

Article

## Understanding ChatGPT Integration in EFL Teaching: A Dual-Model Analysis in Vietnamese Higher Education

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### Abstract

This study investigates why English as a foreign language (EFL) lecturers accept ChatGPT and how they integrate it into their teaching practice at a public university in central Vietnam. Combining the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2) and the Substitution Augmentation Modification Redefinition (SAMR) model as an interpretive dual lens, this qualitative study collected data through semi-structured interviews with ten EFL lecturers, along with their samples of ChatGPT-generated teaching materials. The findings revealed that multiple UTAUT2-based factors shaped lecturers' generally positive acceptance of ChatGPT. They integrated ChatGPT for a range of instructional tasks; however, most applications remained concentrated at the enhancement level of the SAMR model, primarily involving substitution and augmentation of existing practices, rather than fundamentally transforming pedagogical design or learner engagement. These findings highlight ChatGPT's potential to support EFL teaching and underscore the need to develop ChatGPT literacy among higher education lecturers to enable a more transformative integration.

### Keywords

ChatGPT, EFL lecturers, acceptance, integration, UTAUT2, SAMR

### Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping education through tools that can enhance pedagogy and student engagement (Huang et al., 2021). Among these, ChatGPT has gained prominence for its ability to generate human-like texts and support language-related tasks such as material development, lesson planning, assessment, and feedback (Kohnke & Zou, 2025; Lo et al., 2024). For EFL learners, ChatGPT can offer personalized learning experiences, instant feedback, and adaptive support (Guo & Wang, 2024). Despite growing interest in ChatGPT's educational potential, existing studies tend to treat educators' acceptance and pedagogical integration of ChatGPT as separate issues. This conceptual divide overlooks their interdependence: acceptance reflects willingness to use the tool, while integration reveals its transformative impact on teaching and learning. In addition, prior research has often relied on quantitative data focused narrowly on either attitudes or classroom practices, leaving unexplored the nuanced interplay between these dimensions. There is also limited attention to how educators in Southeast Asia, especially in Vietnam, navigate the adoption of ChatGPT. Addressing these gaps, the present study investigates how EFL lecturers accept and integrate ChatGPT through the combined lens of UTAUT2 and SAMR frameworks. Specifically, this qualitative study examines the factors that shape EFL lecturers' ChatGPT adoption and the depth of its pedagogical application in a Vietnamese higher education context.

### Factors affecting the acceptance of ChatGPT in education

Developed by Venkatesh et al. (2003), the UTAUT originally identifies four core determinants of behavioral intention and use of technology acceptance: *Performance Expectancy* indicates how people's belief in the effectiveness of technology use will enhance their performance in specific tasks. *Effort Expectancy* refers to the perceived level of difficulty involved in using technology. *Social Influence* refers to the effect that people within an individual's social or professional network have on their technology adoption decisions. *Facilitating Conditions* means the external resources and supports that can enable technology adoption. Later, Venkatesh et al. (2012) extended the UTAUT to the so-called UTAUT2 by adding three other constructs: *Hedonic Motivation* captures the degree of enjoyment or pleasure users experience when interacting with technology. *Price Value* assesses whether the benefits of using a technology outweigh its costs. *Habit* refers to the extent to which technology use becomes an automatic behavior over time. These seven factors from UTAUT2 can comprehensively predict users' behavioral intention and use behavior. These factors are moderated by individual differences, such as gender, age, and experience, making the model context-sensitive.

Recent studies have shown that these factors can serve as indicators of ChatGPT's acceptance in education. Performance expectancy emerges as a primary factor in users' willingness to adopt ChatGPT (Grassini et al., 2024; Ma et al., 2024). When teachers and students believe that ChatGPT can help them improve their teaching or learning performance, they tend to engage with it. Effort expectancy can also influence ChatGPT adoption, as Duong et al. (2023) indicate that ease of use can positively affect behavioral intention, which, in turn, predicts actual usage. In addition, social influence and institutional support affect whether teachers and students are willing to adopt ChatGPT. Budhathoki et al. (2024) show that students are more likely to use ChatGPT when they perceive endorsement from peers, educators, or academic institutions. Additionally, Duong et al. (2023) emphasize that knowledge-sharing behaviors can enhance the transition from intention to actual use of ChatGPT in higher education contexts. Moreover, facilitating conditions, such as access to proper infrastructure and training, can further support ChatGPT adoption. Beyond functional utility, hedonic motivation also contributes to teachers' and students' engagement with ChatGPT (Strzelecki, 2024). Ma and Huo (2023) note that those who experience enjoyment or novelty when using ChatGPT tend to show higher acceptance rates. These studies suggest that social, emotional, and experiential factors can be just as influential as perceived usefulness and ease of use on users' acceptance of ChatGPT.

### Levels of ChatGPT integration into education

SAMR is a technology integration model designed to guide the selection, implementation, and evaluation of technology in educational settings. Proposed by Puentedura (2006), the model encourages progression from basic to more advanced forms of technology integration, with higher levels linked to more meaningful and transformative learning experiences. The SAMR model is commonly used to analyze the impact of emerging technologies, such as AI tools, on instructional design (Konhke & Zou, 2025; Shiu, 2025). Four distinct levels of the SAMR model as follows: *At the Substitution* level, technology can directly replace traditional tools, without changing the nature of task; *At the Augmentation* level, technology serves the same purpose as traditional tools but adds improved features or functionality; *At the Modification* level, technology can enable a substantial redesign of the task; *At the Redefinition* level, technology makes it possible to implement new tasks that were not previously feasible. While technology use at substitution and augmentation levels can enhance language learning experiences, it is through modification and redefinition-level adoption that learning can be fundamentally transformed (Puentedura, 2006).

The depth of ChatGPT's applications in language education can be categorized according to the SAMR model. At the *substitution level*, ChatGPT is primarily used to replace traditional teaching tools, without altering the nature of the tasks (Shiu, 2025). For instance, teachers and students may use ChatGPT to look up vocabulary definitions or request explanations of grammar, thereby replacing the use of paper dictionaries or grammar books. Moving up to the *augmentation level*, ChatGPT enhances existing tasks by introducing functional improvements that make teaching more efficient and convenient. For assessment, it helps streamline the design of consistent and guideline-based quizzes and tests (Guo & Wang, 2024; Shiu, 2025). ChatGPT can also deliver immediate, detailed corrections, allowing students to revise their writing more effectively than with traditional delayed feedback (Guo & Wang, 2024). At the *modification level*, ChatGPT enables substantial redesign of learning tasks, making learning experiences more learner-centered and personalized. Teachers can create teaching materials aligned with learners' interests and proficiency levels, thereby supporting differentiated instruction (Yeh, 2024). Furthermore, ChatGPT functions as a personalized virtual tutor, thereby supporting self-directed learning and lifelong skill development (Cain & Rajan, 2024). Finally, at the *redefinition level*, ChatGPT can enable the creation of entirely new learning experiences that were previously inconceivable without AI. Teachers can design immersive language scenarios in which students role-play real-life interactions, such as interviews or service encounters, through dialogues generated by ChatGPT (Yeh, 2024).

### Research gaps and research questions

Current research on ChatGPT acceptance and integration reveals notable gaps in methodology, technological focus, and geographic coverage. Most studies rely heavily on quantitative approaches (Grassini et al., 2024; Ma et al., 2025; Strzelecki, 2024), leaving limited insight into the contextual and experiential dimensions that qualitative inquiry could uncover, particularly regarding EFL lecturers' pedagogical engagement with ChatGPT. Although interest in AI integration within language education is growing, applications of the SAMR rarely focus on ChatGPT as a distinct generative AI tool. For example, Shiu (2025) and Yunjo and Shadarra (2025) applied SAMR to general AI use, while Kohnke and Zou (2025) offered only theoretical commentary on ChatGPT's potential in TESOL, without empirical validation. Additionally, existing studies are concentrated in Western and East Asian contexts. For instance, Teng (2024) conducted a systematic review about the integration of ChatGPT in English language education, particularly in writing instruction. The findings show that most studies were conducted in China, Japan, and the USA. Similarly, a review by Lo et al. (2024) found that empirical studies on the use of ChatGPT in EFL/ESL contexts were primarily conducted in East Asia. Meanwhile, educational settings in Southeast Asian countries like Vietnam, where interest in AI-enhanced language teaching is increasing (Nguyen & Pham, 2025), remain underexplored. These gaps offer the current study a unique opportunity to generate deeper insights into the behavioral drivers and pedagogical implications of ChatGPT among EFL educators in a Vietnamese higher education context. This study aims to answer the following two research questions:

1. *Why do Vietnamese EFL lecturers accept ChatGPT for their teaching?*
2. *How do Vietnamese EFL lecturers integrate ChatGPT into their teaching?*

These research questions are guided by a combined UTAUT2 and SAMR framework. Specifically, the UTAUT2 is employed as an interpretive lens to explore the “why” behind lecturers' acceptance of ChatGPT, focusing on constructs such as performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions. Meanwhile, the SAMR helps clarify the “how” of their integration of ChatGPT into instructional practices.

## **Methodology**

### **Research approach**

This study employed a qualitative research approach, as it is well-suited for the study's objective of exploring the driving factors affecting ChatGPT acceptance and the levels of ChatGPT integration among EFL lecturers. Creswell and Creswell (2018) state that this method aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the research problem by examining a small group of participants and discovering their experiences and perceptions.

### **Researcher positionality**

As the researcher, I acknowledge my dual role as both an investigator and an EFL lecturer at the university under study. My professional background and research interest in integrating technology into teaching inevitably shape my perspective on the use of ChatGPT in language education. This positionality provides me with insider knowledge of institutional practices and pedagogical challenges, which enriches the interpretation of participants' experiences. At the same time, I remain mindful of the need to critically reflect on my enthusiasm for technology to avoid overstating its benefits. By situating myself within the research context, I aim to ensure transparency and reflexivity, recognizing how my professional identity informs the questions I ask, the themes I emphasize, and the conclusions I draw.

### **Participants**

This study involves ten EFL lecturers from three faculties at a public university in central Vietnam. Although these lecturers are affiliated with different faculties at the same university, they all have professional backgrounds in English language teaching and are responsible for teaching English courses to both English majors and non-English majors, depending on institutional needs and course allocation. The participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that those invited had direct experience with ChatGPT in their teaching practice. More details about the participants are presented in Table 1 below.

### **Instruments**

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were used to collect data from participants, ensuring that the questions aligned with the research objectives while allowing further probing of their responses (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The interview consists of two main parts. Part 1 provides background information on the participants, while Part 2 explores lecturers' acceptance of and applications of ChatGPT (as shown in Table 2 below). Additionally, samples of teaching materials generated by ChatGPT were collected to provide supplementary insights into how ChatGPT was used in instructional design and content creation.

### **Data collection and analysis**

The interview questions were piloted with one non-sample lecturer for clarity. After refinement, interviews were conducted online or in person in mid-2024, at the participants' convenience. All interviews were conducted in Vietnamese, recorded with consent, and lasted 45–60 minutes. Recordings were transcribed verbatim, translated into English by a research assistant, and verified by the author. Data analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase process of thematic analysis: (1) becoming familiar with the data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) connecting codes into themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) refining themes, and (6) writing the report. In this study, the process was applied deductively, guided by predefined themes derived from the integrated UTAUT2-SAMR framework as outlined in Table 3 below. This adaptation ensured that coding and theme development were aligned with the study's focus on motivational and pedagogical dimensions of AI integration.

Table 1  
*Participants' Demographics*

No.	Participants	Gender	Age Range	Education Levels	Faculties	Teaching Experience (years)	ICT Usage
1	Quyen	Female	30 - 35	M.A.	A	10	Frequently
2	Tuyet	Female	30 - 35	M.A.	B	13	Frequently
3	Mai	Female	26 - 30	M.A.	C	3	Very frequently
4	Tam	Male	60+	Ph.D.	A	40	Very frequently
5	Thanh	Female	50 - 55	Ph.D.	A	10	Very frequently
6	Hong	Female	36 - 40	M.A.	B	15	Frequently
7	Linh	Female	30 - 35	M.A.	B	3	Frequently
8	Lam	Female	36 - 40	Ph.D.	A	14	Frequently
9	Huyen	Female	26 - 30	M.A.	B	5	Very frequently
10	Tien	Female	30 - 35	M.A.	A	10	Very frequently

Table 2  
*Interview Questions*

Sections	Questions
1	When did you first learn about ChatGPT, and through what source? How long have you been using ChatGPT? Why did you decide to use ChatGPT as a teaching support tool? How did you learn to use ChatGPT? Did you encounter any difficulties in the initial stages of using ChatGPT? What were your initial impressions/feelings about ChatGPT?
2	How often do you use ChatGPT for teaching purposes? What teaching activities do you usually use ChatGPT to support? Which topics or teaching activities do you often use ChatGPT to support? During which stage of the lesson do you usually use ChatGPT to support the teaching process? What types of teaching materials do you typically create using ChatGPT? How do you usually communicate with ChatGPT? What prompts do you use to interact with ChatGPT?

### **Ethical considerations**

This study follows international ethical guidelines by ensuring that lecturers' participation was voluntary, that they were informed of the study's purpose, and that their consent was obtained before participating in the interview process. To protect participants' identities, pseudonyms were used as indicated in Table 1. Moreover, the interview recordings and transcripts were securely stored, accessible only to the researcher, and all translations were verified to ensure accuracy.

Table 3  
*Coding Schemes*

Themes	Subthemes	Example quotes
Factors affecting ChatGPT acceptance	Performance expectancy	“Reduce workload and give more ideas”
	Effort expectancy	“User-friendly interface.”
	Social influence	“I have known ChatGPT for about a year or so, through the introduction of colleagues.”
	Facilitating conditions	“Through a seminar on how to use ChatGPT, I was guided ... how to apply ChatGPT.”
	Hedonic motivation	“interesting and enjoyable”
	Price value	“After ChatGPT was free in Vietnam, I used it.”
Levels of ChatGPT integration	Habits	“I use it every day for many different purposes, including everyday life issues.”
	Substitution	“I can use ChatGPT so that I can have the information faster and more effectively.”
	Augmentation	“I inserted a reading passage and asked it to design some multiple-choice questions.”
	Modification	“For the content that I want to redesign to better suit the exam format, I use ChatGPT to suggest suitable questions for me.”
	Redefinition	“I have outlined each chapter and then asked ChatGPT to write it...”

## Results

### Factors affecting Vietnamese EFL lecturers' acceptance of ChatGPT

In the interviews, participants were asked to share their experiences with ChatGPT since its emergence to better understand why they were among the first to adopt and use this tool at the studied institution. The findings were grouped into UTAUT2-based factors.

#### *Performance expectancy*

Many lecturers perceived ChatGPT as useful for improving their teaching and productivity. For example, Tam shared how ChatGPT helped him to work more effectively:

It saves time and optimizes efficiency: in one day, I can do a complete and detailed test with the support of GPT. If I had to do it myself, it would not be finished in a month. [...] The workload is greatly reduced. (Tam)

Likewise, Hong expressed her astonishment at how ChatGPT can save her time and help her work more quickly:

I will work faster as if someone has “prepared” it for me, and I just need to check if the quality is okay, so it saves a lot of time. (Hong)

#### *Effort expectancy*

Some lecturers admitted that ChatGPT has “a user-friendly interface” (Huyen), so they did not encounter difficulties in learning to use the tool. Quyen indicated that while it required some effort, it was ultimately manageable and self-learnable. She said:

To learn how to use ChatGPT, I just did trial and error. I played with it myself, and after a while, I discovered that if I did this, it would return different results like that. (Quyen)

*Social influence*

Many lecturers first heard about ChatGPT when it became widely discussed on social media platforms, such as Facebook, or when it was covered in online news at the beginning of 2023. These lecturers were intrigued by its popularity and decided to explore its capabilities on their own. As shared by Lam:

When information about ChatGPT appears in the press, I am immediately interested, and I find a way to approach it right away. (Tam)

Some other lecturers were inspired by their colleagues, who had prior experience with the tool and guided them in creating accounts and trying the basic functionalities of ChatGPT. For example, Hong voiced that:

There was a teacher at my university who had already learned about it, so I asked her to create a ChatGPT account for me. (Hong)

*Facilitating conditions*

Another important factor affecting the acceptance of ChatGPT among EFL lecturers is the support they receive. In mid-2023, their university held an official workshop featuring an expert who shared the potential of ChatGPT in language education. Since then, more lecturers have learned about the tool and how to explore it for their teaching practice. Lam appreciated the significance of this workshop in motivating her to use ChatGPT:

I learned about ChatGPT after the presentation of an expert in a seminar at my university in 2023. I heard that it was good, so I used it. I had not heard of it before. (Lam)

However, it can be observed that there was still limited facilitation for lecturers at an early stage of adopting ChatGPT, especially in terms of guidance and policy.

*Hedonic motivation*

Emotional factors, such as enjoyment, can also affect whether users accept and continue using ChatGPT. As revealed in the interviews, EFL lecturers' initial reactions to ChatGPT were mostly positive. Tuyet described it as “extremely convenient and versatile”, while Tam and Thanh also emphasized its convenience. Thanh further expressed a strong desire to explore its full range of functionalities, stating that she must use it “at all costs” to uncover its capabilities. Similarly, Hong was highly impressed, referring to ChatGPT as “extraordinarily superior”. Linh found it “interesting and enjoyable”, while Tien simply reacted with “WOW”, indicating her extreme amazement. As ChatGPT brings a very different experience from existing technologies to these lecturers, their excitement and curiosity can motivate them to engage more with the novel tool.

*Price value*

While not widely discussed in the interviews, ChatGPT's cost-free nature may have influenced its trial and continued use. For example, Mai mentioned that she was satisfied with ChatGPT's functionality, even though she was using the free version. She shared that:

I also don't see the need to pay for a better version because I can manage to use the free one well right now. (Mai)

*Habits of ChatGPT use*

The interviewed lecturers varied in how often they used ChatGPT, with some incorporating it into their daily teaching routines while others used it selectively. For instance, Linh turned to ChatGPT only when she needed ideas for her teaching, whereas others, like Tam, used it

frequently for diverse instructional and research purposes. For example, Lam explained her growing frequency of ChatGPT use:

I use it more and more often. At first, I just thought ChatGPT was a smarter, more interactive tool than Google, but the more I use it, the more useful functions I find ChatGPT has, so it attracts me to learn and use it more. (Lam)

This suggests that habit plays a significant role in ChatGPT adoption, as lecturers who use it regularly tend to integrate it into their routines, making its use automatic and sustained.

### **Vietnamese EFL lecturers' application of ChatGPT in English language teaching**

In the interviews, participants were asked how they used ChatGPT; their responses highlighted different ways it has been integrated into teaching practice. Several themes related to ChatGPT-assisted activities have been identified and grouped into the SAMR levels of technology integration, followed by the list of lecturers who adopted them (see Table 4).

Table 4

*Classifications of ChatGPT-assisted Activities Based on the Level of the SAMR Model*

<b>SAMR Levels</b>	<b>ChatGPT-Assisted Activities</b>	<b>Lecturers</b>
Substitution	Grammar checking in student writing	Tuyet, Linh, Huyen, Tam
	Plagiarism detection	Hong
	Creating vocabulary tables/lists	Quyen, Huyen
	Searching for information and academic concepts	Tuyet, Mai, Hong, Thanh, Tien
Augmentation	Designing exercises, quizzes, or questions based on the provided input	Mai, Tam, Hong, Tien, Quyen, Tuyet, Lam, Huyen
	Designing rubrics	Tam
	Creating warm-up activities	Tuyet, Hong, Linh, Huyen, Tien
	Suggesting ideas/topics/outlines	Thanh, Hong, Linh, Huyen, Tien
Modification	Designing customized lesson plans	Tam, Lam
	Modifying reading text levels	Tuyet, Linh, Lam
	Creating customized sample essays	Tam, Lam
	Creating reading texts based on topics and levels of difficulty	Quyen
	Creating tailored question items	Hong
	Giving feedback to student writing	Tam, Huyen, Lam
	Guiding students to use ChatGPT for revision	Tam, Linh, Lam
Redefinition	Co-authoring	Tam

Generally, these EFL lecturers used ChatGPT across a wide range of instructional tasks, with the most frequent applications in reading and writing instruction and assessment. It also reveals that ChatGPT is being integrated across all levels of the SAMR model, with a strong presence in the enhancement dimension (i.e., at the Augmentation and Modification levels). Some lecturers, like Tuyet and Tam, demonstrate broad usage across nearly all categories and levels, while others apply it more selectively.

*ChatGPT-assisted activities at the substitutional level*

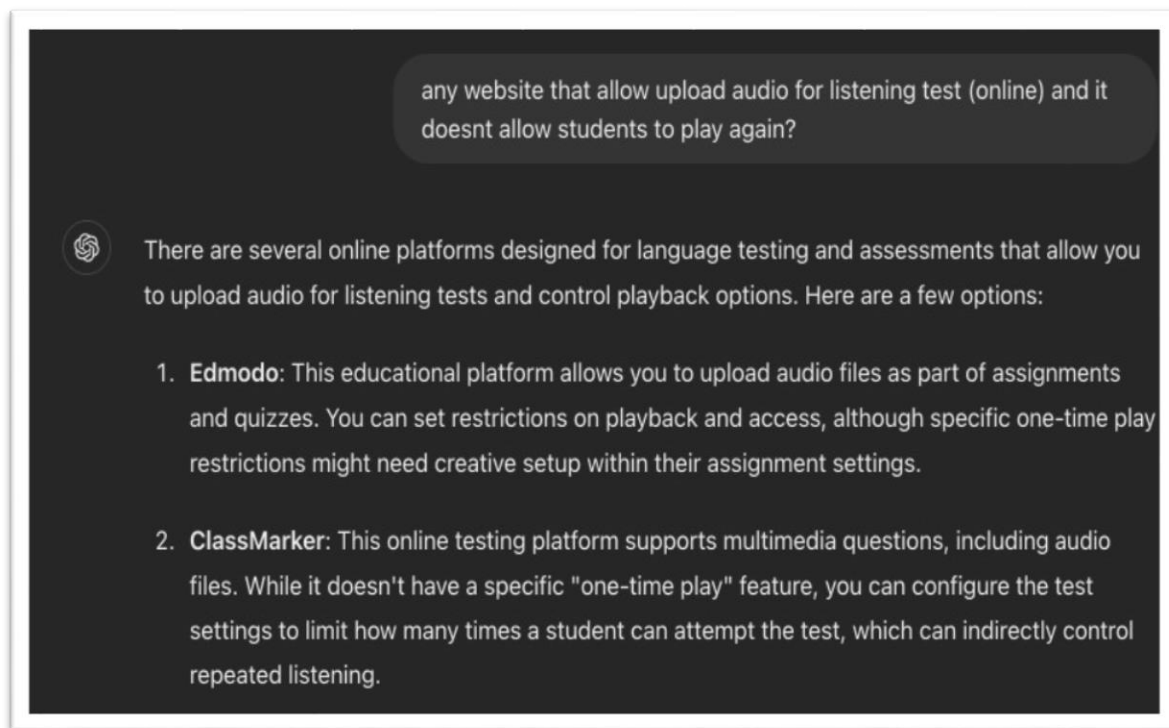
At the Substitution level, lecturers reported using ChatGPT for basic functions such as grammar checking, creating a vocabulary glossary, or searching for information. These activities mirror conventional practices, such as using traditional tools, but are now replaced by ChatGPT for convenience. For example, Tien mentioned that:

I use ChatGPT to ask about specialized concepts, self-study, and equip myself with more knowledge. I mainly ask about concepts that I do not understand. (Tien)

Besides helping lecturers with subject-related knowledge, ChatGPT also helps them introduce available tools they can use for teaching. For example, Huyen described a time when she asked ChatGPT to suggest tools to help her design online listening tests, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

*An Example of Using ChatGPT for Updating IT Skills*



(Sample material 1, Huyen)

Some lecturers use ChatGPT to generate supporting materials to provide students with more input about useful expressions for speaking activities. For example, Figure 2 illustrates how Huyen used ChatGPT to create some useful structures for students in her speaking class instead of preparing them by herself.

Figure 2  
An Example of a ChatGPT-generated Handout for Speaking Lessons

SPEAKING PRACTICE	DISCUSSION
Some useful structures and collocations :	
<b>1. Introducing Opinions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "In my opinion..."</li> <li>• "I think that..."</li> <li>• "From my perspective..."</li> <li>• "As far as I'm concerned..."</li> <li>• "Personally, I believe that..."</li> <li>• "I reckon..."</li> </ul>	
<b>2. Comparing Places:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "When comparing [place A] to [place B]..."</li> <li>• "In contrast to [place C]..."</li> <li>• "On the one hand, [place D] offers..."</li> <li>• "However, [place E] provides..."</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Expressing Preferences:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "I'd prefer to go to..."</li> <li>• "My preference would be for..."</li> <li>• "I'm more inclined towards..."</li> <li>• "Given the choice, I'd opt for..."</li> </ul>	

(Sample material 2, Huyen)

Likewise, Linh shared that she sometimes asked ChatGPT to generate a vocabulary list to provide students with supplementary learning sources, as shown in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3  
Example of Using ChatGPT to Create a Vocabulary List

create a table to present these words include information like word forms, pronunciation, word family, and Vietnamese meaning: challenge, daring, inspire, focused, impressive, risk, do-or-die, obsession, willingness, unthinkable,

Here is a table presenting the words with their word forms, pronunciation, word family, and Vietnamese meanings:

Word	Word Form	Pronunciation	Word Family	Vietnamese Meaning
Challenge	Noun, Verb	/ˈtʃælɪndʒ/	challenged (adj), challenging (adj)	Thử thách, thách thức
Daring	Adj, Noun	/ˈdeərɪŋ/	dare (v), daringly (adv)	Táo bạo, liều lĩnh
Inspire	Verb	/ɪnˈspaɪər/	inspiration (n), inspiring (adj), inspired (adj)	Truyền cảm hứng
Focused	Adj	/ˈfoʊkəst/	focus (r) ↓	Tập trung
Impressive	Adj	/ɪmˈpresɪv/	impress (v), impression (n),	Ấn tượng

(Sample material 1, Linh)

*ChatGPT-assisted activities at the augmentation level*

At the Augmentation level, three main activities that ChatGPT augmented are suggesting teaching ideas and activities, generating materials, and assisting with assessment. Lecturers mentioned using ChatGPT for brainstorming new classroom activities, warm-ups, and teaching ideas, which they found helpful and engaging. For example, Hong mentioned that:

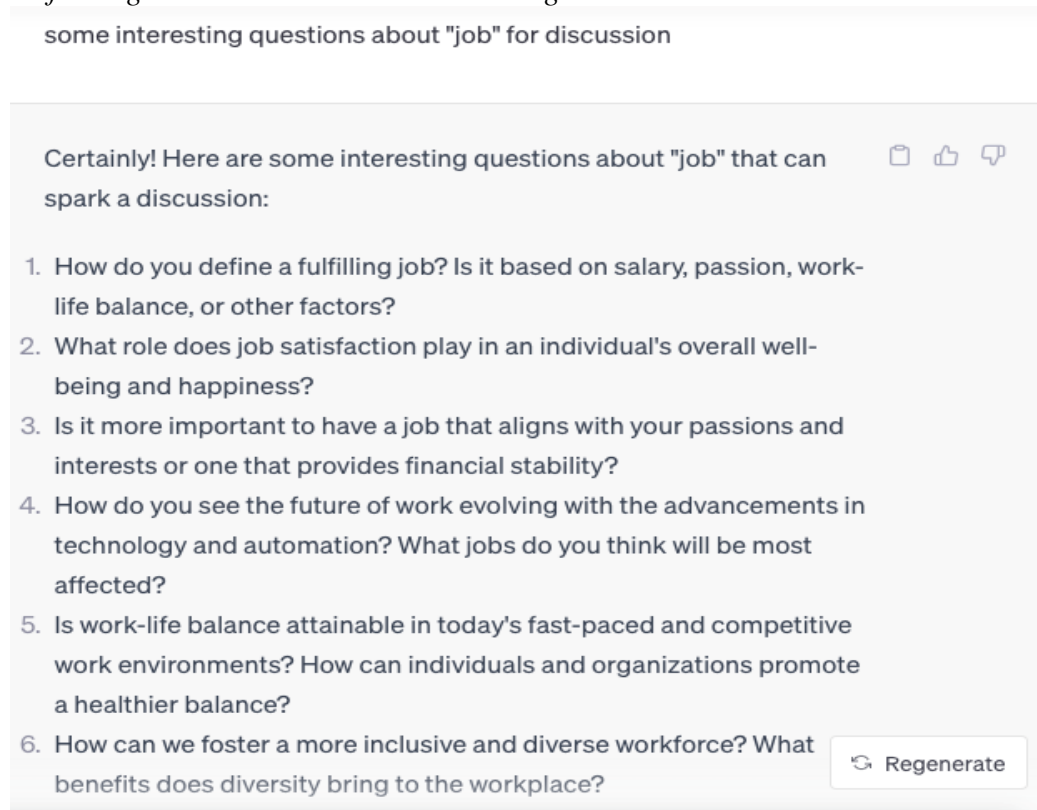
For the lesson topic that day, if I have no idea, I use ChatGPT to suggest some titles, then Google those titles again. (Hong)

Linh also said that sometimes she got stuck with teaching ideas, so she could consult ChatGPT for some creative ideas to include in her lessons.

In my teaching, I sometimes want to add new activities, and ChatGPT gives me suggestions. From what it suggests, I can develop it into a new activity for my students. (Linh)

For instance, as illustrated in Figure 4, Huyen asked ChatGPT to generate speaking questions on the topic of “job” for her students to practice.

Figure 4

*Example of Using ChatGPT to Generate Teaching Ideas*

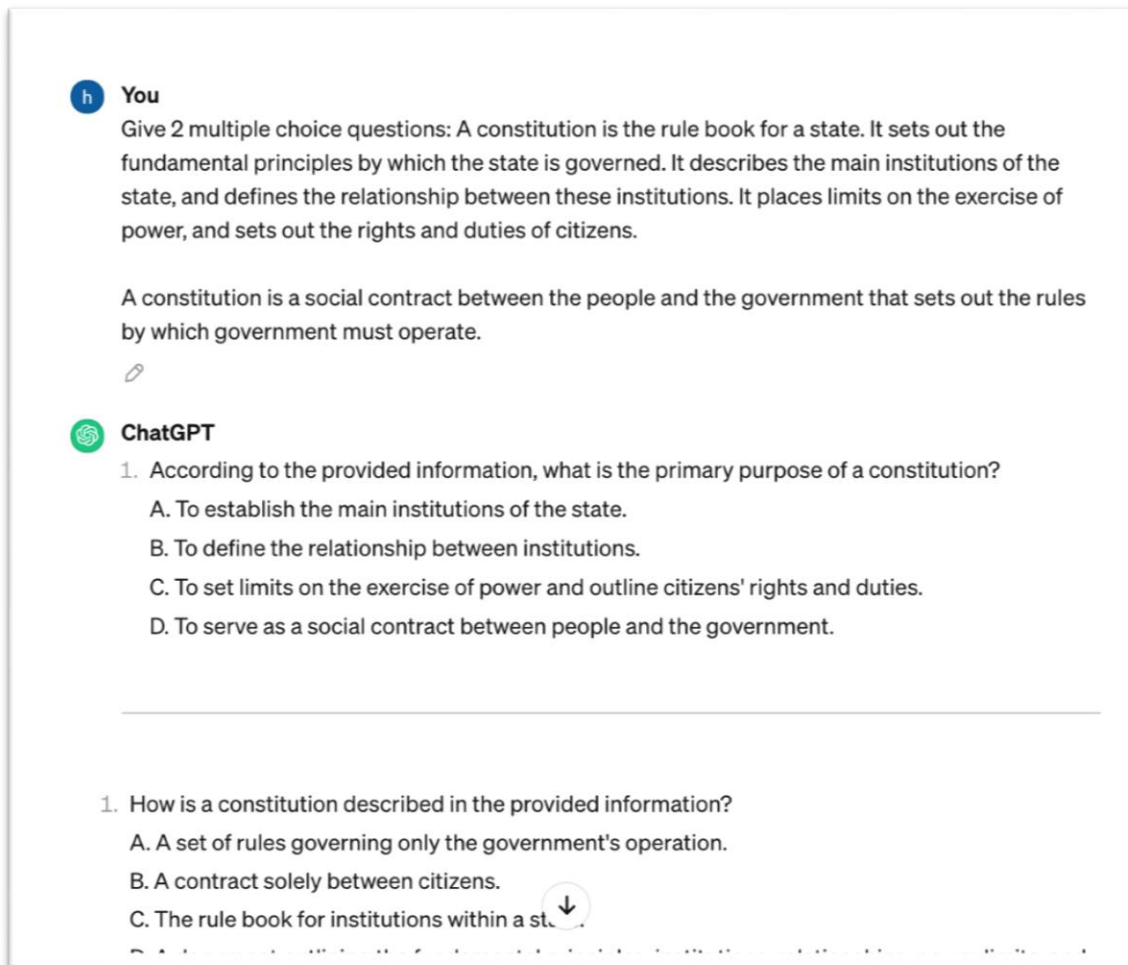
(Sample, material 3, Huyen)

Besides using ChatGPT to brainstorm teaching ideas or topics, many lecturers reported using it to generate quizzes or exercises for assessment, though they often needed to modify them before use. Tien talked about a time when she used ChatGPT to create quizzes based on provided input:

For listening skills, I often ask ChatGPT to create some questions based on the transcript I enter. I ask it to create a transcript, then automatically generate questions based on that transcript. (Tien)

As demonstrated in Figure 5, Mai provided ChatGPT with some background knowledge and asked it to create two multiple-choice questions, and ChatGPT performed the task quite well in a short time.

Figure 5  
*Example of Using ChatGPT to Create Question Items*



(Sample material 1, Mai)

One lecturer, Tam, also reported using ChatGPT to create grading rubrics for assessments (as in Figure 6). It is shown that ChatGPT can assist EFL lecturers in carrying out their instructional tasks more effectively and efficiently, thereby greatly reducing their workload and effort.

#### *ChatGPT-assisted activities at the modification level*

At the Modification level, ChatGPT can help lecturers to customize their teaching practices by generating tailored teaching materials to meet their instructional objectives and students' diverse needs. First, some lecturers use ChatGPT to generate customized materials tailored to specific learning objectives. For example, Lam reported using ChatGPT to create sample lesson plans that align with her teaching goals.

I have used it 1-2 times to design sample lesson plans for pre-service primary teacher students. (Lam)

Figure 6  
*Example of a Rubric Generated by ChatGPT*

This is the rubric used to score the self-assessment or peer assessment form produced by the candidates.

Criteria	Description	Easy	Difficult	Effort	Score
Alignment	How well the self-assessment rubric aligns with the learning objectives and expectations of the assignment.	[]	[]	[]	
Clarity	How clear and understandable the self-assessment rubric is for the student and the teacher.	[]	[]	[]	
Validity	How valid and reliable the self-assessment rubric is for measuring the student's writing skills.	[]	[]	[]	
Feedback	How useful and actionable the self-assessment rubric is for providing feedback to the student and guiding improvement.	[]	[]	[]	

(Sample material 1, Tam)

They noted that to ensure the quality and relevance of ChatGPT-generated lesson plans, it is crucial to provide it with contextual information about teaching objectives, materials, or targeted learners, etc. Otherwise, the lesson plans would not be as they desired.

In addition, ChatGPT enables lecturers to adapt existing teaching materials to better suit students' language levels and curricular goals. Interviewees, including Tuyet, Linh, Lam, Quyen, and Tuyet, described using ChatGPT to modify reading passages based on topic and difficulty, while Hong highlighted its use in generating tailored test questions. For instance, Linh and Hong said that:

Sometimes I look for reading texts for students, but if I find that they are not at the right level for my students (too easy or too difficult), I can ask ChatGPT to find a similar article on this topic or ask it to rewrite that article at a higher level. (Linh)

For the book content that I want to redesign to better suit the exam format, I use ChatGPT to suggest suitable questions for me. (Hong)

Moreover, lecturers could enhance the feedback process by using ChatGPT to provide individualized, formative responses to student work and by guiding students to interact with the tool for self-revision. Tam shared how ChatGPT was used to give detailed feedback on

student writing, while Tam and Lam emphasized its role in helping students revise their drafts through AI-supported suggestions.

I can ask ChatGPT to give feedback on students' writing and ask students to edit their writing based on that feedback. (Lam)

If I take a student's writing to correct in class, I ask it [ChatGPT] to evaluate the pros and cons of that writing, to see if it is relevant to the focus of my teaching. (Tam)

This approach can transform feedback from a static, one-time event into a dynamic, iterative learning experience. By integrating ChatGPT into the feedback loop, lecturers can foster greater student autonomy and engagement, encouraging learners to reflect on and improve their writing with real-time support.

#### *ChatGPT-assisted activities at the redefinition level*

At the Redefinition level, ChatGPT enables tasks that were previously inconceivable in traditional educational settings. However, only one such application was found in the interviews. Tam described using ChatGPT in a co-authoring process. He shared:

I am currently writing a textbook for postgraduate students. I write the outline of each chapter, and then I ask ChatGPT to write because I cannot write as well as it. But I need to check the content it writes. (Tam)

What is especially striking is how Tam maintains critical agency in the process: providing outlines, checking factual integrity, and feeding in citations to ensure academic rigor. While this represents an isolated case rather than a widespread practice, this kind of AI-supported co-authorship not only expands access to high-quality writing but also redefines what it means to produce scholarly work, making it more iterative, dialogic, and inclusive.

## **Discussion**

### **The UTAUT2 factors affecting EFL lecturers' early acceptance of ChatGPT**

By situating this inquiry in Vietnam, the study contributes evidence from a Southeast Asian higher education context that has been largely overlooked in prior ChatGPT research. This focus broadens the scope of existing studies and highlights how contextual factors influence lecturers' acceptance of generative AI tools. It can be seen that Vietnamese EFL lecturers' early adoption of ChatGPT was shaped by a nuanced interplay of UTAUT2 factors, with perceived usefulness emerging as the strongest driver. Participants consistently highlighted its efficiency in streamlining pedagogical tasks such as lesson planning and feedback, which suggests that practical utility rather than novelty can underpin meaningful AI adoption (Grassini et al., 2024; Ma et al., 2024). Ease of use further facilitated ChatGPT engagement, as lecturers navigated the tool through self-directed trial-and-error without formal training. It can be implied that intuitive design and low cognitive load can accelerate ChatGPT uptake in informal learning environments (Duong et al., 2023). Social influence, often underemphasized in prior studies, played a notable role in this study through ChatGPT exposure via online media, peer networks, and institutional workshops, which means that communal academic cultures may amplify the impact of shared digital literacy among educators (Budhathoki et al., 2024; Duong et al., 2023). In addition, facilitating conditions such as infrastructure and expert-led training enhanced confidence and legitimized ChatGPT as a pedagogical resource. This finding reinforces the importance of institutional scaffolding in sustaining adoption, as mentioned by Huang et al. (2021). Hedonic motivation also contributed to early engagement, with lecturers describing ChatGPT as novel and enjoyable, though its entertainment value may diminish over time, underlining the need for deeper pedagogical integration to sustain use (Ma & Huo, 2023; Grassini et al., 2024). Interestingly, price value, an underexplored factor in previous studies,

emerged as meaningful, as some participants used the free version while still feeling satisfied. It can be suggested that cost-accessibility can lower educators' barriers to experience AI tools and encourage them to sustainably integrate them into their practice (Strzelecki, 2024). Finally, habitual use signaled a shift from experimentation to embedded practice, with repeated engagement normalizing ChatGPT in teaching routines and reinforcing habit as a key determinant of long-term integration (Venkatesh et al., 2012; Grassini et al., 2024).

### **EFL lecturers' dynamic spectrum of ChatGPT integration across the SAMR Model**

In addition to understanding Vietnamese EFL lecturers' acceptance of ChatGPT, this study explored how their pedagogical integration spans the SAMR model, with the most prominent use at the Substitution and Augmentation levels. Lecturers commonly use ChatGPT for grammar correction, translation, and Q&A tasks, replacing conventional tools with greater efficiency (Shiu, 2025). However, many also leveraged it to streamline more demanding instructional tasks such as lesson planning and feedback generation (Huang et al., 2021). This suggests that GenAI can reduce workload while enhancing instructional responsiveness, and AI tools can serve as scalable teaching assistants when aligned with pedagogical routines. At the Modification level, ChatGPT enabled material customization and personalized learning experiences, traditionally difficult to implement in EFL contexts. Teachers used it to tailor content to students' interests and proficiency levels, enhancing contextual relevance and learner engagement. This finding shows that GenAI can support differentiated instruction when teachers are empowered to adapt it creatively. ChatGPT also supported feedback practices in writing instruction, addressing gaps in availability and depth of human feedback (Guo & Wang, 2024), which positions GenAI as a viable supplement to formative assessment in resource-constrained settings. Beyond classroom use, lecturers viewed ChatGPT as a personal mentor for their own professional development, using it to deepen subject knowledge and pedagogical skills (Cain & Rajan, 2024). ChatGPT can therefore be a potential tool to foster lifelong learning among educators in rapidly evolving digital landscapes. However, integration at the Redefinition level, where ChatGPT enables previously unthinkable tasks like real-time multilingual simulations, remained rare. This was largely due to limited training, infrastructure, and access to advanced features (Kohnke & Zou, 2025), especially in low-resource contexts like Vietnam (Nguyen & Pham, 2025), implying that transformative AI integration is contingent on systemic support and equitable access. Finally, the depth of integration was more strongly predicted by technological openness and digital fluency than by traditional demographic factors such as gender or age. As shown in this study, lecturers with high digital confidence and curiosity (e.g., Tam, Huyen) adopted ChatGPT more innovatively, while those with limited exposure (like Thanh) or skepticism (like Quyen) remained at basic levels, which suggests that personal innovativeness (Strzelecki, 2024) is a critical enabler of pedagogical transformation with GenAI.

### **Pedagogical implications**

This study offers some pedagogical implications to enhance AI acceptance and adoption among EFL educators, especially in low-resource contexts. Firstly, the study shows an evident need for more formal training to enhance lecturers' AI literacy, in general, and ChatGPT literacy in particular. The shortage of guidance can hinder lecturers' understanding of the tool's full potential and how to incorporate it transformatively into educational contexts. It is widely believed that equipping lecturers with information and formal training is crucial to enhancing ChatGPT integration in higher education. To do this, structured training programs should be implemented to enhance lecturers' ChatGPT literacy and help them integrate the tool effectively into their teaching practices. Workshops and hands-on training sessions can introduce lecturers to ChatGPT's full range of capabilities. Additionally, as social influence

can impact the level of ChatGPT adoption, collaborative learning through peer-sharing sessions can encourage lecturers to exchange experiences and best practices. Institutions can support lecturers in building AI competency, fostering confidence in using ChatGPT, and ultimately enhancing the quality of technology-integrated education through both online and offline communities of practice. Moreover, because institutional support is key to successful AI integration, institutions may need to invest in infrastructure, policy frameworks, and incentives to encourage more transformative uses of AI tools like ChatGPT. Finally, as individual differences, such as technological willingness, are also significant drivers of meaningful AI integration, it is equally necessary to cultivate digital openness and self-efficacy among EFL educators.

### **Conclusion**

This study highlights the positive acceptance and diverse application of ChatGPT among Vietnamese EFL lecturers. Their acceptance of ChatGPT has been shaped by individual, institutional, social, emotional, and experiential factors informed by the UTAUT2 model. Lecturers have leveraged ChatGPT to enhance various instructional tasks, but its integration remains largely at the enhancement level of the SAMR model. These findings suggest that while ChatGPT holds significant promise for supporting EFL instruction, its full capabilities have not yet been fully leveraged. To foster more innovative and transformative uses, institutions should invest in developing AI literacy and in pedagogical training tailored to educators' needs, particularly in low-resource settings. Such efforts could empower lecturers to move beyond enhancement and explore more creative and transformative applications that redefine language teaching and learning in the AI-driven age.

This study contributes to the literature of AI-assisted language education in three important ways. First, it extends methodological diversity by employing qualitative inquiry to capture the contextual and experiential dimensions of EFL lecturers' engagement with ChatGPT, addressing the dominance of quantitative approaches in prior work. Second, it advances theoretical application by combining UTAUT2 and SAMR models to provide a holistic lens on both motivational drivers and pedagogical integration, thereby moving beyond descriptive accounts of AI use. Third, it broadens the geographic scope of ChatGPT research by situating the analysis in Vietnam, offering context-specific insights from a Southeast Asian higher education setting that has been underrepresented in existing studies.

Despite these significant contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the sample consisted of only ten EFL lecturers from a single institution, which means the findings are context-specific and reflect the perspectives of this particular group. Therefore, the insights should be understood as transferable to similar contexts rather than universally applicable. Second, the use of in-depth interviews and thematic analysis introduces a degree of subjectivity, as data interpretation depends on the researchers' analytical perspectives, which may lead to potential biases. Lastly, the study lacks data triangulation, as it primarily relies on self-reported interview data. Future research could address this limitation by incorporating classroom observations to examine how ChatGPT-generated materials and activities are used in teaching and assess their effectiveness in real instructional settings.

### **AI Use Declaration**

In the preparation of this manuscript, the author declares the use of AI tools, including Copilot and Grammarly, solely to refine the language and improve the readability. All content revised and suggested by AI was critically reviewed and carefully edited by the author. The author takes full responsibility for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of the research.

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