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THE DAILY USE OF CHATGPT BY FRENCH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS AT THE ALGÉRIAN UNIVERSITY. PRACTICAL CHALLENGES AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Sara Ghamri*

Abstract. Artificial intelligence, as a new tool, raises questions about its contribution within the university setting. With this in mind, we conducted a survey of 80 students from the French department at Abbes Laghrou Khenchela University, aiming to identify how this tool is used and its effects on learning. The results show that students mainly use the ChatGPT application for writing tasks, text comprehension, and preparation for assessments and exams scheduled as part of their academic program. Without a doubt, this tool offers many beneficial aspects. However, we believe it is essential to also highlight the negative sides. Excessive reliance on artificial intelligence can indeed lead to intellectual laziness, a loss of autonomy, a diminished taste for research and personal reflection, thereby threatening individual capacities for creativity, analysis, and effort. Therefore, artificial intelligence should remain a mere facilitating tool and can never replace the prodigious resources of human intelligence. The rapid development of artificial intelligence and generative tools, such as ChatGPT, has transformed teaching techniques and learning methods in higher education. ChatGPT is now considered a valuable resource for students. It is considered a valuable tool for pedagogical support, research and independent learning. Thanks to its advanced capabilities, students can ask questions and receive clear answers and explanations, generate assignments and even improve their written work in record time. These features make ChatGPT a valuable tool for literature and language students at our university, and it is widely used by our students.

Keywords: ChatGPT, use, University of khenchela, artificial intelligence

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ЕЖЕДНЕВНОЕ ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ СНАТГРТ СТУДЕНТАМИ ФРАНЦУЗСКОГО ОТДЕЛЕНИЯ АЛЖИРСКОГО УНИВЕРСИТЕТА: ПРАКТИЧЕСКИЕ ПРОБЛЕМЫ И БУДУЩИЕ ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ

Сара Гамри*

Абстракт. Искусственный интеллект, как новая технология, вызывает многочисленные вопросы о его вкладе в университетскую среду. В этом контексте нами было проведено анкетирование среди 80 студентов французского отделения Университета Аббаса Лагура в Хеншеле с целью выявить формы использования этого инструмента и его влияние на процесс обучения. Результаты показали, что студенты в основном используют приложение ChatGPT для написания текстов, понимания содержания и подготовки к экзаменам и контрольным работам, предусмотренным учебной программой. Несомненно, данный инструмент имеет множество положительных сторон. Однако важно отметить и его негативные последствия. Чрезмерная зависимость от искусственного интеллекта может привести к интеллектуальной лени, утрате самостоятельности, снижению интереса к исследованию и личным размышлениям, что, в свою очередь, угрожает индивидуальным способностям к творчеству, анализу и усердию. Таким образом, искусственный интеллект должен оставаться лишь вспомогательным средством, которое никогда не сможет заменить выдающиеся возможности человеческого разума. Быстрое развитие ИИ и генеративных инструментов, таких как ChatGPT, радикально изменило методы преподавания и обучения в высшей школе. ChatGPT сегодня рассматривается как важный ресурс для студентов, обеспечивая педагогическую поддержку, исследовательскую помощь и возможности для самостоятельного обучения. Благодаря своим расширенным возможностям студенты могут задавать вопросы, получать четкие объяснения, генерировать письменные задания и улучшать тексты в короткие сроки. Эти функции делают ChatGPT ценным инструментом для студентов, изучающих литературу и языки в нашем университете.

Ключевые слова: ChatGPT, использование, Университет Хеншела, искусственный интеллект

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**CHATGPT-NİN GÜNDƏLİK İSTİFADƏSİ: ƏLCƏZƏİR
UNİVERSİTETİNİN FRANSIZ DİLİ KAFEDRASİ TƏLƏBƏLƏRİNİN
TƏCRÜBƏSİ, PRAKTİKİ ÇƏTİNLİKLƏR VƏ GƏLƏCƏK
PERSPEKTİVLƏR**

Sara Qəmri*

Abstrakt. Süni intellektin ali təhsil mühitinə daxil olması yeni bir alət kimi onun rolu və töhfəsi barədə mühüm suallar doğurur. Bu kontekstdə biz Xəngəla Universitetinin Abbas Lağrur adına Fransız dili kafedrasının 80 tələbəsi arasında sorğu keçirdik. Tədqiqatın məqsədi tələbələrin bu alətdən necə istifadə etdiklərini və onun öyrənmə prosesinə təsirini müəyyənləşdirmək idi. Nəticələr göstərdi ki, tələbələr əsasən ChatGPT proqramından yazı tapşırıqlarında, mətnləri anlamaqda və tədris proqramı çərçivəsində keçirilən imtahan və qiymətləndirmələrə hazırlıqda istifadə edirlər. Şübhəsiz ki, bu alət bir çox faydalı imkanlar təqdim edir. Bununla belə, onun mənfi tərəflərini də vurğulamaq vacibdir. Süni intellektə həddindən artıq güvən intellektual tənbelliyə, müstəqilliyin itirilməsinə, tədqiqat və şəxsi düşüncə qabiliyyətinin azalmasına gətirib çıxara bilər. Bu isə yaradıcılıq, analitik düşüncə və səy kimi fərdi qabiliyyətləri zəiflədə bilər. Buna görə də süni intellekt yalnız köməkçi vasitə kimi qalmalı, insan zəkanın əvəzolunmaz potensialını əvəz etməməlidir. Süni intellekt və generativ alətlərin, o cümlədən ChatGPT-nin sürətli inkişafı ali təhsildə tədris metodlarını və öyrənmə yanaşmalarını dəyişib. ChatGPT bu gün tələbələr üçün əvəzsiz mənbə sayılır- o, pedoqoji dəstək, tədqiqat və müstəqil öyrənmə üçün geniş imkanlar yaradır. Tələbələr bu alət vasitəsilə suallar verə, aydın cavablar və izahlar ala, yazılı işlərini qısa vaxtda hazırlaya və təkmilləşdirə bilirlər. Bu xüsusiyyətlər ChatGPT-ni Xəngəla Universitetinin ədəbiyyat və dil ixtisaslarında təhsil alan tələbələr üçün qiymətli vasitəyə çevirir.

Açar sözlər: ChatGPT, istifadə, Xəngəla Universiteti, süni intellekt

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1.Introduction

In this study, we investigated how students in the French department at Khenchela University’s Faculty of Letters and Languages use ChatGPT daily, and the impact of this usage on their learning practices, autonomy, and relationship with knowledge.

To address these questions and conduct this investigation, we used a questionnaire combining quantitative and qualitative data. Firstly, our study aims to identify the ways in which ChatGPT is used. Secondly, we aimed to understand and analyse its effects on students’ learning. Finally, we aimed to propose pedagogical pathways for reasoned and moderate use.

2.Definition and conceptual boundaries of artificial intelligence

Legg (2007) defines artificial intelligence as ‘the set of techniques implemented to create machines capable of simulating human intelligence’. This definition encompasses fields such as machine learning, natural language processing and image recognition.

According to Russell and Norvig (2016), ‘artificial intelligence involves developing agents that can perceive their environment and act in a way that maximises their chances of achieving a given goal.’ From this definition, we can see that artificial intelligence can be defined as a set of systems or agents that can perceive their environment and act to maximise their chances of achieving a given objective.

3.Methodology

To better understand how ChatGPT is used in everyday life by students in the French department at Khenchela University, we adopted an analytical and descriptive approach. This approach aims to provide an overview of current usage, highlighting the ‘pedagogical, affective and cognitive logics’ underlying these users.

We conducted our survey during the second semester of the 2024/25 academic year, at a time when artificial intelligence is ubiquitous in educational and university settings. Our audience consisted of a sample of eighty students ranging from the first to the third year of their undergraduate studies, as well as first-year Master’s students from the French department. This choice is not coincidental; it is motivated by the students’ regular exposure to guided work such as literary analysis, documentary research and writing assignments, in which the use of ChatGPT can be both relevant and problematic.

Students in the French department progress through a programme in which language, critical thinking and creativity are fundamental skills. Our survey allowed us to gain a better understanding of whether an automated conversational tool is integrated into their academic journey.

To collect the data, we created a questionnaire which we distributed in person to the students during class. We ensured their anonymity to encourage spontaneous and sincere responses. We collected the completed questionnaires at the end of each session.

The questionnaire included 12 questions divided into several categories (frequency of ChatGPT usage, purpose of usage, benefits derived, limitations and identified risks). We analysed the results using a mixed-methods approach, applying qualitative analysis to open-ended responses and quantitative analysis to closed responses. The students' responses were analysed using simple indicators and presented graphically for better readability. For the open-ended responses, thematic analysis and interpretation were employed to identify recurring themes and discursive trends. These approaches provided us with a rich interpretative and statistical view of students' attitudes and behaviours regarding this tool.

4.Location of the survey and target population

Our survey was conducted within the French department at Khenchela University, an institution in eastern Algeria that has become known in recent years for its commitment to integrating digital tools into teaching. Our department is part of the Faculty of Letters and Languages, training hundreds of students each year for teaching professions. The choice of survey location is not coincidental: it is an academic space in which language mastery, intellectual rigour, critical thinking development and creativity lie at the heart of learning. Writing practices also play an important role in students' curricula and training in general.

The target population consists of eighty students distributed across three levels of study: Licence 2, Licence 3 and Master 1. These students were selected due to their exposure to the demands of research, argumentation and written production. They represent a diverse sample in terms of their academic experience, relationship with technology and use of artificial intelligence. Our investigation took place in a calm environment conducive to reflection. All colleagues provided support, facilitating access to student groups to enable us to successfully carry out this survey.

5.Data collection instrument

In order to gather the necessary data for this survey, we developed a questionnaire tailored to the objectives and profile of the respondents. The aim was to ask students about their daily use of ChatGPT, including the frequency of use, their perception of this artificial intelligence and the context in which they use the tool.

The questionnaire consists of twelve questions divided into three main categories. The first category includes quantitative questions, with a number of closed questions. These focus on frequency of usage, modes of use and types

of activity (e.g. essay writing, answering direct questions, revision). The second section uses semi-open questions to examine motivations and perceptions of ChatGPT, exploring what leads students to use it and the associated limitations and advantages. The third section addresses ethical considerations such as plagiarism, moral issues and technological dependence through open-ended questions.

The questionnaire was distributed in class and shared online via Classroom. It was also disseminated through Messenger groups of the students involved in the survey, enabling us to collect a significant number of responses.

Respondents’ anonymity and the confidentiality of their answers were respected to create a trusting environment and encourage sincere responses free from fear of judgement or academic repercussions. The questionnaire proved very effective in gathering rich, varied responses about students’ experiences with ChatGPT.

5.1.Do you use ChatGPT?

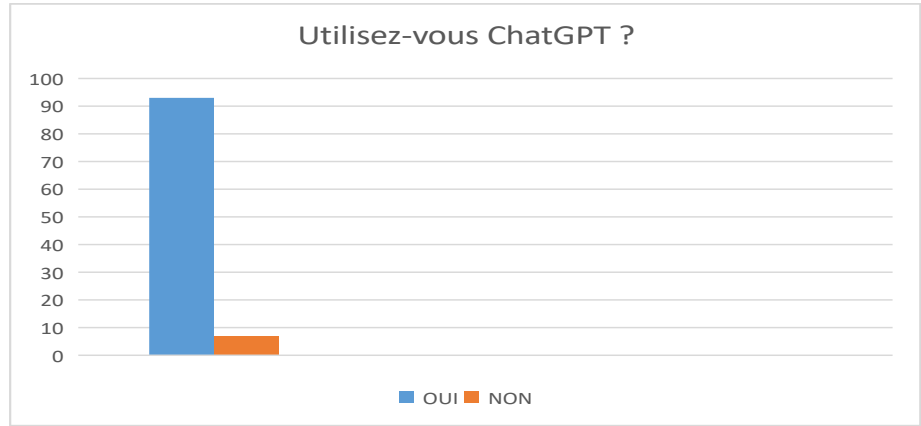


Figure 1: Do you use ChatGPT?

The usage rate of ChatGPT among students is 93%. This impressive figure highlights the increasing integration of artificial intelligence into students’ learning practices. It suggests that ChatGPT is used daily and has become part of the digital environment. Such widespread use could be seen as a response to students’ needs, particularly with regard to writing, comprehension, and pedagogical support. As Rolfe (2023) points out, AI ‘is gradually establishing itself as a mediator between academic knowledge and individual learning needs.

5.2.How frequently do you use ChatGPT?

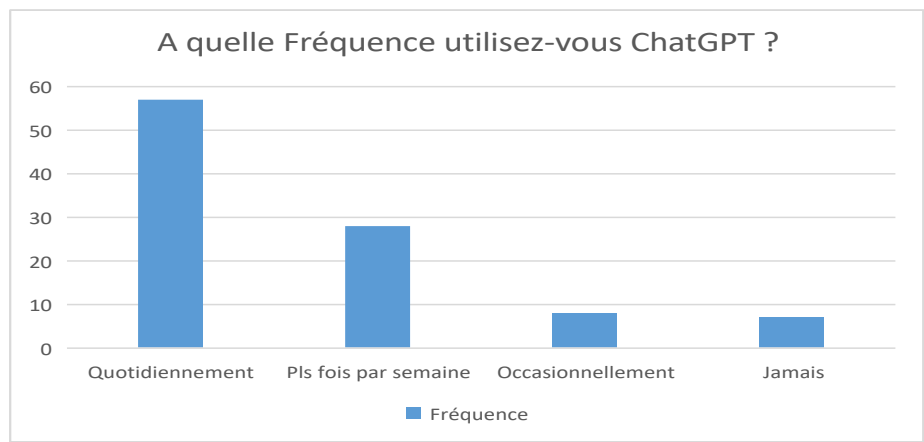


Figure 2: How frequently do you use ChatGPT?

According to the results, 57% of students use ChatGPT daily, 28% use it several times a week, 8% use it occasionally and 7% never use it.

Daily use of ChatGPT reflects its deep integration into students’ everyday pedagogical practices. This suggests that ChatGPT is not just seen as a digital tool, but as a support platform. According to Selwyn (2023), AI is becoming ‘an integrated tool in the cognitive routine of students’, helping them to accomplish various tasks at university. For most students, this artificial intelligence serves as a regular aid for scientific and academic work. This aligns with Martin’s (2021) view that AI is “a tool for structuring daily learning”.

5.3.Why do you use ChatGPT?

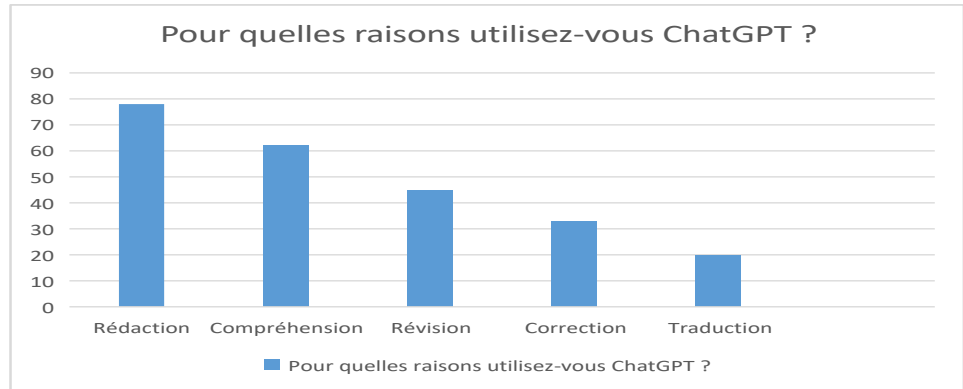


Figure 3: Why do you use ChatGPT?

Students provided various reasons for using ChatGPT. Seventy-eight per cent of students use it for writing short answers, essays and short texts. 62% use it to understand sentences and even complete texts. 45% of students claim to use ChatGPT to review monthly assessments and semester exams. Thirty-

three per cent use it to correct spelling mistakes, often alongside another AI tool. Finally, 20 per cent use it for translation into Arabic.

This functional diversity reflects the “cognitive plasticity of educational technologies”, as described by Luckin and Holmes (2019), which refers to the ability of technologies to adapt to different learner profiles. From this analysis, we can see that most students use ChatGPT for writing and comprehension tasks. This suggests that the tool effectively meets their training needs by acting as a linguistic expert advisor. Dubois (2023) interprets this functional diversity as ‘an indication of the cognitive plasticity of AI, which adapts to different student profiles’.

5.4.Do you use ChatGPT during classes?

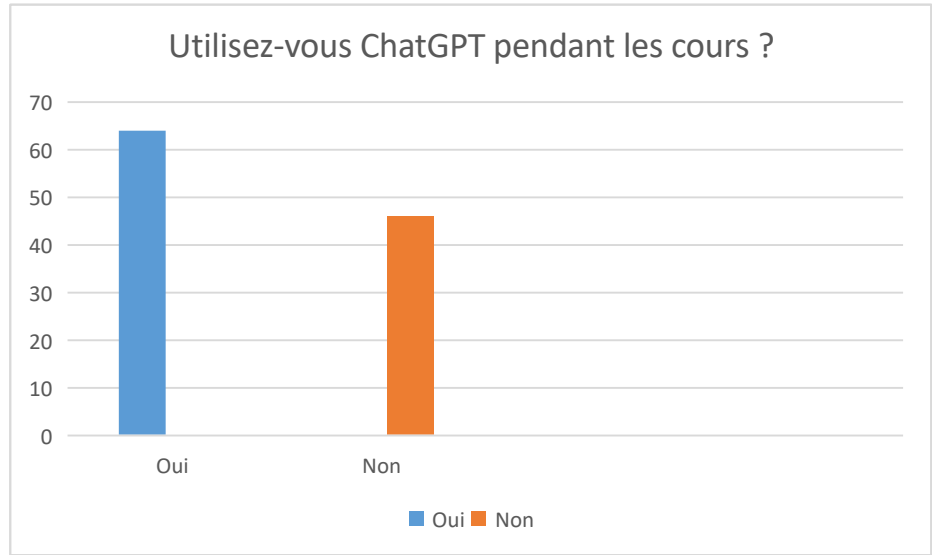


Figure 4: Do you use ChatGPT during classes?

After analysing this question, it appears that 65% of students have used ChatGPT in real time during classes. This figure is quite significant, suggesting a desire for immediacy when accessing resources and information. Students are likely to use this AI to look up definitions, explain concepts or generate answers to questions posed by the instructor. However, these practices raise pedagogical and ethical questions, particularly with regard to what happens in class, the efforts made by students, and the integrity of exchanges. Holmes and Tuomi (2022) caution against potential pitfalls associated with the use of artificial intelligence in classrooms, highlighting a type of assistance that could hinder the acquisition of knowledge.

5.5.Do you think ChatGPT helps you learn better?

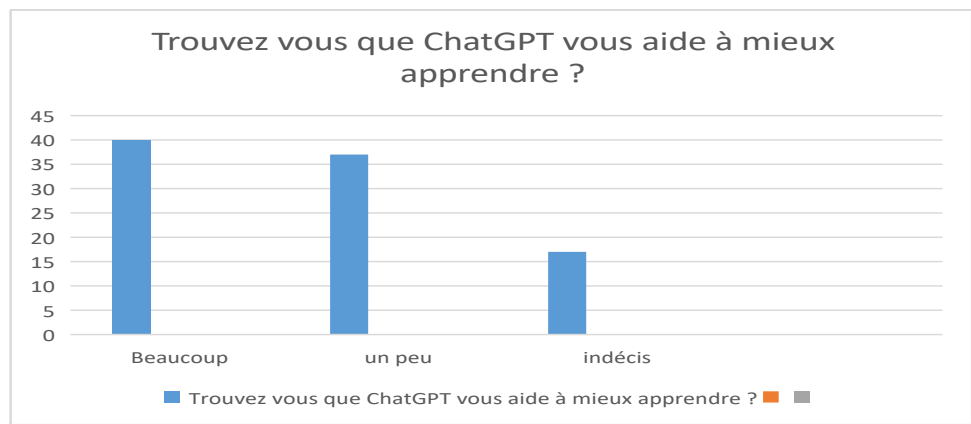


Figure 5: Do you think ChatGPT helps you learn better?

At this point, students are divided: 40% believe that ChatGPT helps them a lot, 37% claim that it assists them somewhat, and 17% are undecided. This variety of opinion reveals that the perceived effectiveness of ChatGPT depends on how it is utilised. For a minority, it serves as a comprehension tool and a true writing assistant. Luckin et al. (2016) state: *‘AI supports learning if it is used to develop understanding rather than to provide ready-made answers.’*

5.6.Do you feel you are becoming dependent on ChatGPT?

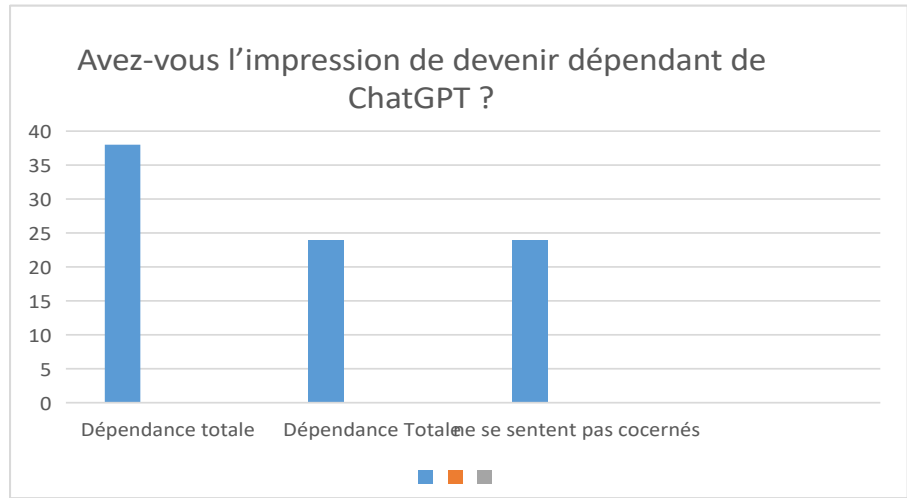


Figure 6: Do you feel you are becoming dependent on ChatGPT?

The majority of students (38%) report feeling dependent on this artificial intelligence, while 24% are partially dependent. The remaining 24% of students do not feel concerned. These results highlight a tension between autonomy and assistance. For students who feel dependent on ChatGPT, this is seen as a secondary effect of the tool’s perceived effectiveness. ChatGPT is considered a valuable AI tool, with students stating that they cannot do without

it. However, even partial dependence can affect students’ ability to produce personal and creative work. According to Selwyn (2023), ‘excessive dependence on AI can weaken personal reflection and problem-solving skills’.

5.7.Do you think the use of ChatGPT should be regulated by teachers?

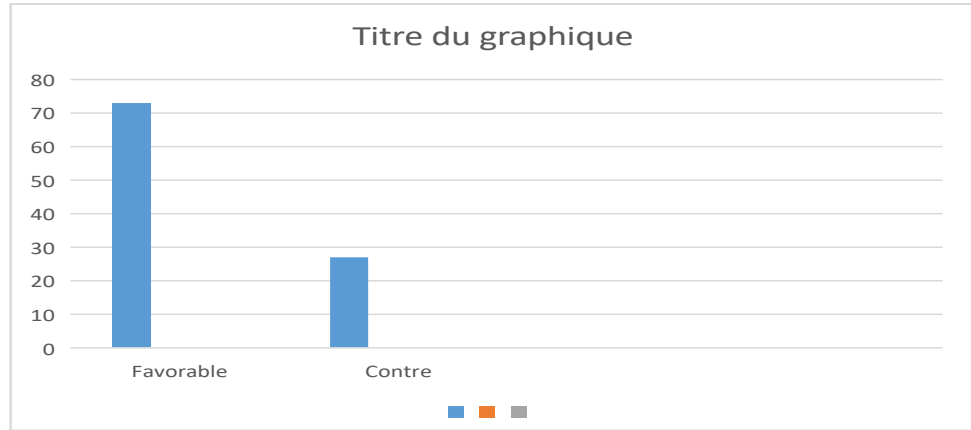


Figure 7: Do you think the use of ChatGPT should be regulated by teachers?

6. Analysis of responses

According to this analysis, 73% of students are in favour of teacher supervision regarding the use of ChatGPT, while 27% are against it. These data suggest that students have a certain reflective maturity regarding artificial intelligence. They are genuinely aware of the risks that can arise from unregulated use of ChatGPT. They even suggest solutions for regulated oversight and use of this AI, such as workshops, usage charters and tutoring. Holmes et al. (2021) advocate “usage charters” and the structured integration of AI into pedagogical practices. This aligns with Lemoine’s (2022) call for an AI pedagogy.

7. Conclusion:

This survey enables us to draw conclusions about how our students use ChatGPT.

When it comes to producing a written piece in response to a given question, it is clear that the output generated by the tool is lacking in several areas:
Absence of personal stance: the student’s individual involvement is missing; they do not take a position on a subject or issue. Taking a stance involves agreeing with, qualifying, denouncing or proposing something. Here, students should express a reasoned viewpoint, demonstrating their analytical and synthetic abilities and asserting their identity as autonomous individuals with intelligence, reason and feelings.

- Lack of precision: This chatbot relies on generic, global references that do not accurately address the subject of the writing.

- Uniform style: The output lacks the individual touch of the student, who should have their own way of expressing and formulating ideas and suggestions.

- Use of incomplete or incorrect citations: The tool often provides truncated or inaccurate citations.

Moreover, excessive reliance on this tool leads to a loss of autonomy, fosters intellectual laziness and threatens the desire for personal research, reflection, effort and creativity. It also undermines the development of critical thinking and its virtues.

Therefore, artificial intelligence should be regarded as merely a facilitating tool for students, who must utilise all their cognitive resources and knowledge to understand, analyse, and produce work.

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