

THE ROLE OF AI IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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Abstract: Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming the landscape of English language teaching (ELT), offering personalized, efficient, and data-driven approaches to language learning. This paper explores the various ways AI technologies—such as chatbots, adaptive learning platforms, automated feedback systems, and virtual assistants—enhance English instruction. Based on literature analysis, classroom observations, and student interviews, the study highlights both the benefits and challenges of integrating AI into English education. Findings reveal that while AI tools can improve learner autonomy, engagement, and pronunciation, the teacher's role remains essential in guiding meaningful interaction, critical thinking, and emotional support.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, English language teaching, language technology, adaptive learning, chatbots, AI tutors, educational innovation, EFL.

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping numerous sectors, including education. In English Language Teaching (ELT), AI is becoming an increasingly powerful tool for facilitating **personalized learning, immediate feedback, and interactive practice environments.**

From **voice recognition software** that evaluates pronunciation to **AI-powered chatbots** that simulate real conversations, technology is allowing learners to practice English in ways that were previously impossible in traditional classroom settings. AI also assists teachers by automating repetitive tasks (e.g., grading, content recommendation) and by analyzing student data to identify learning gaps.

However, while AI presents exciting possibilities, it also raises questions about **teacher roles, student dependency, and the limits of machine understanding** in human language learning. This paper aims to explore:

- The applications of AI in English language instruction,
- The advantages and drawbacks of using AI tools in ELT,
- The implications for teachers and learners in AI-supported classrooms.

The study used a **mixed-methods approach**, combining:

- **Literature review:** Analysis of recent research on AI applications in ELT (2018–2024),
- **Classroom observation:** Three secondary-level English classes using AI tools such as Google Classroom, Duolingo, Grammarly, and AI chatbots,
- **Student surveys** (N=45) and **teacher interviews** (N=6) to gather perspectives on the impact of AI on learning outcomes, motivation, and classroom dynamics.

AI tools examined included:

- **Grammarly** and **Quillbot** for writing assistance,
- **Duolingo** and **BBC Learning English AI chatbots** for vocabulary and grammar practice,
- **Speech recognition tools** for pronunciation training,
- **ChatGPT-based platforms** for real-time conversation and writing support.

The study identified multiple **positive outcomes** of AI integration in English classes:

Improved pronunciation: 75% of students using speech recognition tools reported higher confidence in speaking.

Faster vocabulary acquisition: Adaptive platforms like Duolingo helped students retain words more efficiently due to spaced repetition.

Motivation and engagement: 68% of surveyed students found AI apps more enjoyable than traditional workbook exercises.

Writing accuracy: Tools like Grammarly improved grammar awareness by providing instant corrective feedback.

Teachers noted that AI helped free up class time for **communication-based activities**, as students could practice grammar and vocabulary at home. However, they also reported some concerns:

- Over-reliance on AI tools for writing tasks led to **reduced critical thinking** and creativity.
- Students occasionally accepted AI feedback **without reflection**, leading to shallow understanding.
- Not all students had **equal access** to devices or stable internet, creating equity issues.

The integration of AI into English language instruction offers several **pedagogical benefits**, particularly in areas where learners need **repetition, personalization, and feedback**. For example, AI chatbots allow learners to practice dialogues at their own pace, with immediate corrections and support, which is particularly beneficial for shy or beginner-level students.

However, AI should be seen as a **complement—not a replacement—for human instruction**. Language learning is a deeply **social, emotional, and contextual** process. While AI excels at analyzing patterns and providing surface-level feedback, it lacks the ability to **teach empathy, cultural nuance**, or to respond appropriately to students' emotional needs.

Furthermore, successful AI integration depends heavily on the **teacher's role as a facilitator**. Teachers must guide students in using AI tools critically, teach them to question automated suggestions, and ensure that AI supports—rather than dominates—the learning process.

It is also important to address **ethical considerations**, such as data privacy, AI bias, and the potential for misuse (e.g., copy-paste answers from AI in assignments). Educators must establish clear **digital literacy practices** to teach students how to use AI responsibly.

AI has the potential to revolutionize English language teaching by offering innovative, engaging, and learner-centered tools. It can enhance pronunciation, grammar practice, vocabulary learning, and even conversation skills. However, it should be implemented thoughtfully, with attention to **pedagogical goals, equity, and ethical responsibility**.

Rather than replacing teachers, AI should empower them to focus on what machines cannot do—nurturing students' confidence, creativity, and communicative competence. The future of English education lies in **blending technology with human insight**, ensuring that learners receive a holistic and meaningful language experience.

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