

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN LANGUAGE TEACHING: BALANCING PROS AND CONS

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Abstract

This article explores the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in language teaching, focusing on its positive contributions and potential drawbacks. It examines how AI-based tools support personalization, instant feedback, accessibility, and learner engagement, while also addressing concerns such as reduced human interaction, algorithmic bias, data privacy, digital inequality, and cognitive overload. Drawing on recent academic research, the article argues that AI should function as a supportive assistant within a human-centered pedagogical framework, rather than replacing teachers or authentic communication. The discussion concludes with recommendations for the responsible integration of AI in language education, emphasizing ethical guidelines, teacher training, and equitable access.

Introduction

Artificial Intelligence is increasingly reshaping language education, offering new ways to teach and learn languages through adaptive systems, chatbots, and automated feedback tools (Dugošija, 2024; Tay et al., 2025). In language classrooms and online environments, AI can personalize learning paths, provide immediate corrections, and make practice more accessible outside formal lessons (Zhang et al., 2023; Hacıyeva, 2025). At the same time, its rapid adoption raises important questions about bias, privacy, equity, and the quality of human interaction in language learning. This article analyzes the main positive and negative aspects of using AI in language teaching, highlighting how AI enhances motivation, self-regulation, and oral and written practice while also risking over-reliance, inequality, and reduced communicative authenticity (Smith et al., 2024; Brown et al., 2024). It then outlines principles for integrating AI responsibly, emphasizing hybrid models in which teachers and AI tools work together to support learners' linguistic, cognitive, and intercultural development (Hacıyeva, 2025; Fritzner, 2025).

How AI supports language learning

AI-enhanced language instruction typically uses natural language processing (NLP), speech-recognition, and adaptive algorithms to tailor content to individual learners (Dugošija, 2024; García et al., 2025). These systems can adjust exercises, difficulty levels, and pacing depending on the learner's performance, prior knowledge, and learning style (Tay et al., 2025; Farooq, 2024). As a result, students receive practice that more closely matches their current proficiency, which helps maintain engagement and reduce frustration.

Empirical studies show that AI-mediated instruction improves English-language achievement, learner motivation, and self-regulated learning, especially when combined with clearly designed tasks and teacher guidance (Zhang et al., 2023; Farooq, 2024). Intelligent tutoring

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systems and chatbots allow learners to practice speaking and writing and receive immediate corrective feedback, which can accelerate vocabulary acquisition and fluency development (Tay et al., 2025; Smith et al., 2024). By providing multiple opportunities for low-stakes practice, AI tools encourage learners to experiment with language without fear of strong public correction.

In addition, AI-based platforms can reduce foreign-language anxiety by offering non-judgmental, low-pressure environments for conversation and writing (Tay et al., 2025; Farooq, 2024). In multilingual or L2-context classrooms, large-language-model-based tools support pronunciation training and real-time correction, contributing to stronger oral-language performance (García et al., 2025; Huang et al., 2025). Learners can repeatedly practice difficult sounds or sentence structures until they feel more confident, a feature that is difficult to replicate in large, time-limited classes. Analytics generated by AI systems also allow teachers to monitor individual progress more closely and adjust instruction accordingly, making feedback more targeted and efficient (Dugošija, 2024; Hacıyeva, 2025).

Positive aspects of AI in language teaching

1. Personalization and adaptive learning

One of AI's main strengths is its capacity to personalize learning. AI systems can modify tasks, difficulty levels, and pacing according to each learner's proficiency, prior knowledge, and learning style (Dugošija, 2024; Tay et al., 2025). This personalization has been linked to higher engagement and improved vocabulary retention and reading comprehension (Tay et al., 2025; Farooq, 2024). For example, learners who struggle with grammar can receive extra practice on specific structures, while advanced learners can move quickly to more complex tasks.

2. Immediate feedback and assessment

Automated feedback on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling allows learners to correct errors in real time, reinforcing correct usage (Li & Hegelheimer, 2013; Hacıyeva, 2025). Teachers can then focus more on higher-order skills such as critical thinking, discourse analysis, and communicative competence instead of spending excessive time on routine grading (Hacıyeva, 2025; Farooq, 2024). Instant feedback also helps learners develop a sense of self-monitoring, as they learn to notice and correct patterns in their own writing and speech.

3. Accessibility and flexibility

AI-based language apps and platforms are often available anytime and anywhere, enabling learners to study at their own pace and on their own schedule (Pearson, 2023; García et al., 2025). This flexibility is particularly beneficial for adult learners, part-time students, and those in remote or underserved regions who may have limited access to traditional language classes (Rodríguez, 2025; Farooq, 2024). Mobile-based AI tools also allow learners to practice short activities during daily routines, such as commuting or waiting for appointments, which can increase overall exposure to the target language.

4. Support for learners with diverse needs

AI tools can adapt input to different learners' needs, for instance by offering speech-to-text, text-to-speech, magnification, or simplified language versions (Dugošija, 2024; Farooq, 2024). This adaptability supports learners with disabilities, different learning preferences, or varying levels of digital literacy, helping to create a more inclusive language classroom (García et al., 2025; Farooq, 2024). By reducing barriers to practice, AI can broaden participation in language education and support more equitable learning outcomes.

Negative aspects and challenges

1. Reduced human interaction

Heavy reliance on AI-mediated practice can limit authentic, face-to-face interaction, which is crucial for developing pragmatic and sociolinguistic competence (Dugošija, 2024; Tay et al., 2025). Language is not just a set of structures; it also involves negotiation of meaning, turn-taking, and cultural sensitivity, which are best practiced in real social contexts (Smith et al., 2024; Brown et al., 2024). If learners spend most of their time interacting with chatbots or automated systems, they may become less comfortable adjusting their speech or writing according to the listener's reactions and context.

2. Algorithmic bias and limited linguistic range

Many AI models are trained on dominant-language datasets, which can lead to under-representation of low-resource or minority languages and dialects (García et al., 2025; Farooq, 2024). This means that learners whose home languages are not widely used in global data may find that AI tools are less accurate or less supportive for their specific linguistic varieties (García et al., 2025; Rodríguez, 2025). In addition, training data may reflect cultural or social biases, which can be reproduced in AI suggestions, translations, or generated examples, potentially reinforcing stereotypes or unequal representations.

3. Data privacy and ethical concerns

AI-driven platforms collect extensive learner data, including speech samples, writing, and interaction patterns, raising issues about consent, storage, surveillance, and commercial use (Dugošija, 2024; García et al., 2025). Without clear ethical guidelines and transparent policies, this data can be misused or shared in ways that compromise learners' privacy and autonomy (García et al., 2025; Farooq, 2024). Especially in K–12 or higher-education settings, institutions must ensure that students and parents fully understand how their language data is being processed and protected.

4. Digital inequality and access barriers

Not all learners or institutions have equal access to stable internet, devices, or AI-enabled software, which can widen existing educational gaps (Tay et al., 2025; Rodríguez, 2025). In low-resource contexts, attempts to adopt AI-based tools may deepen inequities rather than narrow them, especially if schools lack the infrastructure or funding to support digital learning at scale (García et al., 2025; Farooq, 2024). There is also a risk that learners without reliable access at home are left behind, even if AI-rich activities are introduced in well-equipped classrooms.

5. Cognitive load and over-reliance

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Interacting with AI chatbots or complex interfaces can impose cognitive load, especially for novice learners or those unfamiliar with technology (Smith et al., 2024; Tay et al., 2025). Untargeted or overly technical prompts, unclear instructions, or too many pop-up suggestions can overwhelm learners and distract them from meaningful language practice. In addition, there is a risk that learners may become dependent on AI corrections, relying on the system to fix errors rather than developing their own monitoring and self-editing skills (Haciyeva, 2025; Farooq, 2024). Over time, this may weaken learners' ability to reflect on their language independently and transfer skills to situations where AI is not available.

Integrating AI responsibly in language classrooms

Researchers increasingly call for "AI-human hybrid" models in which teachers and AI tools collaborate rather than one replacing the other (Haciyeva, 2025; Fritzner, 2025). In such models, AI handles repetitive tasks like grammar checking, vocabulary drills, and pronunciation feedback, while teachers focus on designing meaningful tasks, facilitating discussion, and guiding learners' critical reflection on language and culture (Tay et al., 2025; García et al., 2025). This division of labor can increase the overall quality of instruction without sacrificing the human dimension of language teaching.

Curriculum designers and policymakers are advised to embed ethical guidelines, ensure transparency about data use, and prioritize inclusive language coverage when adopting AI in language education (García et al., 2025; Huang et al., 2025). Institutions should also provide professional development for teachers so they can evaluate AI tools critically, select those that match their learning objectives, and design activities that integrate AI purposefully rather than adding it as a superficial layer (García et al., 2025; Farooq, 2024). Long-term, longitudinal studies are still needed to clarify how sustained AI use affects intercultural communication, creativity, and overall language proficiency beyond narrow skill areas such as writing and pronunciation (Zhang et al., 2023; Huang et al., 2025).

Conclusion

Artificial Intelligence offers powerful opportunities to enhance language teaching through personalization, instant feedback, and flexible practice environments (Dugošija, 2024; Tay et al., 2025). At the same time, its use raises important concerns about bias, privacy, inequality, and the quality of human interaction in language learning (García et al., 2025; Farooq, 2024). A balanced, responsible approach treats AI as a supportive assistant embedded within a human-centered pedagogy, where teachers guide, moderate, and complement AI-mediated activities. By combining AI's technical strengths with the social and emotional dimensions of teaching, language educators can create more engaging, effective, and equitable learning experiences for diverse learners.

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