BG Pulse Journal USA
ISSN:1947-2536 http://www.bgpulseusa.com/index.php/bg

THE ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ELT: BALANCING PEDAGOGICAL BENEFITS AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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Doi: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21857871

Abstract: This article explores the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into English Language Teaching (ELT), examining both its transformative pedagogical opportunities and the accompanying methodological and ethical challenges. AI-powered applications, including Automated Writing Evaluation (AWE) tools, Large Language Models (LLMs), and interactive chatbots, offer significant advantages by enhancing writing skills, mitigating Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) in oral practice, and enabling differentiated, self-paced instruction in mixed-ability classrooms. However, the unchecked adoption of these technologies introduces critical risks, including threats to academic integrity, cognitive passivity among learners, and pedagogical misalignment stemming from a lack of teacher preparedness. To maximize the educational value of AI while safeguarding learning outcomes, the paper proposes a framework centered on fostering teacher AI literacy, transitioning toward process-oriented assessment models, and formulating clear institutional guidelines. Ultimately, the study concludes that AI should serve as an empowering pedagogical aid guided by human instruction rather than a replacement for cognitive engagement.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence in ELT, Large Language Models (LLMs), Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA), Differentiated Instruction, Academic Integrity, Cognitive Passivity, Process-Oriented Assessment.

Аннотация: В данной статье рассматривается интеграция искусственного интеллекта (ИИ) в преподавание английского языка (ELT), анализируются как его трансформационные педагогические возможности, так и сопутствующие методические и этические проблемы. Приложения на базе ИИ, включая инструменты автоматизированной оценки письменной речи (AWE), большие языковые модели (LLM) и интерактивные чат-боты, предоставляют значительные преимущества за счет развития навыков письма, снижения языковой тревожности (FLA) при устной практике и обеспечения дифференцированного обучения в индивидуальном темпе в разноуровневых классах. Однако неконтролируемое внедрение этих технологий влечет за собой серьезные риски, включая угрозы академической честности, когнитивную пассивность учащихся и методические несоответствия, вызванные недостаточной подготовленностью преподавателей. Чтобы максимально повысить образовательную ценность ИИ и гарантировать качество обучения, в работе предлагается концепция, основанная на повышении грамотности учителей в области ИИ, переходе к моделям оценки, ориентированным на процесс, и разработке четких институциональных руководящих принципов. В заключении делается вывод о том, что ИИ должен служить вспомогательным педагогическим инструментом под руководством педагога, а не заменой активной когнитивной деятельности.

Ключевые слова: Искусственный интеллект в преподавании английского языка (ELT), большие языковые модели (LLM), языковая тревожность (FLA), дифференцированное обучение, академическая честность, когнитивная пассивность, процессуально-ориентированное оценивание.

Introduction. In recent years, digital technology is having an impact on every diverse field, ranging from science to education. Likewise, the integration of modern tools into language lessons, especially, teaching English language has brought about some numerous benefits. Of all technological advancements, Artificial Intelligence (AI) plays a crucial role in English Language Teaching (ELT). With the help of these AI-driven tools, including Large Language Models (LLMs) such as OpenAI's ChatGPT, some specialized applications like Elsa Speak and Grammarly, non-native speakers can learn how to gain, acquire, practice and, also refine their English-related knowledge [8; 31].

Artificial Intelligence (AI) appeals primarily to its capacity in teaching language in terms of adaptivity, personalization as well as immediate feedback [6; 14]. In traditional classrooms, time is limited, and the role of teacher is higher than that of students but Artificial Intelligence (AI) gives us a chance to learn whatever and whenever we want creating enjoyable and easy learning atmosphere [9; 31]. Artificial Intelligence (AI) can alleviate the foreign language anxiety which learners are faced with some psychological barriers in the period of learning English.

On the other hand, the integration of digital tools in classrooms can cause some problems for both teachers and students. We cannot deny their benefits, but we must admit their visible drawbacks. For instance, in implementing modern tools in classrooms in order to make lessons more enjoyable and acceptable, teachers feel ill-equipped even though they do not know how to use them. They add their curriculum without thinking whether it is suitable or not [5; 12-124]. This research aims to examine the pedagogical opportunities and methodological risks concerning AI in ELT and to address these challenges:

1. What benefits does AI bring about to improve students' writing and speaking skills?
2. What challenges do teachers face while integrating AI into their language lessons?
3. What practical frameworks do teachers implement to control AI's potential while fostering critical thinking and academic integrity?

By analyzing current literature and existing pedagogical practices, this research gives us valuable information and some recommendations on how to use AI-driven tools in ELT.

Pedagogical opportunities of AI in ELT. AI technologies present considerable benefits in terms of pedagogy, particularly in improving the main language skills and personalizing instruction.

1. **Enhancing writing skills through automated evaluation and LLMs.** AI-driven tools are used mostly in ELT in order to improve students' writing skills. Automated Writing Evaluation (AWE) tools, such as Grammarly and Large Language Models (LLMs), like ChatGPT act as flexible pedagogical support for learners. Instead of only correcting errors, these platforms give suggestions related to grammar, structure and style in real-time. After getting immediate feedback from these tools, language acquires can analyze their mistakes and refine their drafts. In addition, LLMs assist students to boost their academic vocabulary by means of suggesting synonyms, antonyms which are suitable for context, and also advanced grammar structures [1,4,10,7; 694-864].

2. **Fostering speaking skills and reducing foreign language anxiety.** While learning a foreign language, including English, students find speaking proficiency the most challenging to develop, because learners are faced with some psychological barriers like Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA). In traditional classrooms, students struggle to improve their speaking skills, since

there is not enough time to speak individually between a teacher and students. In addition, some students are reticent and introverted. They feel embarrassed to speak in front of their peers. However, AI-powered chatbots and speech recognition applications, like Elsa Speak, create comfortable atmosphere for students mitigating the issue by offering them low-stakes and a non-judgmental environment to practice orally [3; 5]. Students can receive feedback on pronunciation and intonation while practicing with chatbots and interact without any fear of peer evaluation.

3. **Differentiated instruction and adaptive feedback.** In traditional classrooms, teachers encounter challenges in language instruction because students' proficiency level differs from one another. It causes methodological and pedagogical challenges for teachers in organizing lessons. Adaptive learning algorithms in AI-powered platforms analyze the students' language learning proficiency and their pace and then adjust the complexity of tasks, reading materials and grammar exercises to the learners' needs. Students can always receive immediate feedback on their mistakes and suggestions from these platforms. Consequently, they can learn English at their own speed and with their greater autonomy without getting in the way of other peers who are at different level [2; 339].

Methodological risks and ethical concerns. Although there are many advantages of integrating AI into English lessons, it presents ethical and methodological challenges. It threatens to academic integrity as LLMs write advanced structured essays for students. As a result, it compromises the validity of traditional assessments. In addition, overreliance on automated tools leads to cognitive passivity, diminishing students' problem-solving and critical thinking skills [11; 28]. Finally, many teachers lack sufficient technical competence how to use these tools and integrate them. In order to address these risks, AI should be an authentic aid rather than a substitute while learning English.

Practical frameworks and recommendations. In order to integrate AI into ELT in an effective way, firstly, ELT practitioners and institutions must adopt a proactive, balanced framework. First, institutions should prioritize professional development to enhance teachers' AI literacy, enabling them to design task prompts that promote critical thinking rather than passive generation. Second, assessment practices must shift from product-oriented evaluations to process-oriented models. Incorporating multi-stage drafting, reflective learning logs, and oral defenses ensures that students actively engage in the learning process, thereby safeguarding academic integrity. Finally, educational authorities must establish clear ethical guidelines regarding permissible AI usage. Adopting a human-in-the-loop approach ensures that AI serves as a supportive educational tool rather than a replacement for cognitive effort and pedagogical interaction.

Conclusion. To conclude, implementing AI into English Language Teaching represents both benefits and drawbacks. AI tools enable students to improve their writing skills and reduce oral anxiety. However, it causes threat to academic integrity and risks fostering problem-solving skills as well as critical thinking ones. While increasing pedagogical benefits, to reduce the methodological risks, educational institutions should concentrate on teacher training, implement assessments to process and devise ethically clear guidelines. AI should be considered as a substitute. It should help both teacher and students to elevate the quality of language learning.

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