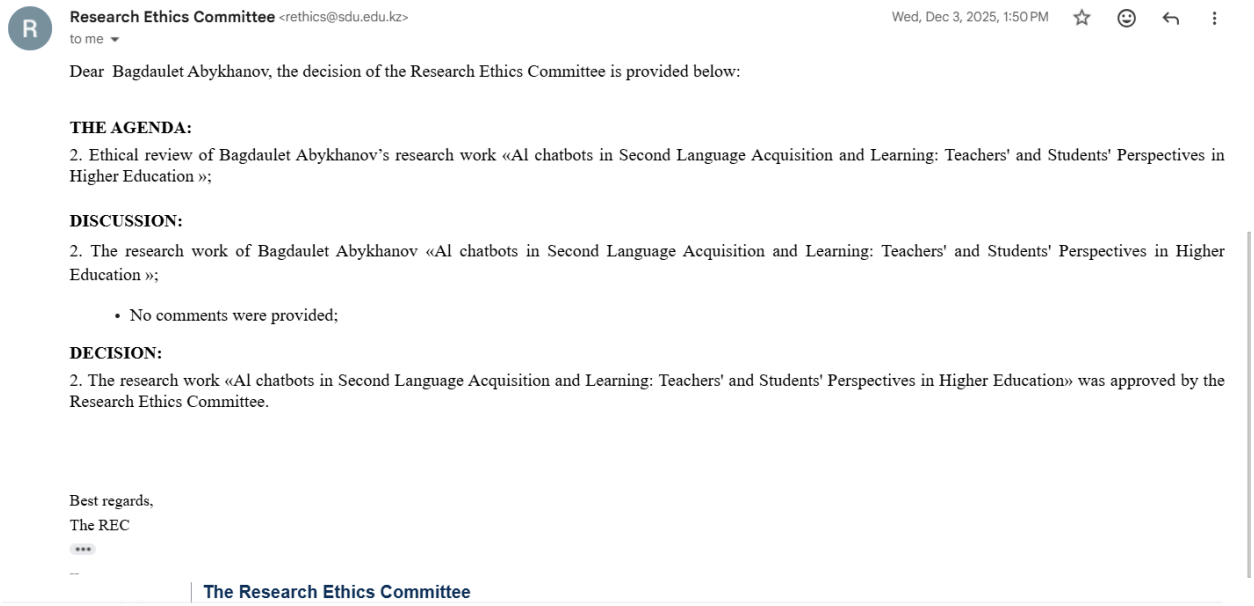
Purpose:

- To record how the teacher uses the material generated AI chatbot or how the teacher uses it during the class
- To record how the students react and interact with the AI chatbot

Descriptive notes	Reflective notes

Appendix D

Approval from the Ethics Committee



Research Ethics Committee <rethics@sdu.edu.kz> Wed, Dec 3, 2025, 1:50 PM

to me

Dear Bagdaulet Abykhanov, the decision of the Research Ethics Committee is provided below:

THE AGENDA:

2. Ethical review of Bagdaulet Abykhanov's research work «Al chatbots in Second Language Acquisition and Learning: Teachers' and Students' Perspectives in Higher Education »;

DISCUSSION:

2. The research work of Bagdaulet Abykhanov «Al chatbots in Second Language Acquisition and Learning: Teachers' and Students' Perspectives in Higher Education »;

- No comments were provided;

DECISION:

2. The research work «Al chatbots in Second Language Acquisition and Learning: Teachers' and Students' Perspectives in Higher Education» was approved by the Research Ethics Committee.

Best regards,

The REC

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The Research Ethics Committee