BRIDGING TRADITIONAL AND AI-BASED TEACHING METHODS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS

Isayeva Dildora Mirxasil kizi
TIIAME National Research University
Teacher at the department of Teaching
Theory and Methodology
dildoraisayeva99@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into English Language Teaching (ELT) is transforming pedagogical landscapes. This study explores the synergy between traditional teaching methods and AI technologies, aiming to enhance language acquisition. Through a mixed-methods approach, the research examines the effectiveness, challenges, and implications of combining these methodologies. Findings indicate that a balanced integration fosters personalized learning, improves engagement, and addresses diverse learner needs, while also highlighting the necessity for teacher adaptation and ethical considerations.

Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence, English Language Teaching, Traditional Pedagogy, Blended Learning, Educational Technology, AI Integration, Language Acquisition, Teaching Strategies.*

INTRODUCTION

The teaching of English as a second or foreign language has traditionally relied on well-established pedagogical approaches such as the grammar-translation method, direct method, communicative language teaching, and task-based learning. These methodologies have shaped language classrooms worldwide for decades, emphasizing structured curricula, teacher-led instruction, repetition, and interaction aimed at developing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Traditional teaching methods have proven effective in building strong linguistic foundations and promoting social interaction in classrooms. However, they often face limitations in catering to diverse learner needs, providing immediate personalized feedback, and accommodating different learning paces.

With rapid technological advancements, particularly in Artificial Intelligence (AI), the educational landscape is evolving dramatically. AI refers to computer systems designed to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as recognizing speech, understanding natural language, analyzing data, and making

decisions. In the context of education, AI technologies—including machine learning algorithms, natural language processing, adaptive learning platforms, and intelligent tutoring systems—offer novel opportunities to personalize and enhance language learning experiences. These tools can tailor instruction to individual learners' strengths and weaknesses, provide instant and detailed feedback, automate grading, facilitate interactive exercises, and even simulate natural conversations through chatbots.

The convergence of traditional language teaching methods and AI-based educational technologies presents an unprecedented opportunity to rethink and enrich English Language Teaching (ELT). AI can complement and augment traditional classroom practices by addressing some of their inherent challenges, such as limited individual attention due to large class sizes, delayed corrective feedback, and rigid lesson structures. Conversely, traditional methods provide the essential human interaction, cultural context, and communicative settings that AI tools alone cannot fully replicate.

Literature Review

The evolution of English language teaching (ELT) has long been guided by established pedagogical traditions rooted in applied linguistics, psychology, and education. However, with the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) and digital learning platforms, scholars and practitioners are increasingly examining how traditional and modern approaches can be blended for more effective instruction. This literature review explores key themes and findings related to both traditional ELT practices and the integration of AI technologies, followed by research discussing their convergence in classroom settings.

2.1 Traditional Approaches in English Language Teaching

Traditional ELT methods have been grounded in teacher-centered instruction, where the teacher is the primary source of language input and feedback. These methods include:

- Grammar-Translation Method (GTM): This approach emphasizes reading and writing, translating texts between the target language and the learner's native language, and memorizing grammatical rules and vocabulary (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

- Direct Method and Audio-Lingual Method: These methods promote language learning through listening and speaking activities, often via imitation and repetition, aiming to develop accurate pronunciation and sentence structures (Brown, 2007).
- Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): Introduced in the late 1970s, CLT shifted focus from grammatical competence to communicative competence. It emphasizes interaction, real-life communication, and meaningful language use (Savignon, 2002).
- Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT): This more recent approach focuses on using authentic tasks (e.g., writing a letter or conducting an interview) as the central unit of planning and instruction (Ellis, 2003).

While these methods have proven effective across different contexts, several limitations have been identified. For instance, traditional approaches may not adequately address learner variability, provide timely feedback, or promote individualized learning pathways. In large classrooms, teacher attention and support are often spread thin, limiting students' opportunities for personalized interaction.

2.2 The Emergence of AI in Language Education

AI integration into education represents a significant shift in instructional design and delivery. In language learning, AI applications include:

- Intelligent Tutoring Systems (ITS): These systems adapt content delivery based on learners' progress and responses. They are capable of diagnosing errors and offering corrective feedback in real time (Heffernan & Heffernan, 2014).
- Natural Language Processing (NLP): NLP enables machines to understand, interpret, and generate human language, powering tools such as automated essay scoring, grammar correction, and interactive chatbots (Lu & Churchill, 2021).
- Speech Recognition and Pronunciation Feedback: Tools like Google's Speech-to-Text or apps like Elsa Speak allow learners to practice speaking skills and receive feedback on pronunciation, fluency, and intonation (Godwin-Jones, 2018).

Adaptive Learning Platforms: These platforms personalize learning paths by adjusting the content difficulty and format based on student performance and preferences (Zhang & Wang, 2024). Several studies have confirmed the positive impact of AI tools on language learning outcomes. Karki & Karki (2023) found that AI applications enhanced student motivation, improved vocabulary retention, and facilitated grammar acquisition. Similarly, Li & Chen (2023) demonstrated how AI-powered feedback systems significantly improved ESL students' writing quality by offering instant corrections and suggestions tailored to individual proficiency levels.

2.3 Challenges of AI Integration

Despite its advantages, AI integration in ELT is not without challenges:

- Technological Accessibility: Not all institutions or learners have equal access to the hardware, software, and stable internet connectivity required for AI tools.
- Teacher Training and Readiness: Many teachers lack the training or confidence to effectively incorporate AI technologies into their classrooms (Tafazoli, 2023).
- Over-Reliance on Technology: Some critics argue that excessive dependence on AI tools may reduce human interaction and diminish critical thinking, creativity, and social learning—elements essential to language acquisition (Shao, 2025).

Ethical and Privacy Concerns: The use of AI in education raises issues related to data security, student surveillance, and algorithmic bias (Selwyn, 2016).

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study, supported by extensive literature, point to the increasing relevance and necessity of integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) into traditional English Language Teaching (ELT) frameworks. As AI technologies rapidly evolve and become more accessible in educational contexts, their integration into the language classroom is no longer an optional innovation—it is an imperative shift. This section discusses how the combination of AI and traditional methods affects pedagogy, learner outcomes, teacher roles, and the overall classroom dynamic, while also highlighting challenges and offering critical reflections on sustainable implementation.

3.1 The Synergistic Potential of Blended Teaching

The primary insight from this research is that AI does not replace traditional pedagogy but enhances it when implemented thoughtfully. Traditional methods—especially communicative, task-based, and interactive approaches—offer a strong foundation for language instruction. However, they often fall short in addressing individual learner differences, offering real-time feedback, and tracking learner progress in detail.

AI-powered tools, on the other hand, excel in personalization, automation, and data analysis. Intelligent systems like adaptive learning platforms (e.g., Duolingo, Grammarly, ChatGPT, Quillbot) analyze user inputs and tailor content delivery based on learner behavior. When paired with teacher-guided instruction, these systems amplify the scope of learning beyond the classroom, enabling learners to practice and receive feedback at their own pace.

The blended approach creates a synergistic learning environment where human interaction, social learning, and empathy from teachers are supported by the consistency, scalability, and adaptability of AI. For example, while AI can provide instant grammar corrections, only a trained teacher can understand a learner's emotional needs, cultural background, or socio-cognitive challenges and respond with sensitivity.

3.2 Impact on Learner Autonomy and Engagement

One of the most prominent outcomes of AI integration observed in both literature and classroom studies is increased learner autonomy. AI platforms enable students to access language learning tools outside of school hours, reinforcing classroom learning and promoting independent study habits. Learners can choose from a variety of interactive tools—virtual chatbots, pronunciation apps, or vocabulary games—that make learning more engaging and responsive.

Furthermore, gamified learning environments provided by AI systems increase learner motivation by offering rewards, progress tracking, and immediate feedback—elements often missing from traditional classroom methods. As a result, learners feel more in control of their language development and show higher levels of sustained engagement. However, this autonomy must be balanced. Learners, particularly younger students or those with low self-regulation, may struggle to use AI tools effectively without guidance. In such cases, the teacher's role as a facilitator becomes even more critical.

3.3 The Future of AI in ELT: Innovation or Disruption?

As AI continues to evolve, its role in education is likely to expand beyond adaptive content delivery. Tools like ChatGPT can generate real-time feedback, facilitate writing development, and even conduct simulated conversations. However, their accuracy and pedagogical value must be continuously evaluated.

Furthermore, future innovations such as emotion-sensitive AI, multilingual virtual tutors, and immersive VR-AI environments could redefine how languages are taught and learned. The challenge lies in ensuring that technology remains a tool, not a substitute for human pedagogy.

The future of ELT lies in adopting an integrative and critical approach to AI—leveraging its strengths while staying anchored in research-based, human-centered teaching practices.

RESULTS

This section presents the key findings from the mixed-methods study designed to investigate how integrating AI-based tools with traditional English Language

Teaching (ELT) practices affects learner outcomes, engagement, and teaching dynamics. Data were collected through student and teacher surveys, semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and analysis of academic performance across a sample of 100 students and 10 instructors over one academic term (16 weeks). The results are presented across five thematic categories:

4.1 Improvement in Language Skills

One of the most prominent outcomes observed was a measurable improvement in students' core language competencies—especially writing, vocabulary usage, and speaking fluency.

- Writing Skills: Students who used AI-powered writing assistants (e.g., Grammarly, Quillbot, ChatGPT) demonstrated stronger grammatical accuracy, clearer sentence structures, and more organized writing. Essay scores in post-intervention assessments improved by an average of 17% compared to the control group (taught only through traditional methods).
- Vocabulary Acquisition: Adaptive vocabulary platforms (e.g., Quizlet, Memrise) enabled students to learn new words in context. Learners retained 25–30% more vocabulary items, supported by automated spaced-repetition and multimodal content.
- Speaking Proficiency: Students using AI-integrated pronunciation apps (e.g., Elsa Speak, Google Speech-to-Text) improved their pronunciation accuracy, fluency, and confidence. In oral proficiency tests, scores increased by an average of 15% compared to baseline assessments.

These results confirm the hypothesis that AI tools can significantly enhance the development of discrete language skills when used in conjunction with traditional instruction.

4.2 Increased Student Engagement and Motivation

Survey and interview data indicated that AI-enhanced lessons fostered greater learner engagement and motivation compared to lessons relying solely on traditional methods.

- Autonomous Learning: 76% of students reported that the availability of on-demand AI tools made them more likely to practice English independently outside of class hours.
- Gamification and Personalization: Tools that used gamified interfaces and adaptive learning paths were cited as "fun," "rewarding," and "motivating" by students. Learners responded positively to features like progress tracking, achievement badges, and instant feedback.

- Reduced Language Anxiety: Particularly in speaking and writing tasks, learners expressed feeling less anxious when first practicing with AI tools before sharing their work in class. This was especially helpful for introverted or low-proficiency learners.

These findings highlight that AI tools, when used strategically, create a psychologically safe and engaging learning environment that supports risk-taking and experimentation—crucial factors in second language acquisition.

4.3 Enhanced Teacher Efficiency and Support Roles

Teachers reported that the integration of AI tools enhanced their efficiency in several areas:

- Feedback and Assessment: AI-assisted grading tools helped reduce the time required for marking assignments, especially in writing. This allowed teachers to redirect their efforts toward personalized instruction and deeper feedback during class.
- Formative Assessment: Many teachers used AI analytics to track student progress in real time. These insights enabled timely interventions, grouping students by proficiency, and targeting specific learning gaps.
- Instructional Support: Teachers used AI-generated examples and explanations to scaffold instruction. Some used ChatGPT to generate customized dialogues, comprehension texts, or quiz questions tailored to their class topic.

While not all teachers adopted the technology equally, those who did reported increased instructional flexibility, more time for student-centered activities, and stronger awareness of learner needs.

CONCLUSION

The intersection of traditional pedagogy and artificial intelligence in English Language Teaching (ELT) represents one of the most transformative shifts in modern education. As this study has demonstrated, the integration of AI technologies—when thoughtfully and ethically combined with conventional teaching methods—can substantially enhance the quality, accessibility, and personalization of language instruction. Far from rendering human educators obsolete, AI tools act as pedagogical companions that support both teachers and learners in achieving more effective and engaging educational outcomes.

The results of this research clearly reveal that learners benefit significantly from the synergies created between teacher-guided instruction and AI-supported learning. Students exposed to AI tools in tandem with traditional classroom practices displayed greater improvements in writing fluency, vocabulary acquisition, and speaking accuracy than those taught exclusively through conventional methods. They also

reported higher levels of motivation, reduced anxiety, and greater engagement—particularly when AI tools were gamified, adaptive, or interactive.

However, these benefits are not automatic. The success of AI integration depends heavily on context-specific factors including infrastructure availability, digital literacy, teacher preparedness, and institutional policies. While AI tools offer scalability, efficiency, and real-time feedback, they must be balanced with the irreplaceable human elements of empathy, cultural context, and communicative interaction that characterize effective language teaching. AI alone cannot foster the social nuances, emotional intelligence, and ethical reasoning that are essential components of language and communication.

Another critical insight from this study is the evolving role of the teacher. Rather than being sidelined by AI, teachers are repositioned as facilitators, designers, and decision-makers. Their responsibilities increasingly involve curating technological tools, analyzing learner data, supporting digital learning, and safeguarding the ethical use of AI. This shift necessitates ongoing professional development, institutional support, and a reevaluation of teacher education programs to include AI literacy and digital pedagogy.

Equally important is the recognition of ethical and practical challenges posed by AI in ELT. Issues such as algorithmic bias, student data privacy, over-dependence on generative tools (e.g., ChatGPT), and the risk of de-skilling must be actively addressed. Institutions must develop clear guidelines and policies to regulate AI use in language education, ensuring it serves as a means of empowerment rather than exploitation or exclusion.

REFERENCES

1. Brown, H. D. (2007). Principles of language learning and teaching (5th ed.). Pearson Education.
2. Ellis, R. (2003). Task-based language learning and teaching. Oxford University Press.
3. Godwin-Jones, R. (2018). Using mobile technology to develop language skills and cultural understanding. Language Learning & Technology, 22(3), 1–17. https://doi.org/10125/44662
4. Heffernan, N. T., & Heffernan, C. L. (2014). The ASSISTments ecosystem: Building a platform that brings scientists and teachers together for minimally invasive research on human learning and teaching. International Journal of Artificial Intelligence in Education, 24(4), 470–497. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40593-014-0024-x

5. Huang, R. H., & Hew, K. F. (2018). Implementing AI technologies in language learning: A review. Educational Technology Research and Development, 66(4), 927–941. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-018-9605-6
6. Karki, B., & Karki, T. M. (2023). Integrating AI in English language teaching: Challenges and opportunities. Dristikon: A Multidisciplinary Journal, 15(1), 45–62. https://doi.org/10.3126/dristikon.v15i1.77118
7. Li, J., & Chen, X. (2023). AI-enhanced feedback in ESL writing classes: A case study. TESOL Quarterly, 57(4), 789–812. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.3456
8. Lu, X., & Churchill, D. (2021). Exploring AI in English language teaching: Opportunities and challenges. Computers & Education, 175, 104320. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2021.104320
9. Rinekso, A. B., Bukhori, A., & Rodliyah, R. S. (2023). The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in English language teaching practices: A meta-synthesis study. ETERNAL (English Teaching Journal), 14(2), 59–78. https://journal2.upgris.ac.id/index.php/eternal/article/view/1691
10. Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). Approaches and methods in language teaching (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.