

EXPLORING THE USE OF CHATGPT FOR EFL STUDENTS' MOTIVATION AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore students' experiences in using ChatGPT and how it shapes their learning motivation and perceived learning outcomes in English language education, based on Self-Determination Theory and Bloom's Taxonomy. This study uses a qualitative case study research design with data collected through semi-structured interviews and documentation in the form of archived screenshots of students' ChatGPT interactions, which were analyzed to identify cognitive learning outcomes. The respondents of this study involved 11 fourth-semester students. The findings indicate that ChatGPT can be used as a tool to support students in learning English through the use of ChatGPT as an academic support tool. Furthermore, the use of ChatGPT has a positive impact on learning motivation through an increase in students' sense of autonomy, competence, and perceived learning support. In terms of learning outcomes, ChatGPT can contribute to the development of students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills. This study provides valuable insights into the potential of AI in English language education by highlighting the use of ChatGPT in supporting increased student motivation and learning outcomes. Nevertheless, pedagogical guidance and AI literacy are essential to prevent students' overreliance on AI tools.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, ChatGPT, Learning Motivation, Learning Outcomes, English Education Students

A. INTRODUCTION

In the current digital era, advances in technology have increasingly transformed education, providing new tools and approaches to support teaching and learning (Rusmarasy et al., 2019; Suryono et al., 2023; Putri et al., 2024). One key innovation is Artificial Intelligence (AI), which enables machines to interact with users through text and voice, offering interactive and adaptive learning experiences (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Balcı, 2024). AI-powered chatbots have gained attention in educational contexts for their ability to support students' autonomous practice, provide immediate feedback, and facilitate engagement in learning activities (Afkarin & Asmara, 2023; Malik et al., 2025; Anjum, 2024). Among these tools, ChatGPT has emerged as a prominent natural language model that can support English

language learning by allowing students to practice writing, reading, listening, and speaking in interactive, text-based environments (Irianto et al., 2025; Mabuan, 2024; Panjaitan et al., 2024). Its accessibility and responsiveness make it a valuable resource for enhancing students' language skills and fostering self-directed learning in English education (Gunawan et al., 2022; Monika & Adman, 2017; Stöhr et al., 2024).

In the context of language learning, motivation is a key factor influencing learners' effort and perseverance in mastering language skills (Monika & Adman, 2017). Similarly, motivation in English learning reflects students' drive to actively engage with the language and succeed in using it effectively, with higher motivation leading to greater engagement and persistence (Gunawan et al., 2022). Learning activities require continuous motivational support, as a lack of motivation can reduce enthusiasm and negatively affect learning outcomes (Sukmadinata, 2005). Motivation also functions as a driving force, a determinant of direction, and a behavioral filter that guides students' actions toward academic achievement (Purwanto, 2002). Therefore, the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Ryan and Deci (2000), provides a relevant theoretical framework for understanding factors that influence learning motivation. SDT provides a basis for analyzing how the use of ChatGPT in English learning may affect student motivation by supporting the fulfillment of learners' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, thereby enhancing their motivation to learn.

Furthermore, learning outcomes also play a crucial role as indicators of the extent to which students achieve mastery after engaging in learning activities (Susanto, 2015). They reflect the new abilities acquired by students, including knowledge, skills, and attitudes, as a result of their engagement in learning (Gagné, 1985; Fernando et al., 2024). In the context of English learning, learning outcomes refer to students' abilities and understanding of the English material they have studied, such as reasoning, comprehension, and expressing ideas in English (Gunawan et al., 2022). Learning outcomes can be classified into three main domains based on Bloom's Taxonomy (1956), which are cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. The three domains in this learning process have a significant role in supporting the development of students' overall outcomes and competencies.

Previous studies have shown that ChatGPT can support the development of multiple English language skills while enhancing overall learning outcomes. It facilitates speaking and listening practice through interactive, text-based exercises that simulate real communication, providing immediate feedback and error correction to help students refine their language use (Irianto et al., 2025). In addition, ChatGPT helps learners expand their vocabulary and improve writing skills through guided prompts, example sentences, and contextualized exercises that promote fluency, while also supporting translation, language comprehension, conversation practice, access to information, and cultural understanding (Mabuan, 2024). Furthermore, ChatGPT has been shown to enhance both general language proficiency and specific skills, including grammar, vocabulary, syntax, writing, listening, speaking, and reading, through personalized practice, immediate feedback, interactive engagement, self-evaluation, and independent learning, providing students with continuous opportunities to develop and consolidate their English skills (Balci, 2024; Malik et al., 2025).

Moreover, ChatGPT has been shown to positively influence students' motivation in English learning. Afkarin and Asmara (2023) found that it enhances students' motivation and performance by improving learning efficiency, facilitating access to information, supporting time management, and promoting self-directed learning. Similarly, Anjum (2024) reported that ChatGPT increases student motivation and engagement by providing instant feedback, personalized learning experiences, and a supportive environment for language practice. Dewi et al. (2025) further concluded that ChatGPT contributes positively to the learning environment through its interactive and personalized features, which foster students' intrinsic motivation and encourage active participation in learning tasks. In addition, students perceive that ChatGPT facilitates the completion of English assignments and enhances their motivation and self-confidence by enriching their vocabulary, providing accurate translations, and assisting with grammar checking and paraphrasing (Phuong, 2024). Therefore, integrating ChatGPT into English learning not only supports skill development but also strengthens learner motivation and confidence.

While ChatGPT brings many benefits, it also carries several risks. Over-reliance on this technology can weaken students' critical thinking skills and, in the long run, lead to decreased motivation and learning quality (Ifani, 2024). Hayati et al. (2024) highlighted additional disadvantages, such as reduced sensitivity to natural language use and a diminished ability to think broadly and solve problems independently. Hidayanti and Azmiyanti (2023) noted that the use of technology without learning awareness may increase cases of plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Similarly, Maulana et al. (2023) stated that while ChatGPT can facilitate the creation of assignments, such as papers and essays, over-dependence on the tool without fully understanding the material, performing in-depth analysis, or following academic ethics can undermine students' reasoning, critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and increase plagiarism risks. In addition, Tarmizi and Yahfizham (2023) found that although ChatGPT is popular among students, it poses several risks, including the presentation of inaccurate or limited information, misuse in academic assignments, shallow understanding of material, increased plagiarism, and reduced critical thinking habits.

Although numerous studies have examined the benefits and risks of ChatGPT in English learning, research on students' personal experiences and contextual interactions with the tool remains limited. Most existing studies emphasize quantitative outcomes or potential risks, leaving the lived experiences, perceptions, and engagement of learners largely unexplored. Understanding how students interact with ChatGPT in real learning contexts and how these experiences affect their motivation and learning outcomes is crucial. Addressing this gap through qualitative research would provide a more comprehensive view of ChatGPT's role in language education and guide strategies for its effective and responsible integration. Therefore, this study aims to explore how students actually utilize ChatGPT and how it contributes to students' motivation and learning outcomes in English language learning. Thus, this research is significant in addressing the purpose of ChatGPT utilization in English education, guided by the following research questions:

1. How do the students utilize ChatGPT as a supporting tool in their English learning process?
2. How does the use of ChatGPT contribute to students' motivation?
3. How does the use of ChatGPT contribute to students' learning outcomes?

The findings of this study are expected to provide theoretical contributions in the development of studies on the use of artificial intelligence, particularly ChatGPT in English learning, as well as provide practical guidance for lecturers, students, and educational institutions in optimizing the use of ChatGPT wisely, and also be a basis for formulating learning strategies that are adaptive to the dynamics of digital technology in higher education.

B. METHOD

This research is qualitative by applying a case study design to explore and describe the process of using ChatGPT and students' responses and experiences of its contribution to their motivation and learning outcomes in learning English. A case study approach was chosen to provide an in-depth understanding of students' experiences within a specific educational context (Creswell, 2016). Participants were selected using purposive and convenience sampling techniques. Purposive sampling was employed to select students who met the following criteria: (1) being fourth-semester students, (2) actively using ChatGPT, and (3) having experience using ChatGPT in their learning activities. Convenience sampling was applied to facilitate access to participants who were readily available and willing to participate (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). To ensure confidentiality, each participant was assigned a code (Inf.1–Inf.11).

Data was gathered from semi-structured interviews and documentation as primary sources. The focus of the interview was to explore how students utilize ChatGPT and their experiences, views, and perceptions regarding the influence of the use of ChatGPT on motivation and learning outcomes. These research questions were modified from previous research conducted by Hmoud et al. (2024) and Kim et al. (2025) by adjusting to the context of this study. To ensure clarity, relevance, and suitability to the research objectives, the research questions have been validated through a validation process by experts in the field of English language education. Meanwhile, documentation was used exclusively to address the third research question as one of the data sources to examine and analyze visual evidence related to the use of ChatGPT in the student learning process. For data analysis, this study employs the interactive model developed by Miles et al., (2014) as presented in Figure 1:

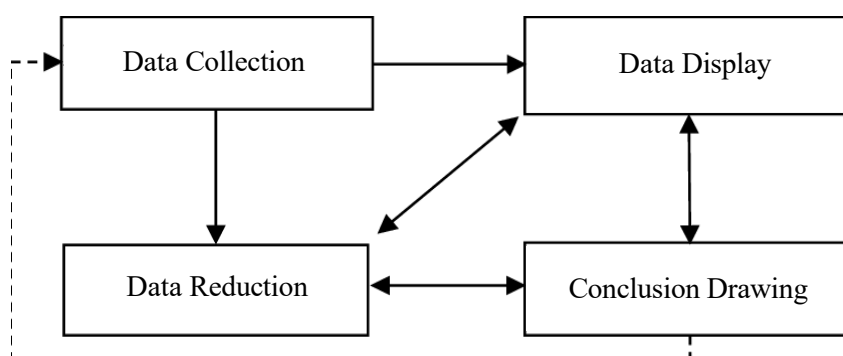


Figure 1. Data Analysis Model in this Study

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data collected, the findings and discussion are presented under several themes that correspond to the research questions. The narrative presentation allows the researcher to identify general patterns, differences, and connections among categories, thereby enabling a more comprehensive and systematic interpretation of the data.

1. Utilization of ChatGPT in English Learning

The findings reveal that students primarily utilized ChatGPT as an academic scaffolding tool and employed it strategically and cautiously. The analysis identified two main themes, which are discussed in the following sections.

The use of ChatGPT as an academic scaffolding tool

In general, all informants explained that ChatGPT was used in various aspects of learning, particularly to support academic learning. The majority of informants stated that ChatGPT was their primary tool for generating ideas and creating outlines. One informant explained:

“I usually use ChatGPT not that much but it is yes, it helped me to finish my work like writing or something like that. But like I said before it's not just everything, I use ChatGPT but it just sometimes just the idea or the outline just something like that.”
(Inf.1)

More than half of the students also explained that ChatGPT was often used to correct their grammar. This was further illustrated by another informant, who stated:

I become interested in using ChatGPT because it helps me practice English anytime and anywhere. It's like having a personal tutor that can correct my grammar, and improve my vocabulary, and help me express ideas more naturally. And I also like how ChatGPT can explain things clearly, and make learning English more fun and interactive. (Inf.5)

Furthermore, Inf. 2 further stated that ChatGPT presented the material in a concise and simplified format, which facilitated a clearer understanding:

“Sometimes when I look into some material from Google or something like PDF or book, it is quite long and I cannot understand it that much. That's why I ask ChatGPT to simplify it up for me, so I can understand more and better than just reading from the PDF or the book, something like that.”

Similarly, Inf. 1 also mentioned that:

“Yeah, sometimes I use ChatGPT to explain more about the PowerPoint because in the PowerPoint we just show the point, but one point, and sometimes I don't understand about that, and I use ChatGPT to expand the explanation about the PPT.”

In addition, ChatGPT was also used to summarize learning materials and assist students with presentations, as expressed by Inf.6:

“I often use ChatGPT to check my grammar to search an explanation about the material that I don't know or not familiar about the material and then for trying to get a topic or ideas or help me with my presentation. And then sometimes also I use it for help me to summarize reading text.”

The findings indicate that ChatGPT functions as an academic scaffolding tool that supports students' learning processes by assisting in idea organization, language accuracy, and a clearer understanding of learning materials (Afkarin & Asmara, 2023; Balci, 2024; Suharmawan, 2023). Its use in generating outlines, expanding explanations, and summarizing texts facilitates students' academic work and helps reduce learning difficulties commonly encountered in ESL contexts (Al-Badi, 2015; Fitria, 2023; Aljuaid, 2024). Furthermore, by providing on-demand explanations and feedback, ChatGPT enables more efficient task completion, although its effectiveness depends on responsible use as a supportive tool rather than a replacement for independent learning (Bukhori et al., 2023; Ifani et al., 2024; Maulana et al., 2023).

The strategic and cautious use in the learning process

Although ChatGPT was considered helpful, students did not use it passively. Seven informants reported that they did not rely entirely on ChatGPT's responses, but instead used it strategically and cautiously by cross-checking information against other AI tools or academic sources. As stated by informant 1:

“Sometimes I use ChatGPT with caution like when I say something to chat GPT I'm not reliable or 100% understand or writing all the answer about that but I try to prove the answer by another AI like Gemini. If the answer same, I will try ask something that maybe we can make the answer different, so if it still same we can make the conclude the answer is right.”

Similarly, Inf.2 explained that they tend to trust ChatGPT but still feel the need to double-check the information it provides to ensure the answers are reliable. Then, half of the students stated that strategic use of ChatGPT involved refining prompts to obtain more relevant responses, as stated by Inf.4:

“Actually, I have like, I need to prompt ChatGPT, atau prompt-nya itu harus lebih jelas dan lebih detail lagi (meaning the prompt needs to be clearer and more detailed), and yeah, after ChatGPT gives the answer, I must to read it and after that I ask again but with my idea, dan ChatGPT itu langsung kayak mengembangkan lagi ide-ide gitu (and ChatGPT then further develops the ideas).”

Similarly, Inf. 6 stated that:

“I usually ask specific and detailed question with my own words so that the answer is more accurate than before. I also compare ChatGPT response with another AI or with my notes or with a textbook to make sure the information is also correct.”

Furthermore, one informant explained that an effective strategy for using ChatGPT is to approach the tool strategically rather than relying on it passively. The participant emphasized that students should first attempt assignments independently and only use ChatGPT afterward to seek guidance, references, or to check and correct their work (Inf. 8). Overall,

the findings show that students used ChatGPT strategically and cautiously by refining prompts, critically reviewing responses, and cross-checking information with other academic sources. This aligns with the concept of AI literacy, which is widely recognized as the capacity to formulate precise prompts, interpret AI-generated outputs, and iteratively refine these prompts to achieve the desired results (Hwang et al., 2023). Critical engagement and evaluative use of ChatGPT are necessary to avoid passive dependency and maintain students' analytical skills (Maulana et al., 2023; Ifani et al., 2024). Similarly, Tarmizi and Yahfizham (2024) highlight the importance of a cautious and reflective approach to ensure that ChatGPT functions as a supportive tool rather than a replacement for independent thinking.

2. The Contribution of ChatGPT on Students' Motivation

The data reveal that ChatGPT contributes to students' motivation in multiple ways, particularly by supporting independent learning, enhancing their sense of capability in performing academic tasks, and providing a form of interactive support that fosters a sense of connection in the learning process. Each of these dimensions is discussed in the following subsections.

Enhancement of learner autonomy

More than half of the students reported an increased sense of independence in their learning. Inf.5 explained that ChatGPT allows them to study at any time without waiting for the lecturer, providing greater freedom to explore topics of personal interest, which in turn enhances their confidence and autonomy. Inf. 6, added the information that ChatGPT provided flexibility in use:

“ChatGPT makes me feel more independent because I don't always have to wait for my lecturer to explain something. And also, sometimes our lecture gives us assignment or a task to give a presentation about the materials that we are not having learned before it. So that's why by using a ChatGPT it makes me feel more independent because I can learn new things before someone told me and then I can learn it anytime, anywhere and depending on my own pace. So that's why using ChatGPT is more helpful for me.”

Moreover, four students also mentioned that ChatGPT helps them learn according to their personal needs, as Inf. 7 stated:

“ChatGPT allows me to choose the learning style I like. Like when I want a short explanation and one just want a conclusion, they give me a conclusion, accurate conclusion, a detailed conclusion so I can understand more about the materials I asked to ChatGPT and then it also provide a full explanation with an example, I just need to write a prompt and then ChatGPT give us the explanation about what I asked to.”

But there are three students who expressed a neutral perspective regarding the role of ChatGPT in supporting independent learning. For example, Inf. 1 stated that:

“Sometimes maybe yes, but sometimes maybe not, because if we just rely about which activity, you know, uh, we can do something alone because ChatGPT helps you a lot, right? And sometimes it makes you, I don't know it's proper to say but sometimes I feel dumb when I rely too much with ChatGPT.”

These findings indicate that ChatGPT supports learning independence by providing flexibility, freedom in learning time, and personalized learning support. This aligns with Ryan and Deci (2000), who argue that autonomy is essential in fostering independent learning. Afkarin and Asmara (2024) also stated that ChatGPT is easy to access and offers time management that helps students. Similar findings were reported by Bukhori et al. (2023), who found that AI-based tools encourage self-directed learning, although excessive reliance may reduce students' active engagement. ChatGPT contributes positively to academic achievement and personal development by promoting personalized learning, encouraging interaction, and supporting self-evaluation (Malik, 2025).

Development of students' sense of competence

There are eight students who reported experiencing only a slight increase in confidence in completing assignments or understanding English learning materials, as they still felt the need to double-check the accuracy of the information provided by ChatGPT. One informant reported that they do not fully trust ChatGPT because some information it provides does not always match what is found in books. They explained that they often search for information using ChatGPT but do not copy it directly, indicating that their trust in the tool is cautious. (Inf.11). Similarly, another informant mentioned that:

“Sometimes yes, but sometimes not really. Because, like I said before ChatGPT answer is not really reliable. Sometimes we need to double-check the information that they give. Is it true or is it false? So, sometimes I paraphrase the answers they give me to my own words that I understand more.” (Inf.2)

The remaining students stated that they felt more confident when using the ChatGPT, as Inf. 1 stated that:

“I feel more confident when I do assignment with ChatGPT help, because sometimes, if we talk about writing, I'm afraid of making mistake like grammar, conjunction and something like that but with ChatGPT we can, scan our answer and make it better.”

Consistently, Inf.7 also reported that:

“Yes, because just like I said, it helps me find things more efficiently and sometimes more accurately, even if it's not always the case. But at least the assignments are done. So yeah, it makes me more confident in completing my assignment.”

Furthermore, all participants reported that ChatGPT helped them feel more proficient in English learning, particularly in writing, reading, and speaking skills, through responsive feedback and practice provided by ChatGPT. As stated by Inf.5, ChatGPT helps improve their vocabulary, grammar, and fluency by providing instant feedback and suggestions, which contributes to their skill development over time.

One student also emphasized that ChatGPT has been very helpful, noting that its effectiveness depends on the prompts used. For writing skills, they often asked ChatGPT to provide practice exercises, which they found significantly improved their abilities (Inf.1). Similarly, Inf. 7 reported that they use ChatGPT in reading to clarify the meaning of unfamiliar words, while in writing, it is primarily used to generate suitable topics, as selecting topics is often challenging. Furthermore, Inf. 6 added the information that ChatGPT helps them become proficient in speaking skills:

“I'm more using ChatGPT before, for writing and speaking because I think using an AI is prefer more using it for writing and speaking. I can also ask it to correct my sentence and also, I can learn from my mistakes and become more proficient. So, it also helped me to feel more skill while using ChatGPT because when you want to write something or write an essay, ChatGPT give you the structure how to make a good sentence or even how to explain about something.”

Another informant revealed that:

“Mm, I think the one that, the features that we can speak to the AI. It helps us a lot with speaking skill especially when we want to have conversation with them. We just have to say that I need to practice my English skills so we can have a conversation, something like that. It's improving a lot with speaking skills, something like that. And then for the writing and any other, um, skills we can just ask them for maybe the material or something like that. Mmm, sometimes yes, because when lecturer asked me some questions that I cannot understand. Sometimes I ask ChatGPT first and then paraphrase it into my own words.” (Inf.2)

This finding indicates that ChatGPT supports students' sense of competence by facilitating practice and understanding in English learning, particularly in writing, reading, and speaking. Consistent with Self-Determination Theory, opportunities for feedback and skill refinement strengthen learners' perceived ability and engagement (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Previous studies have also shown that AI-assisted tools like ChatGPT can enhance students' learning proficiency and motivation by providing immediate, responsive support (Ali et al., 2023; Annamalai et al., 2025; Fitria, 2023). However, the limited increase in self-confidence observed reflects students' cautious approach and need to verify the accuracy of AI-generated information, suggesting that the impact of ChatGPT on confidence is moderated by learners' critical engagement (Stöhr et al., 2024; Kim et al., 2025).

Fostering a sense of relatedness in learning

Although ChatGPT isn't human, four students reported that ChatGPT provided a sense of support and connected to their learning process. As Inf. 10 stated, when they are working on something given by the lecturer, they feel afraid to ask the lecturer and find it more comfortable to ask ChatGPT instead. Another informant reported that ChatGPT felt like having a personal tutor:

“I become interest in using ChatGPT because it helps me practice English anytime and anywhere. It's like having a personal tutor that can correct my grammar, and improve my vocabulary, and help me express ideas more naturally.” (Inf.5)

Another informant revealed that:

“Maybe yes, because sometimes ChatGPT helps me more easily to connect and explore the relate topics easily with the topics that the teacher has been give to the students. Like I said before, it can help us understanding more about the materials that have been g have been gave before. So, it also can immediately ask to give me an exercise or an example that I need.” (Inf.6)

But, one of the students revealed that they felt connected to the learning material but not to the English learning resources:

“Maybe because when I use ChatGPT the materials become more understandable, right. So, I do feel connected to the lesson and it give me like an easier time to do assignment or understanding any other material that is connected the material that I learned in ChatGPT. But English learning resources I think no, because ChatGPT sometimes make up their own resources and doesn't give you or give me give us the real resources where they find the materials that they are giving us. So, I do feel connected to the lesson, but I do not feel connected to the resources at all. When using ChatGPT, I use other AI when I want to search for other resources.” (Inf.7)

Then, more than half of the students also mentioned that ChatGPT helped them as a companion in presentation discussions, as described by Inf. 4:

“Yes of course, because sometimes I use ChatGPT to arrange my word because sometimes my word is so bad. I afraid if my friends don't understand what my word, I use ChatGPT to fix my word and I will ask with the idea to my friends or my lecturer, like that.”

In the same way, a participant mentioned that most of them do use ChatGPT. It helps them organize their thoughts better, making their communication more structured (Inf.9). The other students stated that during discussions, participants should first express their personal opinions. Although ChatGPT is helpful, it is better used only when it is no longer able to respond, and in such situations, it is very helpful, especially in debates or discussions (Inf.8)

This finding indicates that the use of ChatGPT in learning contributes to the fulfillment of students' relatedness needs by providing an accessible and responsive form of academic support. This aligns with Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes the importance of perceived connectedness in sustaining students' motivation and learning comfort (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The supportive role perceived by students suggests that artificial intelligence tools such as ChatGPT function not only as cognitive aids but also as facilitators of affective aspects of learning. This result is consistent with previous studies reporting that ChatGPT can enhance students' motivation and engagement in academic activities (Ali et al., 2023; Annamalai et al., 2025).

3. The Contribution of ChatGPT to Learning Outcomes

At Bloom's Taxonomy level, the findings show that ChatGPT contributes to all domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor, although the effects differ for each informant.

Students' cognitive development

All students stated that ChatGPT had a positive influence on their cognitive development, particularly by enhancing their understanding and analysis. For example, Inf. 5 stated:

"Yes, because it encourages me to think critically about my answer and compare them with ChatGPT's feedback. It helps me not only memorize, but also understand."

Another informant (Inf. 6) also reported:

"When I reach ChatGPT's explanation, I try to compare them with other source like with another AI, Google or any browsers that can help me search the explanation or the answer that I need to learn about and also it can help me to think more about the material critically and then the next questions."

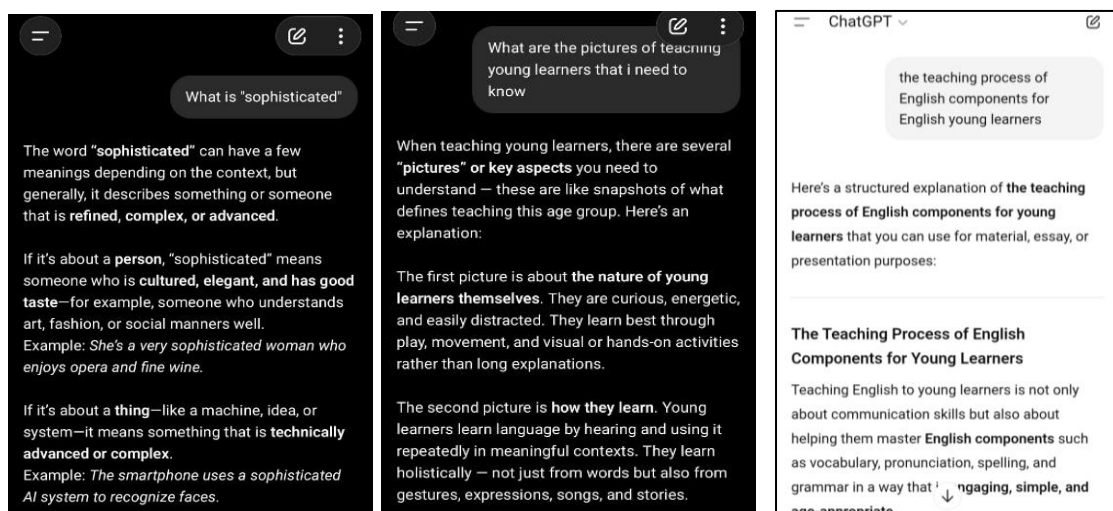
However, all students also emphasized that ChatGPT has the potential to reduce critical thinking skills if it is not used wisely, as Inf. 3 stated:

"Sometimes people say that it is in negative way, because it is reducing our critical thinking. We can just ask them and then they answer it without we have to think. We cannot think that critical, because we just have to ask ChatGPT for the answers. So yeah, it is affecting but I think it depends on the person who use ChatGPT. So are they want to learn or maybe they just want to copy-paste."

Inf. 7 also reported that ChatGPT may cause a negative influence on critical thinking:

"Yes, it influenced on my critical thinking. The influence is kind of a negative influence because it my critical thinking became dull because whenever I have something or some word that I don't know, I immediately go to ChatGPT and do not go to any resources like article or journals and think about it myself, I simply ask ChatGPT so it make my critical thinking dull and but at least my learning development is improving it showing a positive result because I do learn something from ChatGPT, but my critical thinking became dull because of it."

In addition, documentation in the form of student screenshots while using ChatGPT revealed the prompts they employed during the learning process. Analysis of these screenshots shows that students used diverse and structured prompts, ranging from knowledge to the evaluation level.



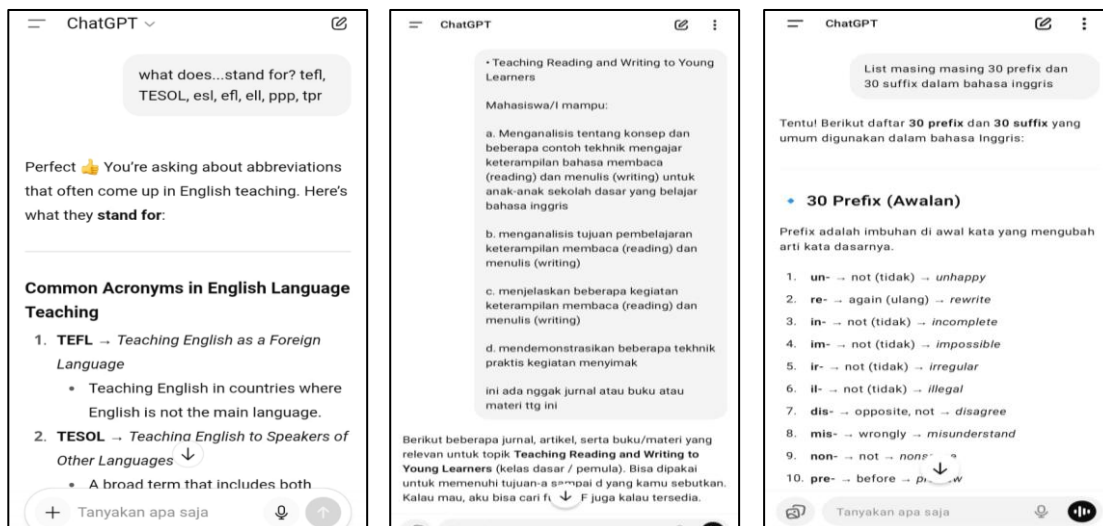


Figure 2. Documentation of student prompts at the *knowledge level*

At the knowledge level, prompts were used to retrieve factual information and basic definitions, such as “What is...,” “What are the...,” “What does...,” “The teaching process of English...,” “Is there a journal or book about this topic,” and “List each of the...”, indicating students’ ability to identify, recall, and retrieve information.

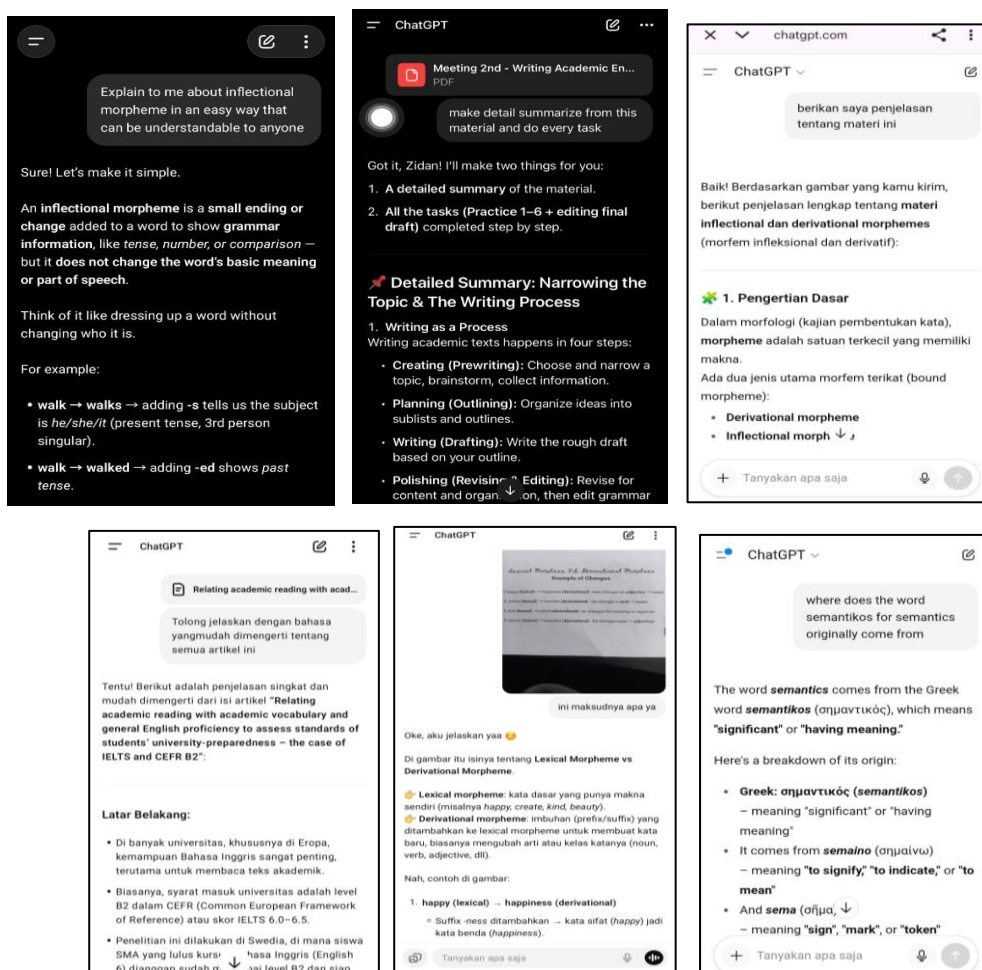


Figure 3. Documentation of student prompts at the *comprehension level*

Moreover, in the comprehension level, prompts such as “*Explain to me...*,” “*Make detail summarize...*,” “*Berikan saya penjelasan...*,” “*Tolong jelaskan...*,” and “*Where does the word...*” demonstrate students’ efforts to understand, interpret, and summarize learning materials, thereby supporting deeper conceptual understanding. These findings suggest that ChatGPT functioned as a tool for meaning-making rather than simple information retrieval. Furthermore, at the analysis level, students employed prompts like “*Please read 3 text... and then analyze... and then make the conclusions...*,” showing their ability to examine relationships between ideas, identify patterns, and draw conclusions.

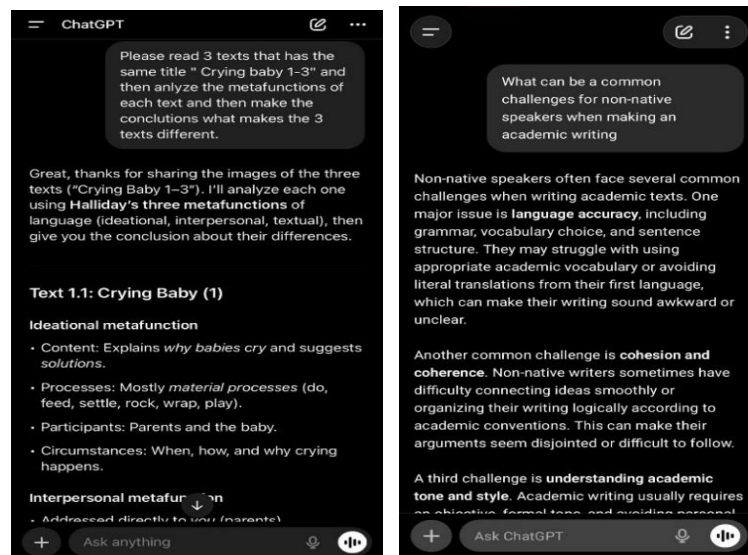


Figure 4. Documentation of student prompts at the *analysis level*

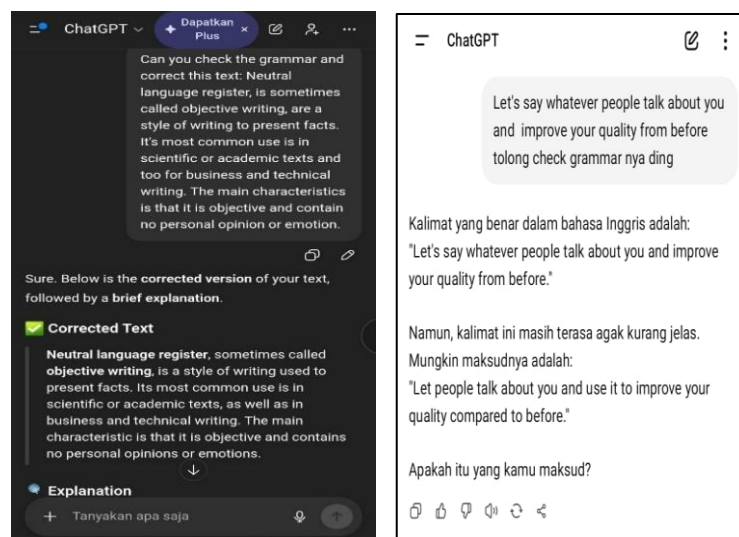


Figure 5. Documentation of student prompts at the *evaluation level*

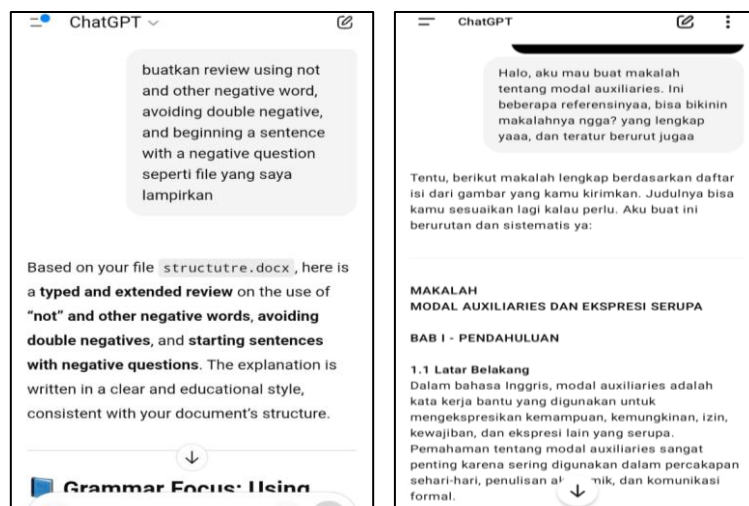


Figure 6. Documentation of student prompts at the *creating* level

Then, based on the figure above, the prompt in the analysis level section, such as “*Check grammar...*” reflects students’ awareness of language accuracy and their engagement in reflective processes. These findings suggest that ChatGPT functions as a tool that supports the evaluation and enhancement of students’ academic output. In addition, at the creating level, the data showed that students prompted ChatGPT with simple requests such as: “Buatkan review... (Create a review)” and “Aku mau buat makalah... (I want to make a paper)”. These prompts provide insight into students’ cognitive engagement, revealing that they are not only consuming information but actively producing and creating knowledge through ChatGPT.

The findings indicate that ChatGPT positively supports students’ cognitive development by enhancing understanding and creating skills. ChatGPT encouraged them to think critically, compare different sources, engage more deeply with learning materials, and also produce knowledge (Afkarin & Asmara, 2023; Ali et al., 2023; Bukhori et al., 2023). This aligns with previous studies showing that AI tools can facilitate comprehension, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking when used effectively (Rizaldi et al., 2024; Akastangga et al., 2023). However, some students noted that excessive reliance on ChatGPT may reduce critical thinking, as immediate access to answers can discourage independent reflection and evaluation (Ifani., 2024; Kim et al., 2025; Panjaitan et al., 2024). These findings suggest that ChatGPT is effective in supporting lower- to mid-level cognitive processes, but its impact on higher-order thinking depends on students’ active and reflective engagement, highlighting the importance of guided pedagogical use (Setiawan & Luthfiyani, 2023; Bukhori et al., 2023). In addition, documentation of student usage shows that learners were able to use prompts effectively, reflecting strong cognitive skills and the ability to engage in higher-order thinking processes, from information retrieval to the evaluation of academic outputs. Students with high AI literacy interacted collaboratively with ChatGPT, generating complex and iterative prompts to evaluate, analyze, and synthesize information alongside the AI, ultimately improving their understanding and academic performance (Kim et al., 2025).

Affective development in learning motivation and interest

In the affective domain, all students reported increased motivation and interest in learning English when using ChatGPT. As claimed by Inf. 2, when asked why ChatGPT increases enthusiasm in learning English, the response was:

“Of course, because when I use ChatGPT, sometimes they give me some words that I cannot understand it. So, I search the meaning of the words that they give me. So, it's just gained my motivation to learn more vocabulary, especially in English.”

“ChatGPT helped me a lot to motivate me to learn English more. Because I wanted to have more something like speaking skill, ability, so it is really motivated me to have better and better in English.”

Moreover, Inf. 7 added that when learning materials become more accessible and understandable, they also become more interesting, which in turn increases enthusiasm for learning. And Inf. 5 also added the information that ChatGPT makes learning more personal and fun:

“Yes, because learning with ChatGPT feels interactive and not boring. It makes English learning more personal and fun, so I feel more motivated. I feel I've grown in confidence and writing ability. I can express my thoughts more clearly and use more natural English expressions.”

Another informant (Inf. 6) mentioned the reason for interest in ChatGPT:

“I become interested in using ChatGPT is because I want to find an easier and faster way to understand English materials that the lecture gives to me because sometimes, maybe I didn't fully understand what the lecture about what the lecture explained about the materials. So, I know about ChatGPT on when I in university my friends told me and gave me an explanation how to use it. So, when I know about it, I use ChatGPT to help me learn in more interactive way.”

The findings show that ChatGPT positively influences students' motivation, interest, and attitudes toward learning English. Students reported that using ChatGPT made learning more interactive, enjoyable, and personalized, which increased their confidence and willingness to engage with English materials (Ali et al., 2023; Dewi, 2025; Hidayanti & Azmiyanti, 2023). For instance, students explained that ChatGPT helped them understand difficult vocabulary, clarified lecture materials, and provided a more engaging way to practice writing and expression, fostering intrinsic motivation and a positive learning attitude (Afkarin & Asmara, 2023; Balci, 2024; Haviki et al., 2024). This aligns with prior research suggesting that AI tools can enhance students' learning engagement, interest, and self-efficacy when integrated thoughtfully into educational activities (Annamalai et al., 2025; Hmoud et al., 2024; Setiawan & Luthfiyani, 2023). Consequently, ChatGPT not only supports cognitive development but also strengthens the affective domain, highlighting its potential to promote more motivated, confident, and autonomous learners.

Students perceived English skill development

Regarding perceived skill development, almost all students reported improvements in their English abilities after using ChatGPT. Rather than representing an objective psychomotor

assessment, these findings reflect students' perceptions of their skill enhancement through practice and interaction. As Inf. 6 explained that:

"ChatGPT is helpful for some people who use it, also sometimes help us to practice, all skill like writing, reading, listening and even speaking, even though it's just through text-based conversation. But we can summarize the explanation and that make us think critically and speaking in English maybe in a good way."

Inf. 7 added that:

"Yes, it does improve my skills because all of the thing that I don't know or have struggle or difficulties understanding become more understandable because of it. And it makes learning easier and more fun to be honest because I can now find the correct answer or the correct meaning of things without have to ask myself whether it is true or not."

Furthermore, students reported feeling encouraged to be more active in practicing and trying new ways of learning English. Informant 5 mentioned that ChatGPT provided various practice activities, such as role plays, quizzes, and writing prompts, which maintained their curiosity and engagement. Informant 1 also mentioned that ChatGPT encouraged them to practice English more often by giving writing exercises.

Another informant emphasized the relevance of AI tools in today's learning environment, explaining that ChatGPT supported vocabulary development, speaking practice, and grammatical improvement. Although the student acknowledged that AI-generated responses may not always be entirely accurate, they still perceived ChatGPT as helpful for experimenting with language use and keeping up with contemporary learning demands.

In addition, another informant highlighted that ChatGPT encouraged them to try new learning activities, such as translating sentences, engaging in mini conversations, and writing short paragraphs. While recognizing that some responses might contain inaccuracies, the student considered ChatGPT beneficial for exploring new ways to practice English skills. Overall, the findings suggest that ChatGPT contributes to students' improvement in English skills across writing, reading, listening, and speaking, highlighting its impact on the psychomotor domain. Students reported that using ChatGPT helped them clarify difficult concepts, practice language skills through text-based interaction, and gain confidence in producing accurate English expressions (Afkarin & Asmara, 2023; Balci, 2024; Bestari Kumboro et al., 2023). They also emphasized that ChatGPT encouraged them to try new learning activities and explore different ways of practicing English, such as role plays, quizzes, writing exercises, and mini conversations, fostering curiosity and active engagement (Ali et al., 2023; Hidayanti & Azmiyanti, 2023; Panjaitan et al., 2024). These findings align with prior research suggesting that AI-driven tools can support skill acquisition, self-directed learning, and active participation, making English learning more accessible, effective, and engaging (Annamalai et al., 2025; Suryono et al., 2023; Setiawan & Luthfiyani, 2023). Therefore, ChatGPT not only aids cognitive and affective growth but also effectively promotes practical skill development and motivates learners to explore new ways of learning English.

D. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that students utilized ChatGPT primarily as an academic scaffolding tool. They employed it to generate ideas, organize outlines, correct grammar, summarize materials, and assist in presentations, while using it cautiously by refining prompts and cross-checking information to avoid misunderstandings and over-reliance. In terms of motivation, ChatGPT positively influenced students' autonomy, competence, and relatedness. It enabled independent learning, increased confidence in understanding and completing tasks, and provided a sense of support and accessibility, making learning more engaging and personalized. In terms of learning outcomes, ChatGPT contributed to students' perceived development in the cognitive and affective domains, such as enhanced understanding, critical thinking, interest, and engagement in learning English. Students also reported improvements in language skills; however, these outcomes are understood as self-reported perceptions rather than objectively measured performance. Overall, ChatGPT appears to function as a complementary learning tool that can support strategic learning and student motivation when used reflectively and responsibly.

The implications of this study highlight the strategic potential of ChatGPT to support adaptive and student-centered learning practices when integrated in a guided and responsible manner. ChatGPT can serve as a complementary tool that supports educators in facilitating autonomous learning, active engagement, and the development of 21st-century skills. Therefore, clear guidance on the ethical and critical use of ChatGPT is essential, alongside institutional policies and instructional frameworks that encourage its effective use without fostering excessive dependence. This study has several limitations that should be considered. The findings were based on qualitative data collected from a limited number of participants, which may introduce potential bias in the responses. For future research, it is recommended to examine diverse educational contexts and levels, and to employ mixed-method approaches to obtain more comprehensive and generalizable results.

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