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EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS OF ARTIFICIAL BENEFITS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract. The article identified five key areas in which AI is being used in ELT: for the development of speaking, of writing and of reading skills, to support pedagogy and for self-regulation. Interestingly, among the language skills, listening did not emerge as an area where AI is being used for support.

Keywords: teaching ELT, language skills, AI, tools, technology in teaching language

Nowadays with all this advanced technology that lets one reach out to a larger audience sitting at home, public speaking has become an important component of life. One needs to know how to converse efficiently in front of an audience or they will be left behind in this fast-paced world. However, with the advancing world, the easy availability of resources has also increased. And hence one can improve one's skills through speech tools of artificial intelligence or AI from the comfort of their home and in their own time.

Language teaching in particular presents multiple opportunities for the integration of AI-powered technologies. Even prior to the development of generative AI tools like ChatGPT, we have seen many successful applications developed using AI to create adaptive learning pathways for language learners. Generative AI tools now provide incredible potential for developing language skills. However, realizing that potential requires motivation and skills from learners, teachers and many other stakeholders. It is clear that there are both barriers and risks which need to be explored, and the voices of those whom these technologies are aimed at must be listened to and carefully considered.

Teaching speaking. Pronunciation was the key sub-skill revealed in the studies related to the use of AI in speaking, with a variety of AI-powered systems and programs available for learners. For instance, a study found that the use of AI - and the visual representation of the pitch as a spectrogram - significantly improved learners' pronunciation by reducing the flatness of pitch and intonation patterns. Pedagogy or teaching methods in relation to teaching speaking also emerged as an area of interest.

Other technologies used for improving speaking skills included using AI for speech recognition, adaptive learning, automatic speech analysis and voice assistance. It was developed an AI-supported pronunciation model for some learners and system helped learners practice, record and react to learners pronouncing words, resulting in longer retention of the vocabulary and significant benefits in learning consonant and vowel sounds.

AI use in writing related mainly to vocabulary learning and grammar. It was found that access to neural machine translation programs resulted in learners' vocabulary improvement, especially when specialized or unambiguous expressions were involved. Another common use of AI in writing is the use of AI grammar checkers. For instance, in higher education it was practiced that learners using the AI-powered tool Grammarly made fewer grammatical errors and wrote with more lexical variation than learners who did not. Only one pedagogical focus, to support giving feedback, emerged in AI use for writing skills. Studies looking at pedagogy in writing were often connected to AI tools providing feedback via spelling and grammar checkers. It was also examined the use

of Grammarly as a feedback tool for English language learners. A variety of AI technology tools were used to support writing skills, including grammar checkers, writing assistants, translation tools and pattern checkers.

Although some studies did involve the use of AI for developing the receptive skill of reading, these were far less common than for the productive skills of speaking and writing. Vocabulary was the only aspect of developing reading skills that appeared to be a key focus, while only gaming emerged as a specific use to support pedagogy. For instance, it was explored how vocabulary learning in reading occurs during gaming quest-play mediated in English, in the game World of Warcraft (WoW) and suggest that learners have opportunities to learn vocabulary and understand meaning via games beyond what a textbook or classroom can provide, by contextualizing often decontextualized vocabulary. WoW uses AI to provide that context through the inclusion of AI characters (i.e. those not operated by a human) and pathfinding navigation algorithms that make the environment dynamic and engaging.

This refers to the methods, strategies and techniques used to facilitate ELT. It is noteworthy that even with the rapid changes in available technology, many conventional forms of pedagogy, such as lectures and explanations, are still in use. Learners' emotions, or affect, can influence their choices and actions they take. Several studies in our review explored using AI to promote self-regulation - the ability to manage and control one's thoughts, emotions, behaviors and physiological responses to achieve personal goals and maintain well-being.

Remarkably, the challenges and risks of AI systems in ELT were not as well studied as its benefits in the research literature we reviewed. However, where they were, there were four main challenges that emerged.

Implications for practice. As English language learning is likely to be the most common discipline for AI use in education (Crompton & Burke, 2023), English language teacher education and training must include a focus on AI literacy. Teachers also need to develop their learners' AI literacy so that they can understand the limitations and risks of AI and discuss the ethical issues around its use. Practitioners should carefully consider how models are chosen, as AI may carry messages about language use and exclude certain groups/varieties of English.

AI can provide a conversational partner, provide language practice outside class and alleviate learner anxiety about speaking. However, more evidence is needed on whether the gains persist independent of such AI tools. Accessible and unambiguous ethics statements for AI in ELT should be developed and committed to, along with clear systems to ensure data privacy.

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