EXPLORING PREDICTORS OF AI ADOPTION IN IMPROVING LEGAL TEXT COMPREHENSION: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF UNIVERSITY ENGLISH MAJORS

Vu Van Tuan[1], Dong Ngoc Linh[2*], & Nguyen Anh Tu[3]

[1]*Hanoi Law University, Ha Noi, Vietnam*

[2]*Students of High School for Gifted Students, Hanoi National University of Education, Hanoi, Vietnam*

[3]*Students of Hanoi Law University, Ha Noi, Vietnam*

Email address: ngoclinhdong2010@gmail.com, tuanvv@hlu.edu.vn

**Corresponding Author: Dong Ngoc Linh*

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ABSTRACT

As artificial intelligence (AI) becomes increasingly integrated into higher education, its role in supporting specialized academic reading warrants closer examination. This study investigates the predictors influencing the adoption of AI tools for legal text comprehension among legal English majors at Hanoi Law University. Using an explanatory mixed-methods design, quantitative data were collected from 168 students through a researcher-developed questionnaire, followed by semi-structured interviews with 15 volunteers to deepen interpretation. The quantitative results indicate that students face considerable challenges with legal English, particularly in navigating complex terminology and lengthy argumentative structures. Although they view AI-generated explanations as helpful, their trust in the accuracy and neutrality of AI remains limited. Qualitative findings reinforce these patterns, revealing that students value AI primarily as a supplementary aid rather than a dependable interpretive tool. Moreover, teacher encouragement, peer influence, and students' digital readiness emerged as meaningful predictors of adoption, while concerns related to privacy, academic integrity, and over-reliance were strongly articulated. As such, the study highlights a cautious yet constructive engagement with AI in legal English learning. The findings underscore the need for guided, responsible integration of AI tools to balance technological support with the development of independent legal reasoning skills.

KHÁM PHÁ CÁC YẾU TỐ DỰ BÁO VIỆC ỨNG DỤNG TRÍ TUỆ NHÂN TẠO TRONG NÂNG CAO KHẢ NĂNG HIỂU VĂN BẢN PHÁP LÝ: NGHIÊN CỨU THỰC TIỄN ĐỐI VỚI SINH VIÊN CHUYÊN NGÀNH TIẾNG ANH Ở BẬC ĐẠI HỌC

Vũ Văn Tuấn[1], Đồng Ngọc Linh[2,*], Nguyễn Anh Tú[3]

[1]*Trường Đại học Luật Hà Nội, Thành phố Hà Nội, Việt Nam*

[2]*Sinh viên Trường THPT Chuyên Đại học Sư phạm Hà Nội, Thành phố Hà Nội, Việt Nam*

[3]*Sinh viên Trường Đại học Luật Hà Nội, Thành phố Hà Nội, Việt Nam*
Địa chỉ email: ngoclinhdong2010@gmail.com, tuanvv@hlu.edu.vn
**Tác giả liên hệ: Đồng Ngọc Linh*
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TÓM TẮT

Khi trí tuệ nhân tạo (AI) ngày càng được tích hợp sâu vào giáo dục đại học, vai trò của nó trong việc hỗ trợ đọc hiểu các tài liệu học thuật chuyên ngành cần được xem xét kỹ lưỡng hơn. Nghiên cứu này khảo sát các yếu tố dự báo ảnh hưởng đến việc chấp nhận công cụ AI trong quá trình hiểu văn bản pháp lý của sinh viên chuyên ngành Tiếng Anh pháp lý tại Trường Đại học Luật Hà Nội. Sử dụng thiết kế phương pháp hỗn hợp giải thích, dữ liệu định lượng được thu thập từ 168 sinh viên thông qua bảng hỏi do nhóm nghiên cứu xây dựng, theo sau là phỏng vấn bán cấu trúc với 15 sinh viên tự nguyện nhằm đào sâu diễn giải kết quả. Kết quả định lượng cho thấy sinh viên gặp nhiều khó khăn với tiếng Anh pháp lý, đặc biệt là trong việc xử lý thuật ngữ pháp lý phức tạp và cấu trúc lập luận dài. Mặc dù họ đánh giá cao các giải thích do AI tạo ra, mức độ tin tưởng vào tính chính xác và tính trung lập của AI vẫn còn hạn chế. Kết quả định tính củng cố những xu hướng này, cho thấy sinh viên chủ yếu xem AI như một công cụ hỗ trợ bổ sung hơn là một phương tiện diễn giải đáng tin cậy. Bên cạnh đó, sự khuyến khích của giảng viên, ảnh hưởng của bạn học và mức độ sẵn sàng số của sinh viên nổi lên như những yếu tố dự báo quan trọng đối với việc chấp nhận AI, trong khi các mối lo ngại liên quan đến quyền riêng tư, tính liêm chính học thuật và sự phụ thuộc quá mức được nhấn mạnh mạnh mẽ. Do đó, nghiên cứu làm nổi bật cách thức tiếp cận AI thận trọng nhưng mang tính xây dựng trong học tập tiếng Anh pháp lý. Các phát hiện nhấn mạnh nhu cầu tích hợp AI một cách có hướng dẫn và có trách nhiệm nhằm cân bằng giữa hỗ trợ công nghệ và việc phát triển tư duy pháp lý độc lập.

1. Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a significant force in higher education, transforming how learners access, process, and interpret academic information. AI-powered tools have been shown to support reading comprehension by simplifying complex vocabulary, providing contextual explanations, and reducing cognitive load during text processing (Chea & Xiao, 2024; Lin et al., 2025). These developments are particularly relevant in Viet Nam, where the adoption of AI adoption in universities has expanded rapidly, influencing students' study habits and expectations (Huynh et al., 2025; Pham & Dang, 2025). Research consistently shows that students perceive AI tools as beneficial for enhancing academic performance and improving comprehension in English-language learning contexts (Alarifi et al., 2025; Nguyen, 2024). Nonetheless, despite this growing body of work, there remains a notable gap concerning how AI supports legal English major students, whose reading challenges differ markedly from those in general English programs. Legal

English involves dense terminology, layered argumentation, and culturally situated legal concepts. As a result, many students at Hanoi Law University report significant difficulty interpreting legal texts in English without additional scaffolding (Hassan & Alsalwah, 2025; Zambrano et al., 2025). While previous studies highlight the effectiveness of AI-assisted reading for EFL learners (Alshakhi, 2025; Daweli & Mahoub, 2024), few have examined its role in facilitating comprehension of specialized legal discourse. Another gap concerns the limited attention to predictors of AI adoption among learners dealing with highly specialized reading tasks. Existing AI adoption studies in Vietnam often focus on general academic settings or non-specialized reading needs (Hoai, 2025; Huynh et al., 2024; Linh, 2025), leaving unanswered questions about whether the same factors apply to legal English learners. For instance, legal text interpretation requires precision, and inaccuracies from AI-generated explanations may lead to misunderstandings of legal principles – an issue seldom explored in mainstream AI adoption research (Shang et al., 2025). Students' hesitation tied to privacy concerns, academic integrity, and potential over-reliance on AI further complicates adoption decisions. These gaps underscore the need for a focused investigation into why and how legal English major students at Hanoi Law University adopt AI tools for legal text comprehension. By examining their learning experiences, perceptions, and concerns through a mixed-methods approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2022), this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of AI's role in legal English reading and inform evidence-based strategies for integrating AI responsibly into legal education. To address the gaps identified above, this study explores how legal English majors engage with AI tools for reading support. Accordingly, the study focuses on two key questions:

1. To what extent do legal English majors at Hanoi Law University adopt AI tools for comprehending legal texts?

2. Which learner-related factors significantly influence students' decisions to adopt AI for legal text comprehension?

2. Methods

2.1 Research design

This study employed a mixed-methods explanatory sequential design to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the predictors of AI adoption in legal text comprehension. In the first phase, quantitative data were collected through a researcher-developed questionnaire to identify overall adoption patterns and key influencing factors. Building on these results, the second phase involved semi-structured interviews to clarify and deepen the quantitative findings. This design, guided by Creswell and Creswell (2022), enabled the integration of numerical trends with students' personal experiences, thereby providing a more nuanced interpretation of how legal English majors engage with AI tools.

2.2 Research Instruments

2.2.1 Survey questionnaire

The primary instrument for the quantitative phase was a researcher-made questionnaire consisting of 30 Likert-scale statements classified into four groups: learners' experience with legal text comprehension, students' use and perceptions of AI tools, predictors influencing AI adoption, and concerns related to AI use. The questionnaire also included demographic items. Its development followed standard procedures for language-education research, including expert review, item refinement, and pilot testing to ensure clarity and reliability (Dörnyei & Dewaele, 2022). Cronbach's (1951) Alpha was later computed to assess internal consistency.

2.2.2 Semi-structured interview

To enrich and explain the survey findings, a semi-structured interview protocol was designed around the same four thematic areas. This format allowed participants to elaborate on their experiences, perceptions, and concerns regarding AI-supported legal text comprehension. Open-ended prompts encouraged deeper reflection and helped clarify patterns emerging from the quantitative data, supporting a more comprehensive interpretation of students' adoption behaviors.

2.3 Research sample

The research sample comprised 168 legal English major students at Hanoi Law University, with data collected during the first term of the 2025–2026 academic year. A convenient sampling approach was used to administer the questionnaire. Of the participants, 23.1% were male and 76.9%

female, and the sample included sophomores (62.5%) and juniors (37.5%). Students reported using AI translation tools mainly for translating legal materials (67.9%), followed by translating academic texts and vocabulary learning. Additionally, 15 students voluntarily participated in semi-structured interviews after providing consent for follow-up data collection.

2.4 Data collection procedures

Before the main data collection, a pilot study was conducted with 30 purposefully selected legal English majors to ensure the suitability of the survey instrument. The pilot tested item clarity, response consistency, and overall scale performance. Reliability analysis yielded Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.84 to 0.90, indicating strong internal consistency. Based on participant feedback and statistical results, the questionnaire was refined in consultation with two experts in education, who recommended adjustments to wording and scale distribution to enhance precision and comprehension. Following the pilot, the finalized questionnaire was administered using both classroom-based distribution and an online survey format, allowing students flexible participation options. Participants were informed of the study's purpose, and consent was obtained prior to data submission. For the qualitative phase, interview sessions were scheduled with volunteers who had indicated their willingness to participate. All procedures adhered to established ethical standards, ensuring anonymity, confidentiality, and strictly voluntary participation throughout the research process.

2.5. Data analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using IBM SPSS, beginning with frequency counts to summarize demographic characteristics and descriptive statistics to examine response patterns. Mean scores for all Likert-scale items were interpreted using predefined interval ranges: strong disagreement (1.00–1.80), disagreement (1.81–2.60), moderate agreement (2.61–3.40), agreement (3.41–4.20), and strong agreement (4.21–5.00). Reliability for each construct was assessed through Cronbach's Alpha. For the qualitative phase, interview recordings were imported into NVivo, transcribed, and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2021) six-phase thematic analysis. Themes derived from qualitative coding were then compared with quantitative trends to produce an integrated understanding of students' AI adoption in legal text comprehension.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Quantitative analysis of students' experiences with using AI tools for legal text comprehension

Table 1 presents a detailed overview of students' perceptions of legal text comprehension and their experiences using AI tools to support their learning. Across the four major domains – learners' experiences with legal English, their use and perceptions of AI, predictors influencing adoption, and concerns about AI use – a number of significant patterns emerge. The findings reveal a student population that is simultaneously in need of support, cautiously optimistic about AI's benefits, and deeply aware of the technology's limitations. When interpreted in the context of earlier research, these results show both continuity with broader EFL studies and unique features specific to legal English learners. Beginning with students' experiences of legal text comprehension, the data indicate substantial difficulty with legal English materials. The consistently high means – such as *3.84* for finding legal texts difficult, *3.66* for requiring support with terminology, and *4.08* for feeling overwhelmed by long legal documents – demonstrate a strong sense of struggle. These results align closely with the challenges identified in previous research, which emphasizes that legal English imposes significantly higher cognitive and linguistic demands than general EFL reading. Similarly, students' agreement that legal English requires more specialized vocabulary training (*M = 3.86*) reflects findings by Zambrano et al. (2025), who noted that specialized texts tend to amplify comprehension barriers among EFL learners.

Notably, confidence levels are moderate rather than high. Students report only moderate agreement regarding their ability to read legal texts independently (*M = 3.04*), suggesting uncertainty about navigating legal discourse without additional support. Such hesitancy mirrors Nguyen's (2024) observations that Vietnamese English majors often struggle with advanced texts, particularly when dealing with discipline-specific content. The moderate score for benefiting from simplified legal language (*M = 3.32*) further highlights the need for supportive tools, confirming the broader pattern of students seeking technological scaffolding for complex reading tasks. Turning to

students' use and perceptions of AI tools, a more nuanced picture emerges. Although students generally acknowledge the utility of AI, their agreement tends to fall in the moderate range. For example, the belief that AI helps them understand legal concepts clearly receives a mean score of *3.00*, while perceived usefulness for legal English reading registers at *3.11*. These levels suggest cautious acceptance rather than full endorsement. Interestingly, students respond more positively to AI-generated explanations (*M = 3.63*), indicating that explanatory features may be more impactful than other AI functionalities. This finding aligns with Daweli and Mahoub's (2024) report that AI tends to be most effective when providing elaborations, clarifications, or simplified paraphrasing for EFL readers.

However, familiarity and habitual use of AI appear more limited. Scores for ease of operation (*M = 2.92*) and frequent use (*M = 2.82*) fall below the midpoint. This partly contradicts studies such as Nguyên and Ha (2025) and Linh (2025), which observed high levels of comfort and frequent use of AI among Vietnamese university students. One possible explanation is that legal English learners face unique obstacles, including the need to verify the accuracy of AI outputs due to the high stakes associated with legal meaning. Because legal arguments depend heavily on precision and nuance, students may be more hesitant to rely on AI tools than their peers in other disciplines. This hesitancy is further reflected in students' perceptions of reliability. The low means for trust in AI accuracy (*M = 2.09*) and confidence in interpreting AI-generated explanations (*M = 2.33*) point to significant skepticism. These concerns echo findings from Hassan and Alsalwah [8], who reported that EFL learners often doubt whether AI-generated outputs truly capture the intended meaning of academic texts. In legal contexts, where misinterpretation can lead to substantial conceptual errors, such doubts may be heightened. This is corroborated by Alshakhi (2025), who emphasized that learners in specialized fields are more cautious about AI reliability compared to those in general language learning environments.

The third category – predictors influencing AI adoption – reveals a combination of environmental support and personal readiness. Students perceive moderate levels of encouragement from classmates (*M = 3.30*) and agree that teachers support AI use (*M = 3.59*). These results are consistent with Vietnamese studies showing that educator endorsement plays a crucial role in technology adoption. Moreover, students report having the digital skills necessary to use AI effectively (*M = 3.60*), which corresponds with broader trends in Vietnamese higher education where students generally demonstrate high digital literacy. The belief that AI is essential for modern learning (*M = 3.33*) reflects a wider shift in attitudes noted by Alarifi et al. (2025), who argue that AI is increasingly considered an indispensable academic tool. Nevertheless, trust emerges again as a limiting factor. Students disagree with the statement that AI provides helpful and unbiased explanations (*M = 2.47*), a result that stands in contrast to the more optimistic views reported in Shang et al. (2025), where students showed strong trust in AI-aided comprehension activities. The disparity may stem from the specialized nature of legal texts, which require precision that current AI systems may not consistently deliver. This reinforces the notion that legal English learners form a distinct user group with concerns that differ from general EFL learners.

The final category – concerns and challenges – shows the strongest and most consistent agreement across the dataset. Students express substantial worry about AI inaccuracies (*M = 3.62*) and privacy risks (*M = 3.78*). These concerns have also been highlighted in previous research, particularly in studies examining AI use in sensitive or high-stakes learning contexts. The belief that overusing AI may impair reading and thinking abilities receives a high level of agreement (*M = 4.05*), echoing findings from Chea and Xiao (2024), who noted that learners fear becoming overly dependent on AI tools. Similarly, students express agreement with concerns about academic dishonesty (*M = 3.91*), reflecting broader ethical questions raised in recent literature about the role of AI in academic integrity. The strongest concern, however, relates to dependence. With a mean score of *4.69*, students show "strong agreement" that relying too heavily on AI may undermine their ability to understand legal texts independently. This sentiment sharply differentiates legal English learners from students in other fields who tend to embrace AI with fewer reservations. The heightened sense of risk underscores the disciplinary sensitivity of legal studies and adds weight to arguments by Daweli and Mahoub [9], who warn that AI must be integrated cautiously in literacy contexts where comprehension accuracy is critical.

Overall, the findings of Table 1 illustrate a complex relationship between legal English learners and AI tools. Students clearly recognize the challenges posed by legal texts and see AI as a potentially valuable support system. Yet they remain skeptical about reliability, cautious about ethical implications, and aware of the risks of overdependence. These patterns reflect both the promise and limitations of AI in complex reading environments. More importantly, they highlight the need for pedagogical frameworks that balance technological support with traditional reading skills, ensuring that AI serves as a scaffold rather than a substitute for legal reasoning.

Table 1. Legal English majors' perspectives on AI adoption for legal text comprehension

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Learners' experience with legal text comprehension				
1. I often find legal English texts difficult to understand.	168	3.84	0.798	Agreement
2. I need additional support to comprehend complex legal terminology.	168	3.66	0.642	Agreement
3. I feel overwhelmed when reading long legal documents in English.	168	4.08	0.553	Agreement
4. I struggle to interpret legal arguments written in English.	168	3.72	0.624	Agreement
5. I can understand legal English better when I receive explanations or examples.	168	3.58	0.563	Agreement
6. I lack confidence in my ability to read legal texts independently.	168	3.04	0.654	Moderate agreement
7. I believe legal English requires more specialized vocabulary training.	168	3.86	0.555	Agreement
8. I would benefit from tools that help simplify legal language.	168	3.32	0.611	Moderate agreement
Students' use and perceptions of AI tools				
9. AI tools help me understand legal concepts more clearly.	168	3.00	0.617	Moderate agreement
10. I find AI tools useful for improving my legal English reading skills.	168	3.11	0.619	Moderate agreement
11. AI-generated explanations make legal texts easier for me to process.	168	3.63	0.653	Agreement
12. I feel comfortable using AI tools for academic purposes.	168	3.32	0.603	Moderate agreement
13. AI platforms are easy for me to learn and operate.	168	2.92	0.627	Moderate agreement
14. I frequently use AI tools when studying legal English.	168	2.82	0.614	Moderate agreement
15. Using AI increases my interest in learning legal English.	168	3.10	0.582	Moderate agreement
16. I believe AI tools provide information that is accurate and reliable.	168	2.09	0.648	Disagreement
17. I feel confident in interpreting AI-generated explanations.	168	2.33	0.658	Disagreement
18. AI tools save me time when working with difficult legal materials.	168	3.35	0.764	Moderate agreement
Predictors influencing AI adoption				
19. My classmates encourage me to use AI tools for studying legal English.	168	3.30	0.722	Moderate agreement

20. My teachers support the use of AI tools for academic work.	168	3.59	0.638	Agreement
21. I believe AI will improve my overall academic performance.	168	3.29	0.704	Moderate agreement
22. I have the necessary digital skills to use AI tools effectively.	168	3.60	0.650	Agreement
23. I trust AI to provide helpful and unbiased explanations.	168	2.47	0.524	Disagreement
24. I believe AI tools are becoming essential for modern learning.	168	3.33	0.579	Moderate agreement
25. The university environment encourages students to use AI responsibly.	168	3.38	0.599	Moderate agreement
Concerns and challenges with AI use				
26. I worry that AI tools might produce inaccurate interpretations of legal texts.	168	3.62	0.628	Agreement
27. I am concerned about the privacy of my personal information when using AI.	168	3.78	0.643	Agreement
28. I think overusing AI could reduce my own reading and thinking abilities.	168	4.05	0.591	Agreement
29. I believe AI may encourage academic dishonesty if used improperly.	168	3.91	0.650	Agreement
30. I am worried about becoming too dependent on AI for understanding legal texts.	168	4.69	0.637	Strong agreement
Valid N (listwise)	168			

Table 2 compares male and female participants across the four thematic domains using independent samples t-tests. Across all categories, the results show no statistically significant gender differences. For learners' experiences with legal text comprehension, the *p*-value of .835 indicates that male and female students report similar levels of difficulty and support needs. This finding is consistent with earlier studies suggesting that legal English poses universal challenges regardless of gender, mainly due to its dense terminology and complex argumentation structures. Similarly, students' use and perceptions of AI tools do not differ significantly between genders (p = .215). Both groups appear to adopt AI with comparable levels of caution and interest, which aligns with observations from Nguyen (2024) and Hoai (2025), who found gender-neutral patterns in AI usage among Vietnamese undergraduates. In the domain of predictors influencing AI adoption, the *p*-value approaches significance (p = .064) but remains above the threshold. This borderline result suggests a slight tendency toward variation, yet it is insufficient to conclude meaningful gender-based differences. Finally, concerns and challenges related to AI use also display no significant gender variation (p = .833), indicating shared apprehensions regarding accuracy, privacy, and dependence. Collectively, Table 2 demonstrates that gender does not play a decisive role in shaping students' experiences or attitudes toward AI-supported legal English reading.

Table 2. Gender differences in legal text comprehension and AI-related domains

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Learners' experience with	Equal variances assumed	0.209	0.648	-0.209	166	0.835	-0.05510	0.26427

legal text comprehension	Equal variances not assumed			-0.211	154.348	0.833	-0.05510	0.26138
Students' use and perceptions of AI tools	Equal variances assumed	0.310	0.579	-1.245	166	0.215	-0.42449	0.34095
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.237	145.102	0.218	-0.42449	0.34325
Predictors influencing AI adoption	Equal variances assumed	0.408	0.524	-1.862	166	0.064	-0.48776	0.26196
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.905	159.496	0.059	-0.48776	0.25601
Concerns and challenges with AI use	Equal variances assumed	0.675	0.412	-0.211	166	.833	-0.04694	0.22228
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.209	143.923	0.834	-0.04694	0.22425

3.2. Thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews on students' AI experiences

Insights from the semi-structured interviews with 15 participants provide a richer and more nuanced understanding of students' experiences with legal text comprehension and their interactions with AI tools. Although qualitative in nature, the themes that emerged closely mirror the patterns identified in the quantitative results. A dominant theme across interviews was students' persistent struggle with legal English texts. Participants frequently described legal documents as "dense," "overwhelming," or "too abstract to decode without help," echoing the high mean scores reported for difficulty and cognitive overload in the survey. Several students emphasized that unfamiliar terminology and lengthy argumentation structures made independent comprehension challenging. This aligns with the quantitative indication that learners generally agree on the need for additional support and specialized vocabulary training. Students also expressed moderate but cautious appreciation for AI tools. Many reported that AI-generated explanations "help break things down" and "save time when dealing with difficult passages," reinforcing the survey items showing agreement or moderate agreement on AI's usefulness. However, students were equally quick to point out the limitations of AI. Several interviewees mentioned that outputs sometimes "miss legal nuance" or contain explanations that feel "too general for legal contexts." This hesitation strongly parallels the low quantitative scores related to trust and perceived accuracy. In terms of adoption factors, interviewees noted that teacher endorsement and peer influence played a meaningful role in motivating them to explore AI tools, confirming the moderately high means observed in the predictor's domain. Digital skills were not seen as a major barrier; most students described AI platforms as manageable, even if not always intuitive for legal tasks. Finally, concerns were strongly expressed during interviews. Participants repeatedly raised issues related to over-reliance, academic integrity, and privacy – precisely the concerns that showed strong agreement in the quantitative data. Many feared that frequent AI use could undermine their legal reasoning skills, with several acknowledging that dependence on automated explanations might "weaken critical thinking." Thus, the qualitative findings not only complement but reinforce the quantitative patterns, offering a coherent and integrated picture of students' complex relationship with AI-assisted legal text comprehension.

3.3. Mixed-methods integration of quantitative and qualitative findings

The mixed-methods design of this study offers a comprehensive and interconnected understanding of students' experiences with legal text comprehension and their adoption of AI tools. When viewed together, the quantitative and qualitative findings reveal a coherent narrative in which students consistently recognize the difficulties posed by legal English, show cautious interest in AI support, and express substantial concerns about accuracy, ethics, and dependence. The two datasets reinforce each other, allowing for a more robust interpretation of students' attitudes and

behaviors. The quantitative results indicated strong agreement that legal English texts are difficult, terminologically dense, and cognitively overwhelming. This statistical pattern was echoed vividly in the interviews, where students described legal documents as "intimidating," "impossible to navigate alone," and "full of terminology that slows you down." Thus, the qualitative data provide personal accounts that give depth to the mean scores in Table 1, underscoring that the struggle with legal texts is not merely a numerical trend but a lived academic challenge. Similarly, the moderate quantitative endorsement of AI tools was reflected in interview responses. Survey results showed agreement that AI-generated explanations improve readability, yet only moderate satisfaction with ease of use and frequency of adoption. Interviews clarified this nuance: students appreciated AI's ability to simplify legal language but emphasized that explanations sometimes fail to capture legal nuance or omit contextual subtleties. These qualitative insights help explain why trust in AI accuracy received low quantitative ratings – students do find AI helpful, but only to a point. They approach AI with caution, mirroring patterns found in recent AI adoption research in specialized disciplines.

The predictors' domain also shows strong alignment. Quantitatively, students moderately agreed that teacher support, peer encouragement, and digital readiness influenced their adoption. Interviews reinforced these findings, with several participants stating that they tried AI tools only after seeing classmates use them or after teachers encouraged experimentation. Students also affirmed that digital literacy was not a major barrier, aligning with the high means for digital competence. The strongest point of convergence between the datasets lies in the concerns domain. Quantitative results showed high agreement on risks related to inaccurate interpretations, privacy issues, academic dishonesty, and over-reliance on AI. The interviews provided vivid examples of these apprehensions: students worried that AI might "push them toward shortcuts," "weaken legal reasoning skills," or "summarize too superficially." These qualitative descriptions enrich the statistical findings by revealing the emotional and ethical weight behind students' concerns. In sum, the mixed-methods integration demonstrates strong convergence between the two datasets. Both strands of evidence point to a student body that acknowledges the potential value of AI but remains highly vigilant about its limitations, particularly within the demanding context of legal English. This integrated understanding highlights the need for balanced instructional strategies that incorporate AI while preserving students' analytical and interpretive skills.

4. Conclusions

This study set out to examine the predictors influencing the adoption of AI tools among legal English major students at Hanoi Law University, with particular attention to how these tools support comprehension of complex legal texts. By integrating quantitative survey data with qualitative interview insights, the research provides a multidimensional understanding of how students perceive both the potential and limitations of AI in their academic reading practices. Across both datasets, students consistently expressed substantial difficulty in interpreting legal English materials. The high cognitive demands of legal discourse – characterized by dense terminology, long argumentative structures, and abstract concepts – made independent comprehension challenging for most learners. In this context, AI tools emerged as a helpful, though not fully trusted, form of support. Students acknowledged that AI-generated explanations improve readability and reduce the time required to understand complex passages. Yet they also emphasized concerns about accuracy, nuance, and the risk of over-reliance, reflecting the careful balance students maintain between technological assistance and the need to develop their own legal reasoning skills. The study also revealed that adoption is shaped not only by individual attitudes but by broader environmental and pedagogical factors. Teacher endorsement, peer influence, and students' own digital skills played meaningful roles in determining whether and how AI tools were integrated into study routines. These findings highlight the importance of institutional guidance in fostering responsible and effective AI use within specialized academic contexts. Finally, the strong convergence between quantitative and qualitative results reinforces the validity of the study's conclusions. Students value AI as a supplementary tool, but they approach it with caution, particularly in a field where precision and interpretive accuracy are essential. The implications for practice are clear: educators should integrate AI thoughtfully, offering structured guidance that enhances learning without compromising critical engagement. Future research may extend this

work by examining long-term patterns of AI-assisted reading and exploring targeted interventions that combine technology with explicit training in legal literacy./.

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