Addressing Ethical Considerations Related to the Use of Artificial Intelligence in EFL Classrooms at Oran2 University

Abdelhadi Ahmed CHADLI[1] iD

[1]Mohamed Ben Ahmed Oran2 University, Algeria

Abstract

Artificial Intelligence has emerged as a significant technology designed to equip machines and computer systems with human-like intelligence. It encompasses various technologies that enable computers to perform tasks typically associated with human cognition. This study provides valuable insights into the ethical considerations and challenges associated with Artificial Intelligence in educational settings, helping to guide teachers and policymakers in the thoughtful integration of Artificial Intelligence technology to enhance educational outcomes. The study investigates the ethical considerations of Artificial Intelligence in EFL classrooms and examines teachers' perceptions of its integration. Using a semi-structured interview, the study engaged seven teachers from the Department of English at Mohamed Ben Ahmed Oran2 University. The findings highlight considerations such as over-reliance on Artificial Intelligence, unethical use, privacy and security issues, algorithmic bias, and potential declines in critical thinking skills. Additionally, teachers expressed negative perceptions regarding its incorporation in EFL settings. Addressing these concerns requires careful implementation to ensure that Artificial Intelligence enhances rather than detracts from the educational experience.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, critical thinking, EFL classrooms, ethical considerations, teachers' perceptions

ملخص

ظهر الذكاء الاصطناعي كتقنية هامة تهدف إلى تزويد الآلات وأنظمة الكمبيوتر بذكاء يشابه الذكاء البشري. تشمل هذه التقنية مجموعة من التكنولوجيات التي تمكّن الحواسيب من أداء المهام التي ترتبط عادةً بالإدراك البشري. توفر هذه الدراسة رؤى قيمة حول الاعتبارات الأخلاقية والتحديات المرتبطة بالذكاء الاصطناعي في البيئات التعليمية، مما يساعد على توجيه المعلمين وصانعي السياسات في دمج تقنيات الذكاء الاصطناعي بشكل مدروس لتعزيز النتائج التعليمية. تبحث الدراسة في الاعتبارات الأخلاقية للذكاء الاصطناعي في فصول تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية وتستعرض تصورات الأساتذة حول تكامل هذه التقنية. باستخدام منهجية المقابلات شبه المهيكلة، شاركت الدراسة سبعة معلمين من قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة محمد بن أحمد وهران2 في الجزائر. تسلط النتائج الضوء على اعتبارات مثل الاعتماد المفرط على الذكاء الاصطناعي، الاستخدام غير الأخلاقي، قضايا الخصوصية والأمان، التحيز في الخوارزميات، والانخفاض المحتمل في مهارات التفكير النقدي. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، أعرب المعلمون عن تصورات سلبية بشأن إدماج الذكاء الاصطناعي في بيئات تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية. يتطلب معالجة هذه المخاوف تنفيذًا دقيقًا لضمان أن الذكاء الاصطناعي يعزز بدلاً من أن يقلل من التجربة التعليمية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الذكاء الاصطناعي، التفكير النقدي، فصول تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، الاعتبارات الأخلاقية، تصورات الأساتذة.

Email: [1]abdelhadi2332@hotmail.com

Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a leading technology designed to equip machines and computer systems with capabilities that mimic human intelligence. Essentially, AI encompasses a range of technologies that allow computer systems to perform intellectual tasks traditionally reserved for humans. As a branch of computer science, AI focuses on addressing cognitive challenges such as learning, problem-solving, and pattern recognition (Fitria, 2021). Beyond simulating human cognition, reasoning, problem-solving, and decision-making, AI has evolved to encompass a broad spectrum of applications across various sectors, significantly transforming human lives and their activities. AI has notably progressed in its implementation within fields such as healthcare, criminal justice, finance, national security, smart cities, and transportation (Kilanko, 2022).

The excitement surrounding the potential of AI in EFL settings is tempered by significant ethical risks and other challenges identified by stakeholders. AI-driven learning programs pose threats to fundamental aspects of the learning process, such as human interactions and the development of critical thinking skills. This literature review explores the pedagogical influence of AI in EFL education, delving into the ethical considerations and potential risks associated with integrating AI technologies into EFL instruction. Additionally, it examines how these technologies might affect student autonomy, privacy, and the teacher-student dynamic, providing a comprehensive overview of both the promises and pitfalls of AI in EFL classrooms. The potential impact of such applications is considered transformative enough to revolutionize EFL education. However, the enthusiasm surrounding AI's promise in EFL settings is tempered by ethical risks and other challenges reported by stakeholders. AI-driven learning programs pose a threat to fundamental aspects of the learning process, including human interaction and critical thinking. This literature review emphasizes AI's pedagogical influence and explores teachers' attitudes toward its integration, along with ethical considerations and potential risks associated with the adoption of AI technologies in EFL classrooms.

Employing qualitative research, data will be gathered from these teachers to explore the potential outcomes, benefits, and challenges associated with integrating AI into English language education. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for teachers, policymakers, and researchers interested in the application of AI in educational settings. This research aims to examine the ethical considerations that teachers of English have regarding the use of AI technologies in EFL classrooms. It also seeks to discover teachers of English attitudes toward incorporating AI into their language courses, focusing specifically on how they perceive AI's impact on language teaching. The study will comprehensively analyze the perspectives of English language teachers at Mohamed Ben Ahmed Oran2 University regarding the integration of AI in English language teaching. In this context, three key research sub-questions have been developed:

- What are the primary ethical considerations that teachers of English have regarding the use of AI technologies in EFL classrooms?
- In what ways do teachers of English believe AI integration affects teacher-student interactions and relationships in the EFL classroom?
- How do teachers of English perceive the incorporation of AI in EFL classrooms?

The researcher hypothesizes that there are significant ethical considerations about data privacy, algorithmic biases, and the potential dehumanization of the learning process. It is also

hypothesized that teachers of English primary ethical considerations regarding the use of AI technologies in EFL classrooms include issues of data privacy and security, the potential for bias in AI algorithms, the undermining of human interaction and critical thinking skills, and the risk of widening the digital divide. Additionally, while AI can provide personalized learning experiences and instant feedback, thereby supporting individual student needs, teachers are concerned that over-reliance on AI might reduce meaningful human interaction and undermine the personal connection that is vital for effective teaching and learning. Finally, teachers worry that the reliance on AI tools might lead to a more passive learning experience for students, reducing opportunities for active engagement and critical analysis.

Literature Review

AI is increasingly becoming a part of all areas of human life, with its widespread presence visible in fields like medicine, computing, marketing, and research. Despite various efforts by AI to modernize the learning process, its use in foreign language learning remains limited (Zitouni, 2024). AI's impact on language courses, especially in English language teaching, is increasingly fascinating and relevant. In recent years, teachers of English have seen how AI has transformed their teaching methods and students' learning approaches. Instead of relying solely on traditional methods, AI tools like language learning platforms and chatbots have revolutionized education (Mijwil et al., 2023). These tools provide personalized learning experiences, instant feedback, innovative solutions, empowerment, personalization, and accessibility (Yang, 2020). According to Rahma and Fithriani (2024), AI is a major catalyst for innovation, efficiency, and advancement. The educational sector is undergoing a significant transformation due to the integration of AI technologies, which are revolutionizing the field. AI-powered adaptive learning platforms are capable of tailoring educational content to suit each student's unique needs and learning preferences.

Using technology-based resources makes learning accessible for all students, regardless of scheduling or geographical constraints typical in traditional education. Online platforms enable learning at one's own pace and convenience, introducing flexibility. AI chatbots, accessible via mobile devices, function as virtual libraries, available anytime. This setup empowers learners to self-direct their learning, determining effective strategies independently. Moreover, it democratizes access to high-quality education, reducing costs associated with transportation and accommodation for learners from diverse backgrounds (Aithal & Aithal, 2023). Students have access to various language resources like online dictionaries, language models, and authentic materials to improve their language skills. When AI-based tools are used in EFL teaching, teachers can better address teaching challenges, meeting diverse student needs (Rudolph et al., 2023). These AI platforms provide multiple learning resources that enhance language learning experiences. For instance, AI-driven platforms include online dictionaries that help students find translations, definitions, and examples quickly, boosting their vocabulary and language proficiency. They also offer authentic materials such as research papers, news stories, articles, videos, and podcasts, which expose learners to real-world language use and deepen their understanding of language nuances, supporting natural language learning. Despite some drawbacks, like generating unreliable information and fake citations, AI effectively delivers information.

Mobile phones have become indispensable in modern life due to technological advancements. They are no longer just for calls and texts but also support numerous educational apps, particularly useful in EFL contexts. AI integration enhances these apps,

making phones powerful tools for learning (Arini et al., 2022). According to Arini et al. (2022), AI-powered mobile learning apps are already being used effectively in EFL settings and are readily available for download on platforms like the Play Store.

Besides, AI provides flexible and adaptable resources that create personalized learning experiences, especially for students with special needs. Not everyone can speak to communicate, so those with speech disabilities need alternative ways to express themselves (Zdravkova et al., 2022). AI enables tailored attention that addresses specific learning challenges and goals. A notable example is Microsoft Translator, which helps students with hearing impairments by providing real-time written transcriptions of spoken language. AI tools can analyze vast amounts of data to understand each learner's strengths, weaknesses, and learning patterns. This insight allows educators to provide personalized feedback, moving away from generic responses. By tailoring learning experiences to individual needs, AI helps create a more customized and effective educational experience.

AI-enabled automatic grading systems have significantly impacted education by streamlining the grading process. Using machine learning algorithms, these systems assess students' assignments and provide prompt, objective feedback, allowing teachers to save time and focus on personalized instruction, lesson planning, and student support (Vera, 2023). These AI-driven systems can handle numerous assignments simultaneously, making them ideal for institutions with large student populations. This ensures students receive timely feedback, promoting active engagement by allowing them to quickly identify and correct mistakes. AI chatbots also automate the evaluation of language skills, including language assessments and short answer questions. Research supports the positive impact of automated evaluation on educational outcomes (Pérez et al., 2020).

In the Algerian context, the integration of AI applications in EFL classrooms presents both unique opportunities and challenges. Zitouni's (2024) findings highlight the pivotal role that AI plays in facilitating and enhancing the EFL learning and teaching process. AI-powered tools can provide personalized learning experiences, adapting to individual student needs and proficiency levels, which is particularly valuable in Algerian classrooms where diversity in language proficiency is common.

Ethical Considerations and Potential Hazards of AI in EFL Settings

The introduction of AI into EFL education has sparked a mix of excitement and concern. While AI promises personalized learning, greater accessibility, and improved efficiency, it also brings a host of ethical issues that need careful consideration. As AI advances in language learning, it is crucial to examine its ethical implications, particularly regarding data privacy, algorithmic biases, job displacement, cost-effectiveness, and reliance on technology. The challenge is to balance technological innovation with the interpersonal dynamics of teacher-student interactions and broader societal impacts. Achieving this balance requires collaboration among policymakers, educators, researchers, and industry leaders. This literature review explores the ethical aspects of integrating AI into EFL education.

The integration of AI into language learning presents complex challenges related to cultural context, idiomatic expressions, and nuanced language use. AI tools often struggle to grasp the subtle nuances and emotional tones of the language, sometimes offering inappropriate or inaccurate responses (Haleem et al., 2022). During AI training, cultural perspectives and diversity are frequently overlooked, neglecting the ethical and cultural aspects of correctness and propriety. The use of AI in education constantly grapples with the influence of cultural and

ethical factors. Often, AI-driven tools fail to capture important details like regional variations, accents, dialects, and idiomatic expressions in EFL learning due to their inherent limitations. This can unintentionally lead to a standardized and potentially culturally biased representation of the language.

Educational institutions increasingly rely on AI-driven solutions, posing significant risks, such as the potential for over-dependence on technology by both educators and learners. This reliance could unintentionally marginalize traditional teaching methods, undermining the development of essential skills like critical thinking and effective problem-solving. Overuse of AI tools might prevent students from understanding their mistakes, thereby impeding their learning and editing skills. Iskender (2023) highlighted this issue, noting that excessive dependence on AI can hinder critical thinking, as students may prefer quick fixes over understanding their errors. Additionally, relying on AI to generate new ideas may stifle natural creativity. Students who depend heavily on AI might struggle with tasks requiring independent language skills, such as spontaneous conversations.

A notable downside of integrating AI into education is the risk of making the learning process too mechanical, thereby losing its human touch. AI-driven educational materials and lesson delivery might be too fast-paced for some students to keep up with. The lack of human interaction can be particularly disadvantageous for learners who benefit more from direct teacher engagement. In language learning, the emotional support and personalized guidance provided by human teachers are crucial, as they address each student's unique strengths and weaknesses.

AI models can inherit biases present in their training data, leading to biased language recommendations and content. This can reinforce stereotypes and marginalize specific linguistic or cultural groups, creating an imbalanced learning experience and promoting certain ideologies without transparency. Buolamwini and Gebru (2018) highlighted this issue through their study on facial recognition algorithms, revealing significant biases. These findings suggest similar biases may exist in AI-driven language learning systems. To promote fairness and inclusivity, it is crucial to address these biases and ensure unbiased access to language learning resources and assessments. The primary source of these biases lies in the data, not the algorithms.

Overreliance on AI tools in language learning may reduce students' motivation to engage in critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving. While AI can aid in language acquisition, excessive use might hinder students' overall development by minimizing their cognitive involvement in learning. Relying heavily on AI for academic success may prevent students from developing essential skills in critical thinking and research. Human educators play a crucial role in adapting teaching methods to individual needs and fostering creativity and cognitive development. Educators should be aware of the potential long-term effects of AI tools on students' academic progress. In Mohamed's (2023) study, faculty members had mixed views on using ChatGPT in EFL instruction. Some praised its quick and precise responses, while others worried it might hinder students' research and critical thinking skills. Considerations also included potential biases and misinformation. AI's limitations are evident in its inability to fully grasp emotional intelligence and the complex emotional states of learners. While AI supports education, it cannot replace the human qualities essential for effective teaching, such as empathy and creativity. The human touch in building rapport and emotional connection remains crucial for meaningful learning experiences. A major concern is the potential impact of AI on

job security for teachers. While it is not an immediate issue, there is growing worry that the widespread use of AI in education might lead to a reduced need for human teachers. As AI takes over more aspects of teaching, there could be a significant shift towards greater efficiency, but also a risk of job displacement for teachers (Tiwari, 2023).

AI language learning platforms are increasingly collecting and storing student data, raising significant privacy and security concerns. If not handled properly, there is a risk that students' personal information could be misused or exposed. Many EFL students using these platforms may not fully understand what data is being collected or how extensively. Xu and Yuan (2021) emphasized the importance of protecting privacy within AI-driven learning environments and advocate for clear data protection policies and consent procedures to safeguard students' personal information. In this context, blockchain technology is emerging as a promising solution to enhance data protection and privacy.

Developing and implementing AI technologies presents significant challenges for stakeholders and innovators, primarily due to cost considerations. The complexity of AI requires substantial computational resources and extensive research, driving up development expenses. Creating and testing algorithms and machine learning models involves considerable investment, and acquiring diverse datasets also demands significant time and resources. Additionally, assembling a skilled team of data scientists and machine learning engineers is crucial and requires appropriate compensation. As a result, educational institutions are considering ways to improve the skills of their software development teams to effectively handle emerging technologies like machine learning and deep learning (Tiwari, 2023).

Instances of academic misconduct, such as plagiarism and cheating, have long been significant issues in education. The rise of AI technologies has transformed this landscape, creating new and complex challenges for educators. The availability of AI tools, like essay mills and paraphrasing software, has made it easier for students to engage in academic dishonesty (Manley, 2023). Detecting such misconduct is increasingly difficult due to the sophisticated algorithms and natural language processing capabilities of these AI tools, making it hard for educators to distinguish between genuine and AI-assisted work (Cotton et al., 2023). Moreover, implementing AI in education can be costly. Many institutions work within tight budgets and may struggle to afford these technologies. Additionally, not all students have equal access to AI resources, which can create a digital divide and disadvantage those with limited access. The financial burden of widespread AI adoption may also be too heavy for many schools to bear.

AI is now used in many areas, from government offices to personal devices like smartphones and computers. While this technology offers many benefits, it also comes with vulnerabilities that can be exploited. Criminals might use AI to cause system failures or hack into private networks. As AI becomes more advanced, it can even make decisions and carry out cyberattacks on its own.

While AI-enhanced education offers considerable potential, its broad integration into schools does not automatically ensure that educators are sufficiently prepared to utilize these technologies effectively or that they will improve the quality of teaching (Mercader & Gairn, 2020). Researchers emphasize that teachers' attitudes towards new instructional technologies are pivotal in determining their successful adoption (Fernández-Batanero et al., 2021). Additionally, the effective use of AI in education hinges on providing comprehensive training and support for teachers, as well as fostering a positive mindset towards technological

innovations. Addressing these factors can help bridge the gap between the promise of AI and its practical benefits in the classroom.

Methods and Materials

This research used a qualitative approach to explore how teachers of English perceive the incorporation of AI in EFL classrooms, what ethical considerations they have about using AI technologies, and how they believe AI integration affects teacher-student interactions and relationships. A semi-structured interview (Appendix A) method was used for data collection, allowing the researcher to gather essential information while asking diverse teachers key questions. This approach helps create a comfortable environment for participants, encouraging them to provide insightful and open responses.

Participants

The researcher employed a simple random sampling technique to gather data from Seven EFL teachers in the English Department at Mohamed Ben Ahmed Oran2 University in Algeria during the 2023/2024 academic year. These teachers specialize in Applied Linguistics, Literature, and English for Specific Purposes. The participants, both male and female, range in age from 31 to 57 years old.

Research Instruments

As noted earlier, a major source of qualitative data in this study comes from semi-structured interviews with teachers. The interview consists of Ten semi-structured questions designed to explore the impact of AI on teaching practices, ethical considerations, teacher-student interactions, and the balance between AI and traditional methods, aiming to assess both the benefits and challenges of AI integration. It also seeks to discover teachers' perceptions and experiences with integrating AI technologies in EFL classrooms. This method is considered essential for obtaining information that might not be accessible through other approaches. To maintain the confidentiality of the participating teachers, a coding system was implemented. The teachers were assigned identifiers as follows: T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, and T7, representing Teacher 1 through Teacher Seven, respectively. Similarly, the respondents were numbered sequentially from One to Seven for reference purposes.

Research Procedures

The researcher, being a member of the teaching team in the English department at Oran2 University, had convenient access to the participants. When the final version of the semi-structured interview was ready for use, the researcher scheduled individual appointments with each teacher. To accommodate the participants, they were allowed to suggest convenient locations and times for the interviews. For one month, the semi-structured interviews were conducted individually with each teacher, with each session lasting approximately 15 to 25 minutes. This approach allowed for extensive involvement and ensured the smooth collection of answers, thereby boosting participant engagement. Participants were assured that their responses would remain confidential and anonymous.

Results

Question One: Perception of AI Integration

The purpose of this question is to understand teachers' general attitudes towards AI and its role in EFL classrooms. T1, T2, T3, T4, and T6 express considerations about the integration of AI technologies in EFL classrooms. One significant worry is the potential reduction in meaningful teacher-student interactions, as AI tools may take over roles traditionally filled by educators, potentially diminishing the personal connection that is essential for effective

language learning. On the other hand, T5 and T7 perceive the integration of AI technologies in EFL classrooms as a valuable addition that enhances the learning experience. They appreciate AI's ability to provide personalized learning experiences, offering tailored lessons and exercises that meet individual student needs and learning paces. AI can deliver immediate feedback on assignments and language exercises, allowing students to quickly identify and correct mistakes.

Question Two: Impact on Teaching Practices

The purpose of this question is to discover how AI influences teachers' teaching practices and methods. Regarding this question, teachers have different views. T1 and T2 stated that: "AI has significantly enhanced my teaching practices by providing personalized learning tools for my students. The immediate feedback and tailored exercises help address individual learning needs more effectively. It has also streamlined administrative tasks like grading, allowing me to focus more on interactive and engaging lessons." Similarly, T3 and T5 posited: "I've found AI to be a valuable resource for creating interactive language exercises and quizzes. It has enabled me to offer a more dynamic learning experience, with AI tools assisting in monitoring student progress and identifying areas where additional support is needed." T4 stated some considerations regarding the use of AI in the classroom by saying: "While AI has introduced some efficiencies, I'm concerned that it might reduce the personal touch in my teaching. I feel that relying too much on AI tools could diminish the depth of teacher-student interactions and the personalized feedback that students benefit from in face-to-face settings. Along the same way, T6 posited: "I worry that AI can sometimes lead to a one-size-fits-all approach, where the nuances of individual student needs are overlooked. The technology might not always adapt well to the complexities of language learning, and I find myself having to compensate for its limitations." T7's answer was a bit different in that his answer was balanced. T7 claimed that: "AI's influence has been mixed for me. While it helps with repetitive tasks, I struggle with its limitations in addressing the creative and critical thinking aspects of language education. It feels like a balancing act to ensure that AI complements rather than replaces traditional teaching methods."

Question Three: Ethical Considerations

The purpose of this question is to identify and understand the key ethical issues that teachers have about using AI technologies in EFL classrooms. The majority of teachers if not all stated that one of my primary ethical considerations regarding the use of AI in EFL classrooms is the potential for increased cheating. AI technologies can make it easier for students to find and use unauthorized resources during exams or assignments, undermining academic integrity. For example, AI tools might provide students with instant answers or generate text that could be used to bypass genuine learning and assessment processes. This not only affects the reliability of evaluations but also diminishes the value of the educational experience. T2, T6 and T7 added another concern which is the privacy and security of student data. They claimed that AI systems often require extensive data collection to function effectively, raising questions about how this data is stored, protected, and used. There is a risk that sensitive information might be exposed or misused if not properly managed.

Question Four: Student Interaction

The purpose of this question is to understand teachers' perspectives on how AI impacts the dynamics of classroom communication and interaction. The majority of teachers claimed that AI integration might negatively affect teacher-student interactions by creating a barrier between personal communication and automated responses. Over-reliance on AI tools could

reduce face-to-face interactions and diminish the quality of personalized feedback. This shift might lead to a less personal educational experience, where the nuance and emotional connection that come with direct teacher engagement are lost. On the flip side, only T3 stated AI integration in the classroom can positively impact interactions between teachers and students by streamlining administrative tasks and providing instant feedback. This efficiency allows teachers to focus more on personalized instruction and engaging activities.

Question Five: Critical Thinking

The purpose of this question is to assess teachers' views on AI's impact on students' cognitive and analytical abilities. T2, T5 and T6 agreed upon the view that AI might undermine critical thinking and problem-solving skills if students become overly reliant on automated solutions. They stated that when AI tools provide instant answers or solutions, students may not engage deeply with the problem-solving process. This could lead to a reliance on AI for answers, reducing opportunities for students to practice and develop their critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Conversely, T1 and T7 believe that AI can enhance students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills by providing personalized learning experiences and adaptive challenges. AI tools can tailor exercises to individual skill levels, presenting problems that push students to think critically and solve complex issues. Consequently, T3 and T4 have a well-adjusted view in which they think that AI can offer a balanced approach by providing both support and challenges.

Question Six: AI Integration

The purpose is to gauge teachers' readiness and identify training or support needs for effective AI integration. T3, T5 and T6 believe that they feel relatively prepared to integrate AI tools into their teaching practice, as they have a basic understanding of the technologies and their potential applications. However, they would benefit from more comprehensive training to fully utilize these tools effectively. Specific support in learning how to customize AI applications for different classroom scenarios and troubleshooting common issues would enhance their confidence and ability to integrate AI seamlessly into their teaching. On the other hand, T1, T2, T4 and T7 feel underprepared to integrate AI tools into their teaching practice due to a lack of in-depth knowledge and experience with these technologies. To improve their readiness, they would need targeted professional development, including hands-on workshops and ongoing technical support.

Question Seven: Balancing AI Tools with Traditional Teaching Methods

The purpose of this question is to explore how teachers incorporate AI while maintaining traditional educational practices. The majority of teachers find it challenging to balance AI tools with traditional methods, often struggling to integrate the technology without overshadowing conventional practices. They may use AI tools for specific tasks but worry that over-reliance on technology could detract from essential aspects of traditional teaching, such as classroom discussions and student-teacher interactions. To address this, they focus on using AI in a way that supports rather than dominates their teaching style, ensuring that technology enhances rather than replaces the core elements of their instructional approach. However, only T2 and T7 think that to balance AI tools with traditional teaching methods, they use AI as a supplement rather than a replacement for conventional techniques.

Question Eight: Challenges of AI Integration

The aim behind this question is to identify practical or theoretical challenges teachers face when integrating AI technologies. All teachers except T4 and T7 have encountered

challenges related to technical issues and a lack of familiarity with AI tools. Technical glitches can disrupt the flow of lessons, and troubleshooting these problems often requires time and expertise they might not have. Additionally, they find it challenging to keep up with the rapid advancements in AI technology, feeling that they need more comprehensive training to use these tools effectively in their classrooms. T4 and T7 anticipate challenges concerning the ethical implications and potential impact on student engagement. They worry about the ethical considerations surrounding data privacy and the potential biases in AI algorithms. Moreover, there is a concern that over-reliance on AI might reduce meaningful teacher-student interactions and negatively affect students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. They also express the need for clear guidelines and policies to ensure the responsible use of AI in educational settings.

Question Nine: Benefits and Drawbacks

The purpose of this question is to gather insights into teachers' perceptions of AI's role in EFL instruction. Hence, T1, T4 and T5 have encountered several challenges while using AI in their teaching. One major issue is the potential for students to misuse AI tools for cheating during exams and writing theses. They have noticed that some students rely on AI to generate answers or write parts of their assignments, which undermines academic integrity. Additionally, they find it challenging to keep up with the rapid advancements in AI technology and ensure they are using the most effective tools. There is also a concern about the reliability of AI systems, as technical glitches can disrupt the learning process. Besides, T2, T3, T6 and T7 face several challenges with the integration of AI in their teaching. Cheating is a significant concern, as students might use AI to complete their exams or produce thesis content, making it difficult to assess genuine student ability. They also worry about the lack of adequate training and support for effectively implementing AI tools in their classrooms.

Question Ten: Support and Training

This question aims to identify the specific types of support and training that teachers need to confidently and effectively incorporate AI tools into their teaching practices. T3, T4 and T7 believe that comprehensive training programs are essential for teachers to effectively integrate AI into their teaching practices. This group emphasizes the need for hands-on workshops that provide practical experience with AI tools and demonstrate how to apply these technologies in real classroom scenarios. They also think ongoing support, such as access to technical assistance and resources for troubleshooting, is crucial to help teachers feel confident and competent in using AI. Additionally, they suggest that training should cover ethical considerations and strategies for maintaining academic integrity, particularly in preventing cheating during exams and assignments. T1, T2, T5 and T6 feel that collaborative learning opportunities and peer support networks are vital for integrating AI into teaching practices. They advocate for creating communities of practice where teachers can share experiences, challenges, and best practices for using AI in education. They also believe that training should focus on the pedagogical implications of AI, helping teachers understand how to balance AI with traditional teaching methods to enhance student learning.

Discussion

This section examines the research findings presented earlier to assess how well the data addresses the research questions and the study's objectives. Therefore, this study found that there are plenty of ethical considerations and challenges when AI is employed in EFL classrooms. Besides, teachers of English generally have unfavorable attitudes toward

integrating AI technologies into EFL classrooms. This scepticism stems from several key concerns and challenges that were highlighted during the interviews and analysis.

Regarding the first question, what are the primary ethical considerations that teachers of English have regarding the use of AI technologies in EFL classrooms?, it is found that teachers are particularly worried about how student data is collected, stored, and used by AI tools, fearing the exposure or misuse of sensitive information. This aligns with the view of Xu and Yuan (2021) who emphasize the need for clear data protection policies to safeguard student privacy, a concern echoed by teachers. Additionally, results have revealed that teachers are apprehensive about potential biases in AI algorithms, which could result in unequal treatment of students based on linguistic background or proficiency level. This supports the view of Buolamwini and Gebru (2018) who highlight how such biases can disadvantage struggling students, potentially widening the digital divide and creating inequities in educational outcomes. Moreover, teachers are concerned about the risk of cheating facilitated by AI technologies, as students may use AI tools to generate essays or answer exam questions, undermining the integrity of assessments and making it challenging for educators to evaluate students' true capabilities and understanding. This resonates with Manley (2023) who points out that AI-driven paraphrasing tools complicate the detection of plagiarism, as AI can produce text that closely resembles student-authored work while evading traditional plagiarism detection systems. Cotton et al. (2023) further illustrate this issue, noting the sophisticated capabilities of AI tools in mimicking authentic student work, thereby challenging educators to find effective ways to assess genuine student learning.

In what ways do teachers of English believe AI integration affects teacher-student interactions and relationships in the EFL classroom? is the second research question. In this account, the informants in this research pointed to several significant concerns that AI might diminish the quality of human interaction in the classroom. They emphasize that meaningful teacher-student relationships are crucial for effective teaching and learning, as these interactions provide the emotional support and motivation that AI cannot replicate. This corresponds to Mohamed (2023) who highlights the limitations of AI in capturing emotional nuances and fostering meaningful connections, underscoring the importance of human interaction. Teachers worry that over-reliance on AI could lead to a more impersonal educational experience, depriving students of the mentorship and personalized feedback traditionally provided by educators.

Concerning the third research question, how do teachers of English perceive the incorporation of AI in EFL classrooms?, results showed that teachers are concerned about AI leading to a more passive learning experience in EFL classrooms. Many teachers worry that students might become overly reliant on AI tools for completing assignments and exams, which could result in a decrease in active engagement and critical thinking. AI's ability to provide quick answers and solutions may discourage students from delving deeply into the material and developing their problem-solving skills. This concern is reflected in Iskender (2023), who notes that excessive dependence on AI might hinder critical thinking and lead to a surface-level understanding of language concepts. Teachers recognize that fostering a deeper comprehension and critical analysis is essential for effective language learning.

Another critical issue identified in the study is the lack of adequate training for both teachers and students in using AI tools effectively. Many teachers reported feeling unprepared to integrate AI into their teaching practices due to insufficient professional development

opportunities. They indicated a need for comprehensive training programs that not only cover the technical aspects of AI tools but also address their pedagogical implications. This gives support to previous research in the field (Mercader & Gairn, 2020).

In conclusion, this research demonstrates that teachers of English have significant reservations about the integration of AI technologies in EFL classrooms. Their considerations primarily revolve around the potential for AI to create a more passive learning environment, ethical issues related to data privacy and algorithmic bias, and the risk of diminishing teacher-student interactions. Addressing these issues will be crucial for successfully integrating AI into educational settings in a way that enhances, rather than detracts from, the learning experience.

Pedagogical Implications

AI tools offer opportunities to personalize learning, allowing teachers to tailor lessons to individual students' needs and learning paces. This can lead to more efficient and effective instruction, as students receive targeted support that addresses their specific challenges. AI can also automate routine tasks such as grading and feedback, freeing up teachers to focus on more interactive and creative aspects of teaching. This increased efficiency can enable educators to spend more time on lesson planning and one-on-one interactions with students, thereby enhancing the overall learning experience.

However, the integration of AI also presents several challenges that educators must address to ensure a balanced approach. Over-reliance on AI tools could reduce students' opportunities for developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as they may become accustomed to AI-generated solutions. Teachers need to consciously design activities that encourage independent thought and creativity, supplementing AI's capabilities with traditional teaching methods. Furthermore, educators must be mindful of ethical considerations, such as data privacy and algorithmic bias, and provide students with guidance on using AI responsibly. Effective training and professional development for teachers are essential to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to integrate AI into their pedagogical practices successfully.

Conclusion

This paper sought to investigate the perceptions and considerations of teachers of English at Oran2 University regarding the use of AI technologies in EFL classrooms. It aims to identify the advantages and disadvantages they associate with AI in education, including its effects on student engagement and critical thinking.

Consequently, this research reveals several significant findings regarding teachers' considerations about AI in education. First, teachers raised considerations about data privacy and security, fearing that student data might be mishandled or misused by AI tools. They also pointed out potential biases in AI algorithms, which could result in unequal treatment of students based on linguistic background or proficiency level, further disadvantaging struggling students and widening the digital divide. The risk of AI-facilitated cheating was also a major concern.

Additionally, teachers expressed worries that AI might diminish the quality of human interaction in the classroom. They emphasized that meaningful teacher-student relationships are crucial for effective learning, providing emotional support and motivation that AI cannot replicate. Over-reliance on AI could lead to a more impersonal educational experience, depriving students of mentorship and personalized feedback traditionally offered by teachers.

Moreover, teachers have negative attitudes towards the integration of AI in EFL classrooms and fear that students could become overly reliant on AI tools for assignments and

exams, reducing their opportunities for active engagement and critical thinking. Teachers noted that AI's ability to quickly provide answers might discourage students from deeply engaging with the material and developing their problem-solving skills. Hence, to effectively integrate AI technologies into EFL classrooms while addressing teachers' concerns, it is recommended that Mohamed Ben Ahmed Oran2 University provide comprehensive training and support for both teachers and students. This training should focus on enhancing digital literacy, ethical AI use, and critical thinking skills, ensuring that AI is used as a complement to, rather than a replacement for, traditional teaching methods. Additionally, implementing robust data privacy measures and regularly evaluating AI tools for potential biases can help safeguard student information and ensure equitable treatment. Encouraging a balanced approach, where AI aids in routine tasks while preserving meaningful teacher-student interactions, will enhance the learning experience and foster a more engaging and supportive educational environment.

About the Author

Abdelhadi Ahmed CHADLI is a PhD student at the Department of English Language at Mohamed Ben Ahmed Oran2 University, Oran, Algeria. He had been a contracted teacher at the University of Oran2 for three years and at Naama University for two years. ORCID N: 0009-0006-2034-4689

Declaration of AI Refined

This document has benefited from the application of AI-driven tools, including Grammarly and Scholar AI Chat, to refine its linguistic aspects. These tools were utilized to correct grammar, and spelling, and improve the overall writing style. It is acknowledged that the use of these technologies may introduce certain AI-generated linguistic patterns. However, the core intellectual content, data interpretation, and conclusions presented remain the sole work of the authors.

Statement of Absence of Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest related to the research, findings, or recommendations presented in this paper. All conclusions drawn are independent and unbiased.

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Appendices
Appendix A
Teachers' Semi-Structured Interview

1- How do you perceive the integration of AI technologies in EFL classrooms?
2- In what ways has AI influenced your teaching practices and methods?
3- What are your primary ethical considerations regarding the use of AI technologies in EFL classrooms?
4- How do you believe AI integration affects teacher-student interactions and relationships?
5- In what ways do you think AI influences students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills?
6- How prepared do you feel to integrate AI tools into your teaching practice, and what support or training would you need?
7- How do you balance the use of AI tools with traditional teaching methods in your classroom?
8- What challenges have you encountered, or do you anticipate, when using AI in your teaching?
9- What do you see as the main benefits and drawbacks of using AI in EFL instruction?
10- What kind of support or training do you believe is necessary for teachers to effectively integrate AI into their teaching practices?