

**EXPLORING EFL STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF USING
CHATGPT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING**



THESIS

Submitted to the Department of English Education in a
Partial fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of Strata I
(Bachelor of Education) in English Language Education



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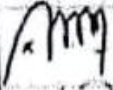
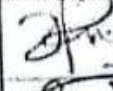


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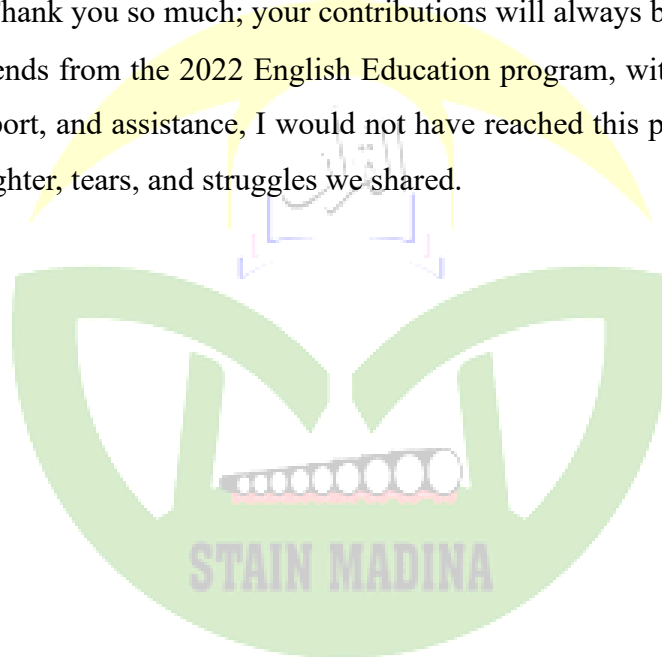
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

- My beloved parents have provided endless moral and material support and prayers for my success, as there are no words as beautiful as the prayers from parents. A simple thank you will never be enough to repay their kindness.
- My siblings Ismail, Mhd Ilyas, Mhd Ali Hanapiah, Khodijah, Kholilah, Abdan Syukro, Mhd Hanif and Aulia Riski, constantly provide support and encouragement; my gratitude and love go to you all.
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MOTTO

“FA INNA MA’AL ‘USRI YUSRO”

“SESUNGGUHNYA BERSAMA KESULITAN ADA KEMUDAHAN”

“LAA YUKALLIFULLAAHU NAFSAN ILLAA WUS’AHAA”

**“ALLAH TIDAK MEMBEKANI SESEORANG MELAINKAN SESUAI
DENGAN KESANGGUPANNYA.”**

“THE JOURNEY IS THE REWARD”

(Steve Jobs)

**“NOT EVERY JOURNEY IS EASY, BUT EVERY STEP BRINGS ME
CLOSER TO MY DESTINATION”**

(Banda Neira)

**“NOT EVERYTHING WE STRIVE FOR WILL BE EASY, BUT EVERY
STRUGGLE ALWAYS TEACHES US TO BECOME STRONGER.”**

-Nurhayati(Researcher)

STAIN MADINA

ABSTRACT

Nurhayati, (2026). *Exploring Students' Perceptions of Using ChatGPT. Thesis. Department of English Education, State College of Islamic Studies (STAIN) Mandailing Natal.*

The rapid integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in higher education has significantly transformed how English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students engage with language learning. This study aims to explore students' perceptions of using ChatGPT in English language learning and how ChatGPT influences their language learning process. A descriptive qualitative research design was employed, involving ten second-semester active students from the English Language Education (TBI) Study Program at STAIN Mandailing Natal, selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered using a screening questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, then analyzed using the qualitative framework of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings revealed that students held overwhelmingly positive perceptions of ChatGPT, viewing it as an intuitive, 24/7 personal tutor that provides a low-anxiety, judgment-free practice environment. Furthermore, ChatGPT constructively influenced students' English acquisition by serving as an interactive scaffold for writing support, grammar refinement, contextual translation, vocabulary expansion, and self-directed learning. Nevertheless, students maintained critical awareness regarding AI limitations, including data inaccuracies (AI hallucinations), rigid translations, and the risk of over-dependency. The study concludes that while ChatGPT serves as a valuable digital scaffold for autonomous learning, it cannot replace human educators, who remain essential as socio-humanistic facilitators and ethical guides.

Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence, ChatGPT, EFL Learning, Self-Directed Learning, Students' Perceptions.*

ABSTRAK

Nurhayati, (2026). *Exploring Students' Perceptions of Using ChatGPT. Thesis. Department of English Education, State College of Islamic Studies (STAIN) Mandailing Natal.*

Integrasi yang pesat dari Kecerdasan Buatan (AI) dalam pendidikan tinggi telah secara signifikan mengubah cara mahasiswa Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing (EFL) terlibat dalam pembelajaran bahasa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi persepsi mahasiswa terhadap penggunaan ChatGPT dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris serta bagaimana ChatGPT memengaruhi proses pembelajaran bahasa mereka. Desain penelitian kualitatif deskriptif digunakan, yang melibatkan sepuluh mahasiswa aktif semester kedua dari Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris (TBI) di STAIN Mandailing Natal, yang dipilih melalui pengambilan sampel purposif. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan kuesioner penyaringan dan wawancara semi-terstruktur, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan kerangka kerja kualitatif Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa memiliki persepsi yang sangat positif terhadap ChatGPT, memandangnya sebagai tutor pribadi yang intuitif dan tersedia 24/7 yang menyediakan lingkungan latihan yang minim kecemasan dan bebas penilaian. Selain itu, ChatGPT secara konstruktif memengaruhi penguasaan bahasa Inggris mahasiswa dengan berperan sebagai penopang interaktif untuk dukungan menulis, penyempurnaan tata bahasa, terjemahan kontekstual, perluasan kosakata, dan pembelajaran mandiri. Meskipun demikian, para mahasiswa tetap memiliki kesadaran kritis mengenai keterbatasan AI, termasuk ketidakakuratan data (halusinasi AI), terjemahan yang kaku, dan risiko ketergantungan yang berlebihan. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa meskipun ChatGPT berfungsi sebagai sarana digital yang berharga untuk pembelajaran mandiri, ChatGPT tidak dapat menggantikan pendidik manusia, yang tetap memegang peranan penting sebagai fasilitator sosial-humanistik dan pembimbing etika.

Kata kunci: *Kecerdasan Buatan, ChatGPT, Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing, Pembelajaran Mandiri, Persepsi Siswa.*

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Panyabungan, Agustus 2026
The Researcher

Nurhayati

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

The rapid development of technology has transformed many aspects of human life, including education. One of the most significant technological advancements in recent years is Artificial Intelligence (AI). AI has become increasingly integrated into educational settings and has changed the way students access information, learn new concepts, and complete academic tasks. According to Luckin et al.(2016), AI has the potential to support personalized learning, improve access to educational resources, and facilitate more efficient learning experiences. The integration of AI into education has created new opportunities for students and educators. AI-powered tools allow learners to obtain information quickly, receive immediate feedback, and access learning support anytime and anywhere. As digital technologies continue to evolve, educational institutions are increasingly encouraging the use of technology to enhance learning outcomes and prepare students for the digital era Holmes et al. (2019).

In recent years, the emergence of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) has introduced a new way for students to interact with digital learning technologies. Unlike conventional educational applications, generative AI is capable of producing human-like responses, generating ideas, explaining complex concepts, and assisting users in completing various academic tasks. As a result, many higher education students have begun to integrate generative AI into their learning activities because it offers immediate support and encourages more flexible and independent learning Crompton & Burke (2023).

Among various AI technologies, ChatGPT has emerged as one of the most widely used AI-powered chatbots in education. Developed by OpenAI, ChatGPT is capable of generating human-like responses and assisting users in performing various tasks, such as answering questions, explaining concepts, summarizing information, and generating ideas. Since its release, ChatGPT has gained significant attention from students, educators, and researchers

worldwide because of its ability to support learning activities efficiently Kasneci et al. (2023). The increasing popularity of ChatGPT has influenced the way students engage with learning materials. Many university students use ChatGPT to understand difficult concepts, complete assignments, search for information, translate texts, and prepare academic presentations. The accessibility and convenience offered by ChatGPT make it an attractive learning tool for students in higher education Tlili et al. (2023).

In English language learning ChatGPT has become particularly useful because it can provide explanations of grammar, vocabulary, writing, reading, and pronunciation. Students can interact with ChatGPT in a conversational manner, allowing them to practice language skills and receive instant feedback. Consequently ChatGPT is increasingly being adopted as a supplementary learning resource by English language learners Rahman & Watanobe (2023).

As the use of Artificial Intelligence continues to expand in higher education, understanding students' perceptions has become increasingly important. Students' perceptions influence their acceptance, trust, and willingness to use AI technologies as learning tools. Positive perceptions may encourage meaningful learning experiences and improve learning engagement, whereas negative perceptions may hinder the effective integration of AI into educational practices. Therefore, exploring students' perceptions can provide valuable insights for educators and institutions in designing appropriate strategies for implementing AI in learning Al-Zahrani & Alasmari (2024).

Despite its benefits the use of ChatGPT in education has generated different responses among students. Some students perceive ChatGPT as a helpful learning assistant that improves understanding and supports academic performance. Others express concerns regarding the accuracy of information, ethical issues, and overreliance on AI technologies. These varying opinions suggest that students may have different perceptions of using ChatGPT based on their experiences and learning needs Kasneci et al. (2023).

Students' perceptions play an important role in determining whether a technology is accepted and effectively utilized. According to Robbins & Judge

(2019), perception refers to the process through which individuals organize and interpret information in order to give meaning to their environment. In educational contexts students' perceptions may influence their attitudes, behaviors, and decisions regarding the adoption of technological tools such as ChatGPT. A positive perception of ChatGPT may encourage students to use the technology more frequently for learning purposes. Conversely a negative perception may discourage students from utilizing the technology despite its potential benefits. Therefore understanding students' perceptions is important for identifying how ChatGPT is viewed and utilized in academic settings.

Recent studies have also shown that students generally perceive generative Artificial Intelligence as a useful learning tool that supports academic activities, particularly in completing assignments, generating ideas, and improving understanding of learning materials. Nevertheless, students also express concerns regarding excessive dependence on AI, academic integrity, and the possibility of reducing critical engagement during the learning process. These findings indicate that students' perceptions of ChatGPT are complex and influenced by both its educational benefits and potential challenges. Therefore, further investigation is needed to understand students' perceptions in different educational contexts Baidoo-Anu et al. (2024).

Several previous studies have investigated students' perceptions of ChatGPT in education. For example Chan & Hu (2023) found that students generally viewed ChatGPT positively because it provided quick access to information and assisted them in completing academic tasks. The study highlighted the usefulness of ChatGPT as a supplementary learning tool in higher education. Similarly, Farrokhnia et al. (2024) reported that many students perceived ChatGPT as an effective educational resource that enhanced learning flexibility and supported independent learning. Their findings indicated that students appreciated the convenience and accessibility offered by AI-powered technologies.

Another study conducted by Cotton et al. (2024) revealed that students considered ChatGPT beneficial for improving learning efficiency and academic productivity. However the study also noted concerns regarding the

reliability of information and the possibility of excessive dependence on AI-generated responses. Although previous studies have provided valuable insights into students' perceptions of ChatGPT, most of them were conducted in different educational contexts and focused primarily on the benefits and challenges of using ChatGPT. Research specifically exploring students' perceptions of using ChatGPT in Indonesian higher education institutions, particularly in smaller institutions, remains limited. This gap highlights the need for further investigation to understand how students perceive ChatGPT within their own educational environment.

Based on preliminary observations conducted by the researcher among students of the English Language Education Study Program at STAIN Mandailing Natal, it was found that many students have utilized ChatGPT for various academic activities. Students reported using ChatGPT to complete assignments, understand course materials, search for information, and assist with academic writing. However students appeared to have different views regarding the usefulness and reliability of ChatGPT.

These differences in perception may be influenced by several factors, including students' previous experiences with ChatGPT, frequency of use, digital literacy skills, academic needs, perceived usefulness, ease of use, and trust in the information generated by the chatbot. Since these factors may shape how students perceive and utilize ChatGPT, it is important to investigate them further. Considering the increasing use of ChatGPT among university students and the limited research conducted in the context of STAIN Mandailing Natal, this study is important to provide a deeper understanding of students' perceptions of using ChatGPT and the factors influencing those perceptions. Therefore, this study entitled "Exploring Students' Perceptions of Using ChatGPT" aims to explore students' perceptions of using ChatGPT and identify the factors that influence those perceptions.

B. Formulation of the Problem

Based on the background of the study, researcher formulates the research questions as follows:

1. How do EFL students' perceive the use of ChatGPT in language english learning?
2. How does ChatGPT influence EFL students' english language learning?

C. Objectives Of the Study

This research is intended to meet the following objective:

1. To explore how EFL students perceive the use of ChatGPT in English language learning.
2. To analyze how ChatGPT influences EFL students' English language learning.

D. Significance of the Study

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education has become increasingly common, particularly through the emergence of ChatGPT as an AI-powered chatbot. Many students use ChatGPT to support their academic activities, such as searching for information, understanding course materials, generating ideas, and completing assignments. Since students may have different experiences and perceptions regarding the use of ChatGPT, it is important to explore how they perceive this technology in their academic activities. The findings of this study are expected to provide benefits for various parties, as outlined below:

1. For Students

This study is expected to help students better understand the advantages and challenges of using ChatGPT in academic activities. By exploring students' perceptions, the findings may increase students' awareness of how ChatGPT can be used effectively and responsibly to support their learning process.

2. For Lecturers

Understanding students' perceptions of ChatGPT is important for improving teaching and learning practices. This study may provide lecturers with valuable insights into how students utilize ChatGPT and how they perceive its role in academic activities. The findings can help lecturers guide students in using AI technologies appropriately and effectively.

3. For Educational Institutions

This study may provide educational institutions with useful information regarding the increasing use of ChatGPT among students. The findings can serve as a reference for developing policies, guidelines, and educational strategies related to the use of AI technologies in higher education.

4. For Future Researchers

This study is expected to contribute to the existing literature on students' perceptions of using ChatGPT in education. Furthermore, it may serve as a useful reference for future researchers who are interested in conducting similar studies related to ChatGPT, artificial intelligence, and educational technology.

E. Scope and Limitation

This study focuses on exploring students' perceptions of using ChatGPT in academic activities. The study investigates how students perceive the use of ChatGPT, including their views, experiences, opinions, and attitudes toward the use of ChatGPT as a learning tool. In addition, this study explores the factors that influence students' perceptions of using ChatGPT in academic contexts. The participants of this study are the second-semester students of Class A in the English Language Education Study Program at STAIN Mandailing Natal. The data are collected through semi-structured interviews to obtain an in-depth understanding of students' perceptions, experiences, and opinions regarding the use of ChatGPT in their academic activities.

This study is limited to exploring students' perceptions of using ChatGPT and does not examine the effectiveness of ChatGPT in improving learning outcomes, academic achievement, or language skills. Furthermore, this study only involves students who have experience using ChatGPT and does not include lecturers or students from other study programs. Therefore, the findings of this study are limited to the experiences and perceptions of the participants involved and cannot be generalized to all students in different educational contexts.

F. Key Terms

1. Students' Perceptions

Students' perceptions refer to students' views, opinions, interpretations, and understanding of a particular phenomenon based on their experiences and interactions. According to Robbins & Judge (2019), perception is the process by which individuals organize and interpret sensory impressions to give meaning to their environment. In this study, students' perceptions refer to how students perceive the use of ChatGPT in their learning activities, including both positive and negative perceptions.

2. ChatGPT

ChatGPT is an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based conversational chatbot developed by OpenAI that uses natural language processing to generate human-like responses to users' questions and prompts. According to Kasneci et al. (2023), ChatGPT is a large language model that can support learning by providing explanations, answering questions, generating ideas, and assisting users with various academic tasks. In this study, ChatGPT refers to the AI chatbot used by students to support their English learning.

G. Research Systematics

The systematic organization of this research is divided into five chapters as follows:

Chapter I Introduction: This chapter presents the background of the study, identification of the problem, limitation of the problem, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, and research systematics.

Chapter II Review of Related Literature: This chapter discusses the theories and concepts related to the study, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), ChatGPT, students' perceptions, previous studies, conceptual framework, and research questions.

Chapter III: Research Methodology: This chapter explains the research design, location and time of the study, participants, sampling technique, research instruments, data collection procedures, data validation, and data analysis techniques.

Chapter IV Findings and Discussion: This chapter presents the findings obtained from the interviews and discusses the results based on the relevant theories and previous studies. The discussion focuses on students' perceptions of using ChatGPT and the factors influencing those perceptions.

Chapter V Conclusions and Suggestions: This chapter contains the conclusions of the study based on the findings and discussion. It also provides suggestions for students, lecturers, educational institutions, and future researchers.

