

Generative AI in ELT: Opportunities, Challenges and Ethical considerations

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Abstract—Generative AI has exerted a significant influence in all the fields of education. Especially, in teaching English language. Applications like Automated writing Evaluation systems, grammar checkers and translation tools provide immediate feedback, facilitates vocabulary development and also helps in learners motivation. However, its excessive usage may create concerns related to privacy, academic integrity, unequal access, inaccurate feedback and learner dependence. This paper discusses the Responsible use of generative AI in English Language teaching. It states that Artificial Intelligence should function as a great assisting tool rather than a replacement for teachers, learners and human Judgement. It emphasises the principles of informed use and process-oriented assessment. It concludes that AI can promote learner Autonomy only when students are trained to question, verify and apply its suggestions.

Index Terms—English Language Teaching, Generative AI, Academic Integrity, Learner Autonomy, AI literacy

I. INTRODUCTION

In English Language Teaching Artificial Intelligence has become a significant assisting tool in all the activities. Lesson planning, vocabulary development, conversational practice writing support, translation, feedback and assessment will be prepared with the help of Generative AI tools. It becomes a learning companion, teaching companion and source of automated feedback. It reduces students' fear of making mistakes and assists learners at several stages of the writing process. Students may use it to generate ideas and develop outlines. AI reports possible benefits in writing quality, learners autonomy and engagement when it is used within an appropriate pedagogical framework.

II. ETHICAL CHALLENGES IN ELT

Artificial Intelligence in English Language Teaching raises several ethical concerns. Student's data protection is one among the concerns. Learners may enter personal information, drafts or voice recordings. Students not always understand how that is stored or processed.

The Second challenge is algorithmic and linguistic bias. The system may treat a particular form of English as a correct or more natural while overlooking legitimate linguistic diversity.

Academic integrity is another major concern. Students use AI to generate essays, paraphrase sources or complete assignments. This makes teachers difficult in evaluating the students own writing process.

III. A LEARNER CENTRED APPROACH

AI should be used as a scaffold for learning not as a substitute for human thought. Students should make decisions about when and how AI should be used. The teacher's role is to design meaningful tasks, provide guidance and evaluate learning. Students can use AI for brain storming, vocabulary exploration and identification of grammatical patterns. This process encourages learner's autonomy. Autonomy does not mean work without support; it means that they gradually develop an ability to develop informed decisions about their learning.

IV. GUIDED CLASSROOM PRACTICES

AI can be introduced in classes through a series of guided activities. Students may write an initial draft independently, they can then ask for AI tools to identify problems, grammar, vocabulary or clarity.

Finally, they should submit the original draft. Teachers should explain that students must not enter personal or confidential information into public AI systems.

V. AI AND TEACHER RESPONSIBILITY

Generative AI cannot replace the social and human dimensions of language teaching. Teachers understand students' backgrounds, emotional needs, learning difficulties, and communicative purposes. They can also interpret errors in relation to classroom context and provide encouragement, clarification, and ethical guidance. AI feedback should therefore be treated as one source of information, not as an unquestionable judgment. Teachers should examine whether AI suggestions are accurate, appropriate, inclusive, and relevant to the learning objective. They should also ensure that students are not penalised for using legitimate language varieties or culturally meaningful forms of expression. Teacher education programmes should include AI literacy, data privacy, bias awareness, academic integrity, prompt design, and evaluation of automated feedback. Teachers need not become computer programmers, but they should understand the possibilities and limitations of the tools.

VI. IMPLICATIONS FOR ELT RESEARCH

Research on AI in ELT should move beyond the simple question of whether AI improves examination scores. Studies should also examine how AI affects learner autonomy, critical thinking, writing processes, teacher roles, linguistic identity, privacy, and educational equality. Ethical research should obtain informed consent and protect participant identity. Writing samples, interview recordings, prompts, and learner reflections should be anonymised and securely stored. Participants should have the right to withdraw, and students who do not wish to use AI should be offered an equivalent alternative.

VII. CONCLUSION

Generative AI offers valuable possibilities for English Language Teaching, especially in academic-writing instruction. It can support idea generation, feedback, revision, vocabulary development, and learner engagement. However, its educational value depends

on responsible implementation. AI should not replace teachers, independent student thinking, or the social nature of language learning. Its use should be guided by privacy protection, fairness, transparency, academic integrity, and human oversight. When students are taught to question and verify AI-generated suggestions, the technology can support learner autonomy. When it is used without guidance, it may encourage dependence and weaken the development of genuine language ability. Responsible AI integration therefore requires a shift from tool-centred teaching to ethically informed pedagogy. The central question is not simply whether AI can produce better English, but whether its use helps learners become more critical, independent, ethical, and effective users of English.

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