# "Fear of Missing out!": Veteran EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Using AI-Powered Tools in English Language Teaching

Trinh Quoc Lap[1,*], Phan Ngoc Tuong Vy[1], Nguyen Cao Bao Uyen[2], and Le Cong Tuan[1]

[1]School of Foreign Languages, Can Tho University, Can Tho, Vietnam
[2]School of Foreign Languages, Cuu Long University, Vinh Long, Vietnam
Email: tqlap@ctu.edu.vn (T.Q.L.); vym1623063@gstudent.ctu.edu.vn (P.N.T.V.); nguyencaobaouyen86@gmailcom (N.C.B.U.); lctuan@ctu.edu.vn (L.C.T.)
[*]Corresponding author
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***Abstract*—The rapid advancement of AI and AI-powered tools has garnered global attention, promising transformative potential across various fields, including English Language Teaching. As AI integration in education accelerates, veteran teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) may experience a "fear of missing out," influencing their curiosity, skepticism, or urgency to adopt these tools. This exploratory case study, employing a mixed-methods approach, investigates (1) how veteran EFL teachers perceive AI-powered tools for language teaching, (2) how frequently they use these tools in EFL classrooms, and (3) their concerns and needs for AI integration in teaching. Qualitative insights were first gathered through narrative frame responses, offering an in-depth understanding of teachers' perspectives, which then informed a survey to collect quantitative data for external validity. Findings reveal that veteran EFL teachers highly agree on the benefits of AI-powered tools, with 13 different applications reported being used for multiple purposes, primarily for pedagogical practices and, to a lesser extent, for professional development. Overall, they recognize AI's potential but face challenges in their digital proficiency due to old age and AI-related ethical concerns in teaching and learning activities. The discussion presents the need for structured, sequential training programs alongside awareness-raising initiatives to support experienced teachers in effectively integrating AI tools into their teaching. These findings contribute to ongoing discussions on AI adoption in Vietnam's EFL context and provide insights into strategies for assisting veteran teachers in navigating AI-enhanced pedagogy.**

***Keywords*—AI-powered tools, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' perception, Frequency of Usage, English Language Teaching (ELT)**

## I. Introduction

In a global context, the rise of AI has recently transformed education, particularly English Language Teaching (ELT). AI-powered tools were popular due to their offer of personalized instruction, automated grading, and enhanced student engagement [1]. These tools, including AI chatbots, adaptive learning platforms, and automated feedback systems, have the potential to reshape traditional teaching methodologies [2]. Although existing studies have clarified AI's benefits in ELT, adoption varies due to factors like digital proficiency, institutional support, and educators' willingness to embrace technological change. Among various research objectives, a special group of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers, those with over 16 years of experience considered veterans, are worth examining. First, tracing from their careers, it can be inferred that when they were trained as pre-service teachers in the late 1990s or early 2000s, their education system had minimal digital exposure. Unlike younger educators who received formal tech training in the 2010s and beyond, they had to adapt to digital tools later in their careers, often without structured support. Having built their methods on conventional approaches, they now face challenges integrating AI. Second, veteran in-service EFL teachers form a substantial part of the ELT workforce in southern Vietnam, making their adaptation crucial for educational sustainability. Supporting their emotional perceptions of AI ensures both professional growth and a smoother transition to technology-enhanced language teaching. To fill the gap, this study explores veteran EFL teachers' perceptions of AI tools using a mixed-methods approach for a comprehensive view of their integration process. Interviews and a Likert-scale questionnaire were guided by UTAUT to examine key adoption factors and Andragogy to address adult educators' characteristics in their learning and professional development. By synthesizing these frameworks, this study not only sheds light on the technological and pedagogical dimensions of AI adoption but also offers practical implications for fostering a more inclusive and effective approach to AI-enhanced EFL teaching. Ultimately, bridging the gap between AI advancements and veteran teachers' needs will contribute to more sustainable and adaptive professional development initiatives, paving the way for future research on equitable AI integration in ELT.

## II. Literature Review

### A. Empirical Studies on AI-Powered Tools (Apts) in ELT

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been broadly defined, with original AI described as creating machines with human-like intelligence [3], or as an "intelligent agent" that optimally adapts to circumstances [4]. AI is categorized into systems that act or think like humans or function rationally, with capabilities such as automation, learning, and problem-solving [5]. In educational context, AI refers to technological programs assisting veteran EFL teachers in performing automated tasks in language classrooms [6]. As AI continues to evolve, its manifestation in education depends not only on its capabilities but also on how teachers perceive and engage with it. As for teachers' perception, as a cognitive process, is shaped by internal factors like knowledge and experience or external environmental stimuli [7]. In this study, veteran EFL teachers' perceptions are defined as their thoughts, feelings, and knowledge regarding AI-powered tools, their confidence in integrating them, and their awareness of AI's role in language education.

The influence of users' frequency of use for and their perceptions of using Apts to teach English for EFL learners has not been examined to the extent that it is possible to draw conclusions. While usage satisfaction had an impact on users' self-efficacy and engagement with AI tools, frequency of use alone is not a meaningful factor [8]. In the era of digital transformation, EFL teachers generally have a positive attitude towards the concept of AI-based tools, especially in assisting language skill mastery [9]. The reasons for it could be from the benefits EFL teachers receive or acknowledge. It was suggested that EFL teachers should exploit Apts as much as possible to make up for the shortcomings occurring in traditional classrooms in terms of creating personalized learning materials, using machine translation tools, AI-driven assistants, chatbots [10]. Thanks to the benefits from Apts, EFL teachers can reduce the pressure of teaching, increase the quality of classroom environment and learners' learning motivation, alter the roles of teachers, elevate the standard of English instruction, and encourag the reform of English teaching [11, 12].

Several papers taking place in numerous contexts and groups of participants with distinctive characteristics have given a considerable number of results. Han, Kim and Kwon [13] figured out that Korean EFL teachers recognized the use of AI-based systems is appropriate for the role of assisting activities during classes. They also reflected the role of AI technology as a tool, an assistant in the educational field and as a means to find ways to support teachers at work. In the Hong Kong context, an investigation into EFL teachers' perceptions and preparedness for using computer-assisted language learning found that participants had positive attitudes toward integrating technology in the classroom and recognized the significant impact of ICTs on English teaching [14]. The differences in the participants' perceptions towards the digital integration indicated the diversity in the way EFL teachers in Hong Kong perceived the practice of CALL and ICT, expressing the need for technological training courses for pre-service teachers. EFL teachers generally appreciate the existence and help of the technological devices, yet the chances to put the adoption and application of ICTs into practice remained limited. Due to how diverse the responses turned out, it is worth studying whether teachers with different backgrounds also recognize the use of Apts in English teaching and their digital proficiencies and readiness or not. In the same vein, Yang [15] stated that EFL teachers in the Yeongnam area benefited from the usefulness of AI-based chatbots as teaching and learning aids. Thai EFL teachers also showed the positive perception about using AI tools in language classrooms was above average level [16]. Moreover, Dilzhan [17] proposed the results of numerous EFL teachers showing positive perceptions to the practice of using ChatGPT to teach English as well as appreciating its ability to improve student engagement, reduce burden for teachers, and provide fresh ideas for incorporating into lessons.

Besides, the challenges that occurred along with the benefits were also mentioned. EFL teachers acknowledged the challenges they would encounter during the application of digital tools into teaching English language [18]. Some challenges result from external factors while other obstacles are internal factors. The challenges could be related to the lack of necessary training for the technological integration, EFL teachers' lack of knowledge about the digital tools or AI, a lack of technological support for digital integration in language classrooms [19–21]. Some EFL teachers continued to have negative opinions of technology and would prefer not to use it due to various concerns, arising from both their own unfulfilling experiences with AI-driven tools and their learners' misuse or excessive dependence on them [22, 23]. A lack of information and ICT skills, a lack of experience with ICT as a learner, a lack of motivation, difficulty integrating ICT with teachers' existing learning styles and practices, a sense of being uncomfortable, fear of losing control over students and losing their dominant position in the classroom, and a fear of losing their respect from them [24–26]. In terms of the affective aspect of teaching, teachers are worried that AI may reduce their position in teaching, reduce teacher-student interactions, and they also questioned the accuracy and reliability of the data that the system produced [27].

A similar AI-themed study in Vietnam found that EFL teachers had positive attitudes toward digital tools in foreign language teaching, demonstrating readiness for digital transformation in language centers [28, 29]. Recent research has further examined AI's role in EFL instruction. Dang [30] conducted a systematic review of empirical trends in AI chatbot use, highlighting their increasing presence in language classrooms. Le *et al*. [31] explored Vietnamese EFL lecturers' perceptions of ChatGPT in facilitating language acquisition, noting both its advantages and limitations. Additionally, a case study at Van Lang University investigated AI-based assessment in ELT exam creation, demonstrating its impact on testing practices [32]. In lines with international studies, Vietnamese research has contributed to the growing integration of AI tools in various aspects of language teaching, from task design and assessment to self-study. However, they leave room for further exploration of specific teacher groups who may face greater challenges or exude different perspectives in adopting AI. Previous research on AI integration in ELT has been rich and considerable, offering valuable insights with high external validity regarding teachers' perceptions, technological adoption, and pedagogical implications. However, most studies have primarily focused on early-career educators or those in higher education, leaving a gap in understanding how veteran EFL teachers navigate AI-driven teaching. Little is known about how these experienced teachers, who have spent more than half of their lives without exposure to high-tech or AI-powered tools, adapt to AI-driven teaching while supporting young learners in developing foundational language skills. Their perceptions, digital competencies, and adaptability are critical areas for further investigation. Understanding their challenges and readiness is essential for the effective and contextually relevant integration of AI in EFL classrooms in southern Vietnam.

### *B. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework of the Study*

In response to the identified gaps, this study was conducted to address three research questions:

1) How do veteran EFL teachers perceive the use of Apts for ELT?

2) How frequent do veteran EFL teachers use the Apts for English teaching in EFL classrooms?
3) What are veteran EFL teachers' concerns and needs for using Apts for English teaching in EFL classrooms?

To explore veteran EFL teachers' insights into using AI-powered tools, this study adopted the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) [33] as the conceptual framework to facilitate narrative frames and clusters for questionnaire development. The narrative frames were designed based on key UTAUT constructs, including Performance Expectancy (belief that AI enhances teaching effectiveness), Effort Expectancy (ease of AI adoption), Facilitating Conditions (availability of technological and institutional support), and Social Influence (perceived pressure from peers or institutions to use AI) (Venkatesh *et al.* 2003). These aspects provide a structured but still flexible approach to capturing veteran teachers' experiences, challenges, and adaptability in integrating AI into their instructional practices (as illustrated in Fig. 1).

Knowles' (1984) Andragogy served as the theoretical framework for grounding the study scope and unpacking the data on veteran EFL teachers' experiences with AI-powered tools. As Andragogy Theory emphasizes self-directed learning, experiential knowledge, and problem-solving, it could elaborate on how adult educators engage with and adapt to technological changes in their teaching [34]. In this study context, UTAUT teachers' age, prior experiences, beliefs, and professional autonomy play important roles in shaping their willingness to integrate AI, their concerns about its effectiveness, and their strategies for adapting to this shift.

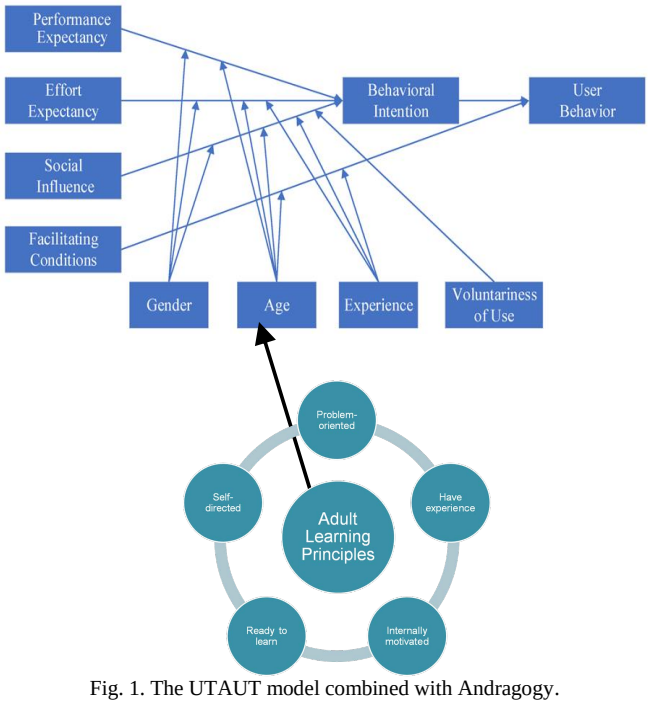


Fig. 1. The UTAUT model combined with Andragogy.

## III. Materials and Methods

### A. Design and Sampling Technique

This research employed an exploratory mixed-methods design, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative approaches to explore veteran EFL teachers' perceptions of using AI-powered tools in English teaching. This design enables the triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data sources, providing a more comprehensive picture of the case [35, 36].

This study employed a purposive sampling approach, or so-called criteria-based sampling technique, grounded in the principle that participants should offer rich, experience-based insights relevant to both qualitative and quantitative strands of the research [37]. The primary criterion for participant selection was that the teachers had extensive experience in secondary or high school English teaching and had been recognized for their outstanding performance and prominent use of technology-assisted instruction. Eight veteran EFL teachers, aged 45 to under 60, who had demonstrated excellence in their teaching practices, were introduced through school principals and volunteered to participate in the qualitative phase. Their insights, gathered through in-depth narrative frame responses, provided rich perspectives on their experiences regarding AI integration in language teaching. These teachers were given pseudonyms from VT1, VT2, VT3, VT4, VT5, VT6, VT7, and VT8 (see Table 1).

Table 1. Interviewing participants' demographic information

| Participant | Gender | Working context |
|---|---|---|
| VT1 | Male | High school |
| VT2 | Male | Secondary school |
| VT3 | Female | High school |
| VT4 | Female | High school |
| VT5 | Female | Secondary school |
| VT6 | Female | Secondary school |
| VT7 | Male | Primary school |
| VT8 | Male | Primary school |

For the quantitative phase, the snowball sampling method was employed to recruit 116 veteran EFL teachers, each with over 15 years of teaching experience (see Table 2). The process began by reaching out to an initial group of qualified participants, who were then asked to refer other eligible colleagues from their professional networks [38]. This referral-based approach facilitated access to a larger pool of experienced teachers from primary, secondary and high schools in the interviewees' working contexts. Snowball sampling was particularly useful in this context, as veteran teachers with experience for being aware of using Apts may not always be easily accessible through traditional recruitment methods.

Table 2. Questionnaire participants' demographic information

| Variables | Demographic Features | Number (N=116) |
|---|---|---|
| Gender | Male | 51 (43.97%) |
| | Female | 65 (56.03%) |
| Working context | Primary school | 27 (23.28%) |
| | Secondary school | 30 (25.86%) |
| | High school | 59 (50.86%) |

### B. Instruments and Data Collection

This study employed two complementary data collection instruments, encompassing narrative frames and a categorical Likert-scale questionnaire. The first instrument, narrative frames, facilitated answers through structured initial prompts [39]. This ensures that participants' responses are guided by predetermined themes, including performance expectancy (perceived usefulness of AI tools in enhancing teaching and learning), effort expectancy (ease of use and accessibility), social influence (support from colleagues and institutions),

facilitating conditions (available resources and training opportunities) and their perceived confidence in applying these tools for ELT. The protocol began by introducing the study purpose and ethical considerations for information security. After reflective prompts addressing their experiences and professional growth in relation to AI integration in language education, participants were asked to list the AI tools they have been utilizing. They were encouraged to share any further insights than the provided prompts, which potentially enriched the research findings with emerging themes. All interviews were granted with consent, conducted in Vietnamese, recorded and transcribed for confirmability. Ethical considerations were strictly observed, including obtaining informed protocols, ensuring confidentiality through anonymized data, and allowing participants to withdraw at any stage without consequences.

The second instrument, a categorical Likert-scale questionnaire, was designed to assess teachers' perceptions and frequency of AI tool usage. The questionnaire ensures clarity and consistency, as confirmed by expert reviews and pilot testing. Following the design of an exploratory sequential mixed-methods study, all clusters and their items in the questionnaire were systematically developed through open coding and thematic analysis of narrative frames collected from eight interviewee participants. It consisted of six clusters, with the first five measuring various perceptual dimensions and the final cluster capturing frequency of AI tool usage (see Table 3).

Table 3. Summarization of the categorical Likert-scale questionnaire

| Cluster | Description | Likert Scale Type |
|---|---|---|
| Performance Expectancy (PE): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 | Perceived usefulness of Apts in ELT. | 5 = Strongly Disagree → 1 = Strongly Agree |
| Effort Expectancy (EE): 6, 7, 8 | Ease to use Apts in ELT. | |
| Social Influence (SI): 9, 10, 11 | Influence of external factors on Apts adoption. | |
| Facilitating Conditions (FC): 12, 13, 14 | Availability of resources and training for AI use. | |
| Perceived Confidence (PC): 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 | Teachers' self-efficacy in using Apts in ELT. | |
| Frequency of Apts usage: 22, 23, 24, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34 | How often teachers use AI-powered tools in their teaching practices. | 5 = Never → 1 = Always |

### C. Data Analysis

Both inductive and deductive thematic analysis were used. Inductive analysis identified emerging themes from participants' responses, while deductive analysis applied the UTAUT model to categorize data based on predefined themes. For the quantitative data, SPSS software version 26.0 was used for analysis. Oxford's (2001) rating scale was applied for interpreting the data [40]. To ensure validity and reliability, the interview questions and survey items were reviewed by two experts in the field of TEFL research before being piloted with participants. The reliability of the instruments was analyzed using Cronbach's α scores. All the clusters were analyzed separately which resulted in the Cronbach's α ranging from 0.885 to 0.967, which were all higher than 0.7, indicating high reliability (see Table 4).

Table 4. Cluster reliability statistics

| Clusters | Cronbach's Alpha | N of items |
|---|---|---|
| Performance Expectancy | 0.946 | 5 |
| Effort Expectancy | 0.901 | 3 |
| Social Influence | 0.885 | 3 |
| Facilitating Conditions | 0.944 | 3 |
| Perceived Confidence | 0.967 | 7 |
| Frequency of using Apts tools | 0.944 | 13 |

## IV. Result and Discussion

### A. Veteran EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Using Apts in ELT

#### 1) Perceived performance expectancy

From the narrative frames of eight veteran teachers, five main themes regarding the performance of Apts in English teaching were debriefed:

- Designing tasks that enhance EFL learner engagement.

"Kahoot and quizlet caught my learners' attention and competitiveness more than I did!"

- Aiding in teaching English receptive language skills (listening and reading).
- Aiding in teaching English productive language skills (speaking and writing).
- Aiding in testing and assessing EFL learner outcomes.

"AI tools could ease the process of feedback on procedural aspects of languages, which is helpful for non-native speakers like me and my learners." (VT4, excerpt 4).

- Aiding in teaching English language elements (pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar).

"I do not have a 'posh English accent'. My tongue is too old to change. AI bot could help my learners acquire different accents across the world." (VT2, excerpt 2)

Table 5 illustrated the results of the survey participants' perceptions of performance expectancy for Apts.

Table 5. Descriptive results of veteran EFL teachers' perceived PE ($N$ = 116)

| Items | M | SD |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Apts aid in designing tasks enhancing learner engagement. | 3.93 | 1.011 |
| 2. Apts aid in teaching productive language skills. | 3.88 | 1.064 |
| 3. Apts aid in teaching receptive language skills. | 3.93 | 0.984 |
| 4. Apts aid in testing and assessing learning outcomes. | 3.86 | 1.079 |
| 5. Apts aid in teaching language elements. | 3.91 | 0.965 |

| Items | Response anchors | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 | 4 (3.4%) | 5 (4.3%) | 24 (20.7%) | 45 (38.8%) | 38 (32.8%) |
| 2 | 5 (4.3%) | 10 (8.6%) | 13 (11.2%) | 54 (46.6%) | 34 (29.3%) |
| 3 | 6 (9.4%) | 4 (4.7%) | 12 (17.2%) | 64 (42.2%) | 30 (26.6%) |
| 4 | 7 (6%) | 6 (5.2%) | 16 (13.8%) | 54 (46.6%) | 33 (28.5%) |
| 5 | 3 (2.6%) | 9 (7.8%) | 14 (12.1%) | 59 (50.9%) | 31 (26.7%) |

Generally, participants expressed high level agreement on the usefulness of AI-powered tools in teaching ($M_{PE}$ = 3.902), with the highest-rated statement indicating their perceived benefits in designing tasks that aim to engage learners better as well as receptive language skill practice, including

listening and reading, ($M_1 = M_3 = 3.93$). Similarly, their role in aiding vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar teaching received high endorsement ($M_5 = 3.91$). These reports showed an agreement with findings from Wang *et al*. [41], reinforcing AI's advantage in language element acquisition with its consistent, data-driven support compared to memory limitations and emotional influence affecting human teachers and learners. Additionally, the high agreement on its overall effectiveness in aiding productive skills, such as speaking and writing ($M_2 = 3.88$) aligns with research highlighting AI's ability to personalize instruction and integrate learning into daily life. The results shared similarity with the empirical studies about the influence of Apts to the enhancement of students' English language skills [42, 43]. While testing and assessing support from AI tools received the lowest score ($M_4 = 3.86$), perceptions remained positive, likely due to its ability to provide real-time feedback yet lack of human interaction for assessment integrity, echoing previous findings [44, 45].

*2) Perceived effort expectancy*

From the narrative frames of eight interviewees, three main themes regarding the effort for using Apts in English teaching were listed as follows:

- Economical fees of Apts.

"My colleagues and I shared the same accounts on some AI tools. Just make sure we don't access it at the same time." (VT1, excerpt 1).

- User-friendly interface of Apts.

"Most of the AI tools were easy to input and work with. Their responses were not always satisfying but still show a sign of 'flattery' towards users…" (VT5, excerpt 5).

- Low time consumption and physical effort in accessing to Apts.

The results of the participants' perceptions of effort expectancy for Apts were presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Descriptive results of veteran EFL teachers' perceived EE ($N = 116$)

| Items | M | SD |
|---|---|---|
| 6. I purchase Apts with affordable prices by sharing with peers. | 3.65 | 1.049 |
| 7. I spend less time and physical effort accessing to Apts. | 3.64 | 0.990 |
| 8. I use Apts easily as they are user-friendly. | 3.63 | 1.076 |

| Items | Response anchors | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 6 (5.2%) | 11 (9.5%) | 22 (18.9%) | 56 (48.3%) | 21 (18.1%) |
| 7 | 5 (4.3%) | 8 (6.9%) | 31 (26.7%) | 52 (44.8%) | 20 (17.2%) |
| 8 | 7 (6%) | 9 (7.7%) | 27 (23.3%) | 50 (43.1%) | 23 (19.9%) |

On a whole, participants shared a fairly high level of agreement on the ease and simplicity of Apts ($M_{EE} = 3.64$). The highest-rated statement ($M_6 = 3.65$) indicated that participants considered AI-powered tools affordable when shared with peers, aligning with research findings from Turkish EFL teachers' perceived ease of use in Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) [46]. This suggests that they felt capable of paying the fees together with their professional circles to use Apts for shared teaching goals. The second statement ($M_7 = 3.64$) reflected participants' belief that AI tools required minimal time and effort to access, reinforcing their confidence in understanding how the technology functions. The final statement in this category, regarding AI tools' user-friendly design, had the lowest mean score ($M_8 = 3.63$), but a substantial number of participants still agreed, with 50 selecting "Agree" and 23 choosing "Totally agree". This aligns with the current findings, indicating that participants found AI-powered tools accessible even without extensive prior experience [47, 48]. This accessibility is likely due to AI tools' interactive, multidimensional design, which provides guidance and modeling, which could be associated with the interface benefits identified by Alshumaimeri and Alshememry [49].

*3) Perceived social influences*

From the narrative frames of eight interviewees, three main themes regarding the social effect for using Apts in English teaching were extracted:

- Colleagues and students' expectations for adopting Apts in English teaching.

"I feel like I would earn more respect and prestige if I could use AI tools to collaborate with peers and students…" (VT4, excerpt 4).

- Institutional and curricular requirements of interactive teaching.
- Societal trends and transforming generational gaps in education AI-assisted methods.

"I grew up and spent more than half of my life without AI, but my students and the future youngsters would never know a time without it. I had to catch up with the trends to better prepare my learners…" (VT6, excerpt 6).

Table 7 presented the results of the participants' perceptions of the social influences for them to use Apts at their workplaces.

Table 7. Descriptive results of veteran EFL teachers' perceived SI ($N = 116$)

| Items | M | SD |
|---|---|---|
| 9. My students and colleagues expect me to adopt Apts for teaching English. | 3.78 | 1.031 |
| 10. My institutional curricula push me to use Apts for teaching English more interactively. | 3.61 | 1.078 |
| 11. The societal trends drive me to use Apts in teaching English. | 3.60 | 1.102 |

| Items | Response anchors | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9 | 6 (5.2%) | 7 (6%) | 20 (17.2%) | 57 (49.1%) | 26 (22.5%) |
| 10 | 7 (6%) | 11 (9.5%) | 23 (19.8%) | 54 (46.6%) | 21 (18.1%) |
| 11 | 9 (7.7%) | 8 (6.9%) | 24 (20.7%) | 54 (46.6%) | 21 (18.1%) |

Overall, participants exhibited a relatively high level of agreement regarding the social influences driving their adoption of AI-powered tools in English teaching ($M_{SI} = 3.66$). The highest-rated statement ($M_9 = 3.78$) indicated that students and colleagues expected and respected their use of AI, suggesting that the immediate ecological environment significantly fosters AI adoption in the workplace. The second statement ($M_{10} = 3.61$) highlighted the influence of institutional curricula in prompting teachers to incorporate AI tools for more interactive teaching to blend in broader

educational shifts. The last statement ($M_{11}$ = 3.6) reflected the societal shift toward AI integration. Despite slight variations in agreement levels, the majority of participants responded neutrally or positively across all three items, indicating that while external pressures exist, they are not overwhelmingly strong. These findings suggest that veteran teachers recognize social expectations for AI adoption but may not yet feel fully compelled by them. The participants' choices were understandable and aligned with previous findings on the impact of social expectations on users' intention and capacity to use AI-powered tools for teaching English. A similar study on EFL teachers in China, with a collectivist culture to Vietnamese contexts, found that while schools and colleagues were generally supportive of AI integration in education, social influence and responsibility alone were not always the most critical and decisive factor in determining teachers' high willingness to adopt AI tools [50].

*4) Perceived facilitating conditions*

From the narrative frames of eight interviewees, three main themes regarding the external facilitators for using Apts in English teaching were found:

- AI training program for learning from tech experts and seniors from various institutions.
- Up-to-date materials and online webinars for self-study to use Apts in English teaching.
- Immediate support for technical or logistic problems of AI tools from colleagues and institutions.

Table 8 presented the results of the participants' perceptions of the facilitating conditions for them to use Apts in English teaching professional development.

Table 8. Descriptive results of veteran EFL teachers' perceived FC ($N$ = 116)

| Items | M | SD |
|---|---|---|
| 12. My colleagues provide help with problems of Apts in teaching English. | 3.65 | 1.049 |
| 13. Training programs and tech experts from across-institutions provide help with using Apts in teaching English. | 3.63 | 1.092 |
| 14. Online resources foster self-study to use Apts in teaching English. | 3.59 | 1.047 |

| Items | Response anchors | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12 | 5 (4.3%) | 11 (9.5%) | 28 (24.1%) | 48 (41.4%) | 24 (20.7%) |
| 13 | 7 (6%) | 10 (8.6%) | 26 (22.4%) | 49 (42.2%) | 24 (20.7%) |
| 14 | 6 (5.2%) | 9 (7.7%) | 34 (29.3%) | 45 (38.8%) | 22 (19%) |

Collectively, participants demonstrated a moderately high level of agreement regarding the availability of support for using AI-powered tools in English teaching ($M_{FC}$ = 3.62). The highest-rated statement ($M_{12}$ = 3.65) indicated that colleagues were the most accessible source of assistance, suggesting strong peer support in troubleshooting AI-related issues. Training programs and tech experts from across-institutions ($M$ = 3.16) and online resources ($M$ = 3.16) were rated equally, reflecting that institutional and independent learning support were perceived as moderately helpful. With varying agreement levels, 57%–62% of participants responded with "Agree" and "Strongly Agree", and the remaining exuded neutral to low perceived support from external facilitators, indicating that while there are available coping mechanism strategies, they may still be inconsistently accessible or insufficient for all teachers. The results of this cluster supplement previous findings that convenient conditions to operate Apts to teach English at schools must include nested and continuing assistance from their seniors, principals and school policies [51]. Facilitating Conditions were to support teachers' technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK), which expectedly promoted teachers' acceptance and intention to use Apts to teach English [52].

*5) Perceived confidence*

From the narrative frames of eight interviewees, there were seven main themes regarding the pedagogical aspects they were confident about using Apts in English teaching:

- Analyzing and planning English courses by Apts.
- Creating and adapting personalized EFL materials for learners by Apts.
- Integrating multi-dimensional input into English teaching by Apts.
- Guiding students to prevent plagiarism in writing by using Apts.
- Aligning and adjusting English teaching and learning activities with outcomes by Apts.
- Offering multiple English teaching and learning modes.
- Providing real-time feedback by Apts to improve students' outcomes and motivations.

Table 9 illustrated the results of the participants' perceptions of their confidence when using Apts to teach English for EFL students. The statements were arranged based on their mean scores from the highest to the lowest.

Table 9. Descriptive results of EFL teachers' PC (N=116)

| Items | M | SD |
|---|---|---|
| 15. I know how to use Apts to plan courses. | 3.75 | 0.995 |
| 16. I know how to use Apts to personalize materials for my learners. | 3.77 | 0.972 |
| 17. I know how to guide my students to avoid plagiarism by Apts. | 3.81 | 0.932 |
| 18. I know how to give real-time feedback by Apts for learners. | 3.82 | 0.938 |
| 19. I know how to use Apts to monitor teaching and learning progress | 3.81 | 1.004 |
| 20. I know how to make use of multi-dimensional input provided by AI tools. | 3.72 | 1.043 |
| 21. I know how to use Apts to offer flexible teaching modes. | 3.80 | 0.980 |

| Items | Response anchors | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15 | 5 (4.3%) | 6 (5.2%) | 27 (23.3%) | 53 (45.7%) | 25 (21.6%) |
| 16 | 5 (4.3%) | 5 (4.3%) | 26 (22.4%) | 56 (48.3%) | 24 (20.7%) |
| 17 | 4 (3.4%) | 5 (4.3%) | 24 (20.7%) | 59 (50.9%) | 24 (20.7%) |
| 18 | 4 (6.3%) | 6 (5.2%) | 21 (18.1%) | 61 (52.6%) | 24 (20.7%) |
| 19 | 5 (4.3%) | 7 (6%) | 20 (17.2%) | 57 (49.1%) | 27 (23.3%) |
| 20 | 6 (5.2%) | 8 (6.9%) | 23 (19.8%) | 54 (46.6%) | 25 (21.6%) |
| 21 | 5 (4.3%) | 5 (4.3%) | 24 (20.7%) | 56 (48.3%) | 26 (22.4%) |

Overall, participants demonstrated a high level of confidence in using APTs for various teaching duties (*MPC* = 3.78). The highest-rated statement ($M_{18}$ = 3.82) indicated that participants felt most capable of providing real-time feedback using APTs. To the same extent, they showed strong confidence in monitoring teaching and learning progress and guiding students to avoid plagiarism ($M_{17}$ = $M_{19}$ = 3.81), enriching findings from Tang, *et al*. [53] about AI benefits in writing progress-checking and products. Offering flexible teaching modes ($M$ = 3.80), personalizing learning materials ($M_{16}$ = 3.77) and planning courses ($M_{15}$ = 3.75) were also rated highly, reflecting language teachers' comfort with deploying AI-driven tools for lesson customization and instructional design, especially in mixed-level classrooms [54]. About introducing new knowledge for learners, participants reported slightly lower confidence in using multi-dimensional input provided by AI tools ($M_{20}$ = 3.72). Across all items, a majority of participants selected neutral (point 3) or agreement levels (point 4), with very few participants expressed strong disagreement (point 1) or strong agreement (point 5). The results were in line with the prior studies about self-efficacy for the contents of technological and technological pedagogy knowledge, or so-called "Confidence" in this study [55].

### *B. Veteran EFL Teachers' Frequency of Using Apts in ELT*

Eight interview participants shared the Apts they frequently used in their English teaching due to the benefits they bring, as summarized in Table 10.

Table 10. AI-powered tools for ELT

| AI tools | Common use in ELT |
|---|---|
| Duolingo AI | Adaptive language learning with AI-generated exercises and feedback. |
| Text-to-Speech | Converts text into natural-sounding speech for listening exercises. |
| Grammarly | AI-powered grammar, spelling, and style checker. |
| QuillBot | Paraphrasing, summarization, and grammar improvement tool. |
| Siri | Voice assistant for interactive language learning and practice. |
| Consensus | AI-powered research assistant that extracts key findings from academic papers. |
| Character AI | AI-generated character conversations for role-play and interactive dialogues. |
| Elsa Speak | AI-powered pronunciation coach for improving speaking skills. |
| CoralAI | Summarizes articles for reading comprehension and research purposes. |
| Kahoot! | Creates AI-generated quizzes for vocabulary and grammar practice. |
| Generative AI | AI chatbots for conversation practice, writing assistance, and answering queries. |
| Orai | AI speech coach for public speaking and pronunciation improvement. |
| Amazon Alexa | AI-powered voice assistant for vocabulary practice, Q&A, and interactive learning. |

These suggested Apts were developed into 13 items (item 22 to 34) for cluster 6 in the questionnaire, namely Frequency of the use of Apts in ELT (see Table 11 and Fig. 2).

Table 11. Descriptive results of EFL teachers' frequency of use for AI-powered tools ($N$ = 116)

| **Items** | **M** | **SD** |
|---|---|---|
| 22. Duolingo AI | 3.72 | 1.037 |
| 23. Text-to-Speech | 3.60 | 1.291 |
| 24. Grammarly | 4.00 | .914 |
| 25. Quillbot | 3.84 | 1.076 |
| 26. Siri | 3.49 | 1.191 |
| 27. Consensus | 3.23 | 1.281 |
| 28. Character AI | 3.41 | 1.209 |
| 29. Elsa Speak | 3.76 | 1.092 |
| 30. CoralAI | 3.29 | 1.279 |
| 31. Kahoot! | 3.57 | 1.210 |
| 32. Generative AI | 4.23 | .827 |
| 33. Orai | 3.54 | 1.288 |
| 34. Amazon Alexa | 3.45 | 1.274 |

| Items | Response anchors | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| 22. Duolingo AI | 6 (5.2%) | 10 (8.6%) | 17 (14.7%) | 61 (52.6%) | 22 (19%) |
| 23. Text-to-Speech | 15 (12.9%) | 7 (6.0%) | 17 (14.7%) | 47 (40.5%) | 30 (25.9%) |
| 24. Grammarly | 4 (3.4%) | 2 (1.7%) | 18 (15.5%) | 58 (50.0%) | 34 (29.3%) |
| 25. Quillbot | 6 (5.2%) | 10 (8.6%) | 11 (9.5%) | 58 (50.0%) | 31 (26.7%) |
| 26. Siri | 12 (10.3%) | 9 (7.8%) | 27 (23.3%) | 46 (39.7%) | 22 (19.0%) |
| 27. Consensus | 19 (16.4%) | 10 (8.6%) | 29 (25.0%) | 41 (35.3%) | 17 (14.7%) |
| 28. Character AI | 14 (12.1%) | 10 (8.6%) | 24 (20.7%) | 50 (43.1%) | 18 (15.5%) |
| 29. Elsa Speak | 9 (7.8%) | 5 (4.3%) | 17 (14.7%) | 59 (50.9%) | 26 (22.4%) |
| 30. CoralAI | 20 (17.2%) | 7 (6.0%) | 23 (19.8%) | 51 (44.0%) | 15 (12.9%) |
| 31. Kahoot! | 13 (11.2%) | 7 (6.0%) | 2 (18.1%) | 51 (44.0%) | 24 (20.7%) |
| 32. Generative AI | 2 (1.7%) | 2 (1.7%) | 11 (9.5%) | 53 (45.7%) | 48 (41.4%) |
| 33. Orai | 16 (13.8%) | 7 (6.0%) | 17 (14.7%) | 50 (43.1%) | 26 (22.4%) |
| 34. Amazon Alexa | 17 (14.7%) | 9 (7.8%) | 14 (12.1%) | 57 (49.1%) | 19 (16.4%) |

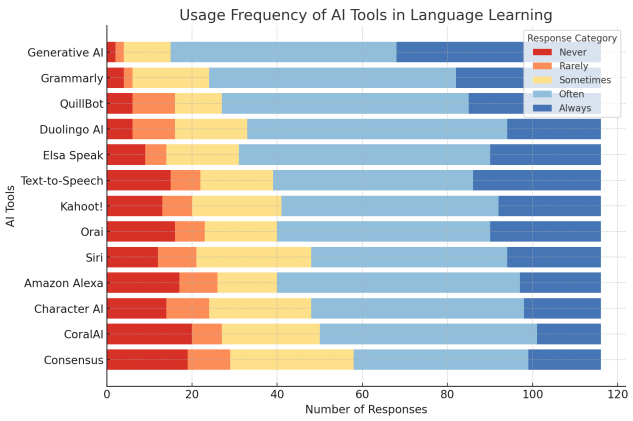


Fig. 2. Usage frequency of AI-powered tools in ELT.

Participants reported varying levels of AI-powered tool usage for language teaching, with Generative AI being the most frequently used, as nearly half (41.4%) stated they "Always" use it, and another 45.7% selected "Often". This finding shows that generative AI has become one of the most popular resources in EFL teachers' pedagogical practices due to its unique function of quickly creating novel content, consistent with the discoveries of De Wilde [56]. Grammarly and QuillBot were also widely adopted, with over 50% of participants reporting frequent usage ("Often" or "Always"), indicating their importance in supporting and editing writing tasks. Elsa Speak and Text-to-Speech tools followed a similar trend, suggesting that AI tools facilitating pronunciation and listening skills are also highly valued. Meanwhile, tools such

as Duolingo AI, Kahoot!, Orai, Siri, and Amazon Alexa were used less frequently, with a higher number of participants selecting "Never" or "Rarely". This indicates that while interactive and speech-based AI tools have potential, they may not yet be fully integrated into teaching practices. Character AI, CoralAI, and Consensus had the lowest levels of frequent usage, with a substantial number of participants either never or rarely using them. These tools, designed for text-based AI interactions and research summarization, may be perceived as less essential or unfamiliar to educators, or the lack of practice and support for the technical knowledge and needs as well as training that helps EFL teachers be updated with the latest trends. Overall, the findings highlight a strong preference amongst veteran EFL teachers in this study for AI-powered writing, grammar, and pronunciation tools, while AI-driven assistants and research-oriented platforms remain underutilized in ELT.

### C. Concerns and Needs for Using Apts in ELT

The findings revealed several concerns regarding the challenges veteran teachers face and their need for professional development in technology-integrated education. The responses indicated that veteran EFL teachers are generally aware of AI's potential and recognize its achievements in the linguistic education field. These teachers acknowledged AI's ability to address limitations in traditional classrooms, enhance teaching efficiency, and assist in skill development to a moderate extent. However, despite these advantages, practical challenges that affect the experience of using APTs were present. Teachers' reflections have identified both external and internal barriers to AI adoption. Among these, the most pressing concern was their own capacity and proficiency in utilizing AI tools effectively. Veteran teachers expressed apprehension about their lack of formal training and being "marginalized for old age and slow reflexes" (VT3, excerpt 3) in AI-driven applications, making it difficult and hesitant for them to integrate the tools seamlessly into their teaching.

Beyond the need for work-related training, ethical concerns surrounding AI integration in ELT also appeared as a commonly-reported issue among veteran teachers. Participants mentioned data privacy, algorithmic bias, and over-reliance on AI in language teaching. Several teachers voiced concerns about the security of teachers and students' information when using AI-powered platforms. As for cultural sensitivities in language learning, especially translation and interpretation, they highlighted the risk of AI-generated content reinforcing biases or inaccuracies, which could mislead students if not carefully monitored. Some educators also warned against excessive dependence on AI tools, stressing that while AI can enhance teaching efficiency, it should complement rather than replace human interaction in language learning. As one participant, VT8, reflected, *"To be honest, I used to be a Luddite, as I fear that AI may tell my student any misconceptions or overgeneralization, but now I see its potential if used smartly and responsibly" (VT8, excerpt 8)*. From the Andragogical perspective, their resistance can be understood as a response to both a lack of formal training and a deeply ingrained belief in traditional teaching methods. Many experienced educators have built their professional identities around direct, human-centered instruction, and the introduction of AI challenges these long-standing pedagogical approaches. Without adequate support and professional development, teachers may feel unequipped to critically evaluate AI's role in ELT, leading to skepticism or reluctance in adopting AI-driven tools. Addressing these ethical challenges requires clear policies on data protection, transparency in AI decision-making, and a balanced approach that maintains the teacher's role as the primary facilitator of learning.

Several issues emerged were the needs for structured professional development opportunities. The participants emphasized that EFL teachers must be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to use AI tools effectively. Their responses highlighted the necessity of targeted training programs tailored to their professional needs. It is suggested that institutions should provide ongoing AI-related training, ensuring that teachers receive adequate support in both technical proficiency and pedagogical adaptation. Furthermore, some participants stressed the importance of peer collaboration in navigating AI adoption, recommending that teachers share best practices and mentor one another to ease the transition into AI-enhanced instruction. Under the Andragogical lens, as experienced educators, veteran teachers are self-directed learners who seek relevance and practicality in their professional development. Their concerns about AI proficiency suggest that training programs should focus on experiential hand-on learning, problem-solving, and direct engagement with AI tools rather than theoretical instructions or awareness-raising alone. The Andragogical principles also amplify the importance of leveraging teachers' prior experiences, suggesting that workshops or training initiatives should be designed to integrate their existing knowledge while addressing specific gaps in AI competency. In addition, given that veteran teachers often have extensive teaching experience, collaborative learning environments, peer mentoring programs or professional learning communities, could facilitate smoother AI adoption and create spaces for shared expertise. By considering veteran teachers' voices for not being missed out, institutions can refine their approach to AI training for teachers, ensuring that professional development initiatives align with educators' learning needs.

Regarding practical implications stemming from the findings and discussion, to facilitate AI adoption among veteran EFL teachers, policymakers and institutions could consider implementing structured initiatives that ease the technology apprehension. Training programs should be designed to provide step-by-step guidance, ensuring accessibility for teachers with minimal prior exposure to digital tools. These initiatives should go beyond basic technical instruction by incorporating mindset-shifting workshops to help teachers build confidence and reframe AI as a support system rather than a replacement. Establishing mentorship networks and professional learning communities would also enable veteran teachers to share experiences, exchange strategies, and voice concerns in a supportive environment.

Moreover, to ensure feasible AI integration, training programs should help veteran teachers recognize and classify the multipurpose functions of different AI tools, ranging from lesson planning and material development to classroom

management and educational research. A structured approach to AI adoption should be introduced in phases, beginning with AI-powered tools directly related to teaching, such as automated grading systems, adaptive learning platforms, and AI-assisted content creation. Once teachers develop familiarity and confidence with these practical tools, the integration can expand to teaching-driven AI applications, including language modeling tools for personalized feedback, student engagement analytics, and classroom automation systems. The final phase should focus on teaching-research AI tools, which can support educators in conducting action research, analyzing student performance trends, and accessing academic literature through AI-driven databases. By sequencing AI integration in this manner, training programs can prevent information overload while ensuring that veteran teachers gradually build both technical competence and pedagogical efficacy.

In addition to emotional and psychological support, AI training should be highly practical and directly applicable to classroom settings. Hands-on workshops that simulate real teaching scenarios can enhance teachers' ability to integrate AI meaningfully into lesson planning, student engagement, and assessment. Furthermore, institutions should consider policy reforms that recognize the varied levels of digital proficiency among teachers. Offering incentives such as reduced workloads during training periods or financial support for professional certification would encourage more teachers to participate in AI integration initiatives. By implementing these measures, institutions and policymakers can foster a more inclusive approach to AI adoption, ensuring that veteran teachers remain integral to the evolving landscape of ELT while continuing their professional growth. Ultimately, equipping these educators with the necessary skills and support systems will contribute to a more sustainable and adaptive teaching workforce in the age of AI-driven education.

## V. Conclusion

This study achieved its primary goals to deduce insights into the perceptions, acceptance, and use of Apts in ELT among veteran EFL teachers with over 15 years of experience. By addressing the research questions and filling the existing research gap, the findings contribute to digging into how teachers at a late-career stage navigate fluctuating technological advancements in education. The mentioned Apts that veteran teachers frequently choose for their classroom teaching could serve as references for other colleagues to consider and attempt. Complementing much of the existing research that generally examined EFL teachers' technology adoption, this study specifically accentuates the experiences of seasoned educators who have witnessed multiple shifts in educational technology throughout their careers. The findings suggest that, regardless of career stage, teachers generally seek to enhance their professional development by engaging with the latest educational trends. However, veteran teachers face distinct emotional challenges and apprehensions compared to their younger counterparts. While they recognize AI's potential in improving lesson delivery, personalizing content, and increasing workplace efficiency, many experience concerns regarding their own proficiency, the necessity for more inclusive structured training, and the long-term implications of AI integration on their teaching roles. These challenges highlight the pressing need for targeted professional development programs that address not only technical skills but also the emotional and psychological aspects of adapting to technology.

Despite its contributions, this study acknowledges several limitations. One notable constraint is the potential for response biases and subjective interpretations inherent in self-reported data collection methods, such as questionnaires [57]. Participants' responses were largely influenced by their emotions, which could have been redirected by personal experiences or attitudes toward AI-powered tools. Future research could incorporate observational techniques, such as classroom observations or think-aloud protocols, to provide a more objective and comprehensive evaluation of AI tool usage, its benefits, and challenges across diverse educational settings. These methods would allow researchers to triangulate findings, mitigating potential biases from self-reported data and enhancing the validity of conclusions. Additionally, while the sample size of this study was sufficient for exploring specific insights into veteran EFL teachers' experiences, its limitations in generalizability suggest the need for larger and more diverse participant pools. Expanding future studies to include broader samples would improve the transferability and external validity of the findings, ensuring that results reflect a wider spectrum of teaching contexts. A longitudinal research design incorporating teachers at different career stages, from early-career to mid-career educators, would provide a comparative perspective on how professional development needs and attitudes toward AI evolve over time. Moreover, adopting experimental or action research designs could assess the direct impact of AI-assisted teaching on student learning outcomes, offering empirical evidence beyond teachers' perceptions. Collecting student performance data across AI-enhanced and traditional teaching methods would provide valuable insights into the pedagogical implications of AI adoption in EFL classrooms.

## Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

## Author Contributions

Trinh Quoc Lap: conceptualizing and overseeing the study; Phan Ngoc Tuong Vy: interpreting and discussing the data; Nguyen Cao Bao Uyen: collecting and analyzing the data; Le Cong Tuan: revising and editing the final draft. All authors had approved the final version.

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