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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN LEARNING

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Abstract. *Artificial intelligence has become an influential factor in contemporary English language teaching because it expands access to feedback, practice, and personalised learning support. This article examines the role of artificial intelligence in English language teaching and analyses innovative learning approaches associated with its integration. The study is based on a qualitative review of recent academic and policy literature. The findings indicate that AI contributes most visibly to speaking practice, writing support, adaptive learning, learner autonomy, and classroom innovation. At the same time, the literature highlights important challenges, including ethical concerns, overreliance on technology, limited teacher preparation, and the need to preserve meaningful human interaction in the learning process. The article concludes that artificial intelligence should be used not as a replacement for the teacher, but as a pedagogical resource that becomes effective only when integrated critically, ethically, and methodologically.*

Keywords: *artificial intelligence, English language teaching, innovative learning, learner autonomy, digital pedagogy, feedback, language skills.*

INTRODUCTION

The growing use of artificial intelligence in education has changed the discussion about how languages should be taught and learned in the digital era. In English language teaching, AI is increasingly associated with personalised feedback, interactive speaking practice, automated support for writing, and more flexible learning beyond classroom walls. UNESCO describes the educational use of generative AI through a "human-centred vision," which suggests that technology should serve learners and teachers rather than dominate them (Miao & Holmes, 2023).

In a similar way, OECD notes that generative AI can "democratise autonomous learning experiences," although it also raises concerns about assessment, skill development, privacy, and bias (OECD, 2023).

English language teaching is a particularly important field for AI integration because language learning depends on repeated practice, timely feedback, confidence building, and authentic communication. According to the British Council, AI tools are being used to improve speaking, writing, and reading, while also supporting learners with "goal setting and managing their own learning" (British Council, 2024). The same source also observes that AI can "lessen learners' fear of speaking in English," which is especially valuable in EFL settings where learners may have limited opportunities to communicate outside class (British Council, 2024).

These developments suggest that AI is not only a technical tool but also a factor reshaping methodology and learner experience.

At the same time, the educational value of AI is not automatic. Recent systematic reviews and meta-analyses show positive results, but they also stress that outcomes depend on context, task design, teacher guidance, and responsible implementation. For this reason, the present article addresses one main question: how does artificial intelligence support English language teaching, and which innovative approaches in learning appear most valuable in recent literature?

METHODOLOGY

The analysis is based on recent policy documents, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses related to artificial intelligence in education, language learning, and English language teaching.

The selected literature was examined in order to identify repeated themes, pedagogical tendencies, and major challenges connected with AI-supported language instruction.

The review process involved three steps. First, the literature was analysed for its treatment of AI in language skill development, especially speaking, writing, listening, vocabulary, and feedback. Second, the findings were grouped into broader categories related to innovation in learning, including adaptive learning, self-regulated learning, conversational practice, and teacher-supported digital pedagogy. Third, the positive effects and the limitations of AI integration were compared in order to produce a balanced academic interpretation. Since this article is not based on an experiment or survey conducted by the author, the results section presents synthesised findings from the reviewed literature rather than primary numerical data.

RESULTS

The literature shows that artificial intelligence has made its strongest contribution to productive language skills, especially speaking and writing. Reviews of AI use in ELT indicate that AI-powered systems are widely used for pronunciation practice, conversation simulation, automated writing support, and grammar-focused feedback. A systematic review of conversational AI tools in ELT found growing interest in chatbots and speaking-oriented tools, especially in Asian EFL contexts (Lai & Lee, 2024). A broader meta-analysis of AI in L2 learning also reports that AI interventions have a significant positive effect on language learning outcomes and are particularly effective for speaking, listening, writing, and vocabulary development (Wu, 2024). A more recent meta-analysis focused on English language teaching similarly concludes that AI-based interventions positively affect EFL learning outcomes across multiple skills (Ekizer, 2025).

Another major result is that AI is encouraging innovative approaches to learning rather than merely introducing new tools. The reviewed literature repeatedly connects AI with adaptive learning, on-demand support, multimodal feedback, and self-regulated learning. OECD’s analysis suggests that generative AI can expand autonomous learning opportunities, while the British Council highlights its role in helping learners practise outside class and manage their own progress (OECD, 2023; British Council, 2024). In practical terms, this means that learning can become more flexible, more individualised, and more continuous, especially when students use AI to rehearse speaking, revise writing, check vocabulary, or request explanations independently.

The findings also show that the expansion of AI in language education has not reduced the importance of the teacher. On the contrary, recent research on AI in teaching and teacher professional development shows a major imbalance: much more attention has been given to student-facing AI applications than to teachers' preparation for using them well (Tan, Cheng, & Ling, 2025). This suggests that educational systems may be adopting technologies faster than they are preparing teachers to apply them critically. In ELT, teacher guidance remains essential because language learning involves pragmatics, meaning, culture, accuracy, and appropriateness, all of which require human judgement.

At the same time, the literature identifies several challenges. UNESCO stresses the need for ethical regulation, human capacity development, and protection of inclusion and diversity in the age of generative AI (Miao & Holmes, 2023). OECD draws attention to risks linked to cheating, plagiarism, privacy, bias, and skill attrition (OECD, 2023). The British Council also notes that AI in ELT may reflect biases about "appropriate" language use and may not represent all varieties of English equally well (British Council, 2024). These concerns show that innovation must be guided by pedagogy and ethics rather than by technological enthusiasm alone.

DISCUSSION

The reviewed evidence suggests that artificial intelligence can strengthen English language teaching when it is used to extend practice, increase access to feedback, and support learner autonomy. This is especially important in EFL environments, where students often lack regular opportunities to use English in authentic settings. AI can partly reduce this limitation by creating low-pressure spaces for practice and revision. When learners interact with conversational tools, automated writing support, or adaptive practice systems, they are able to work more frequently and often with greater confidence. In this sense, AI contributes to innovation by changing the structure of access to language practice.

However, innovation in learning should not be confused with automation alone. Genuine innovation appears when technology deepens engagement, supports reflection, and improves the quality of communication. If students use AI only to generate quick answers, the educational value becomes limited and may even reduce critical thinking. By contrast, when AI is used for guided drafting, feedback interpretation, speaking rehearsal, self-monitoring, and revision, it can strengthen active learning. Recent research on generative AI in language learning and teaching shows that the field is expanding rapidly, but it still requires broader investigation across educational levels, regions, and learning contexts (Li et al., 2025).

Teachers need to know not only how to use digital tools, but also how to evaluate their output, set boundaries for ethical use, and maintain academic integrity. In language education, this is especially important because correct language use involves more than grammar; it also includes context, register, tone, and cultural meaning. Therefore, AI should function within a model of teacher-guided innovation rather than teacher replacement.

CONCLUSION

Artificial intelligence is becoming an important pedagogical resource in English language teaching.

The literature reviewed in this article shows that AI can support speaking practice, writing development, learner autonomy, adaptive learning, and innovative classroom design. It can also reduce anxiety and expand learning beyond the classroom, especially when students need more frequent interaction and feedback.

At the same time, the successful use of AI depends on balance. Technology should not replace the teacher, the learning process, or academic responsibility. Instead, AI should be integrated critically, ethically, and methodologically so that it enriches communication, strengthens reflection, and supports more meaningful language learning. For this reason, the future of English language teaching lies not in machine substitution, but in thoughtful cooperation between intelligent technologies and human educators.

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