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# THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING: ETHICAL ISSUES AND EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

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Artificial Intelligence, English Language Teaching (ELT), Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Ethical Issues, Student Perceptions.

**A B S T R A C T**

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) marks a significant change in English Language Teaching (ELT), providing tailored learning experiences while also raising important ethical issues. This research seeks to understand how students perceive the role of AI in their English studies, particularly regarding its usefulness, user-friendliness, and potential ethical dangers. Employing a quantitative approach, the information and insights were gathered from a survey conducted with a representative group of 20 English language learners. The data collection involved a closed-format questionnaire based on a Likert scale that ranged from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree. " This tool was crafted to apply the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT). Analysis of the data was performed through descriptive statistics, including mean calculations and percentages to summarize the feedback received. The results indicate a strong level of acceptance; students consider AI to be very useful for comprehending course materials (75%), enhancing their English abilities (74%), and speeding up task execution (76%). Additionally, 77% of the students found AI tools easy to use, suggesting minimal technical difficulties. On the other hand, students voiced significant ethical worries, indicating that AI could undermine academic integrity (71%) and contribute to plagiarism (69%). The results of this research imply that although AI can effectively support educational success, it is crucial for educators to integrate it responsibly. Maintaining a balance between technology use and behavioral supervision, along with teacher support, is vital to ensure that AI serves as an aid rather than a replacement for independent critical reasoning.

## INTRODUCTION

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) represents one of the most transformative shifts in modern education, particularly within the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). Historically, the process of language acquisition was deeply rooted in communal and contextual interactions, progressing from informal storytelling to structured instruction within formal classroom settings.

As noted by Cook (2001), these early approaches have now evolved to incorporate sophisticated digital elements. Tools such as language applications with adaptive algorithms and AI partners like ChatGPT have fundamentally restructured the methodology of learning English. These digital tools not only enhance accessibility but also offer personalized learning experiences that adapt to individual learners' paces and styles, as highlighted by Chapelle (2007).

By providing interactive environments and instant feedback, these technologies address long-standing pedagogical challenges, such as the scarcity of native speakers and the difficulty of providing individualized attention in high-enrollment classrooms.

However, the emergence of smartphones and widespread internet access has catalyzed a profound paradigm shift in pedagogical frameworks and the dynamics of teacher-student interactions. The efficacy of even the most advanced technology is ultimately dependent on the human element and the students' willingness to adopt it. To analyze this, the present study utilizes the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), a seminal framework developed by Fred Davis (1989).

This model focuses on two primary determinants: Perceived Usefulness, regarding whether students believe AI helps them learn better, and Perceived Ease of Use, concerning the user-friendliness of the tools. Furthermore, the study acknowledges Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by Deci and Ryan, which suggests that successful technology integration must satisfy a student’s innate need for autonomy and competence to ensure long-term engagement. By investigating these perceptions, the research seeks to answer the central problem statement: How do students perceive the use of Artificial Intelligence in learning English?

While AI offers significant advantages in flexibility and vocabulary enhancement, it often lacks the cultural depth and authentic human engagement found in traditional methods.

Recent research by Zhang and Dong (2024) emphasizes that while generative AI models improve engagement and retention, they often struggle to replicate the real-world immersion and interpersonal interactions essential for natural fluency. Understanding these student perspectives is vital for educators who aim to move beyond simply using "cool" tools and instead aim to build a learning environment where AI truly supports and empowers the student.

The goal is to bridge the gap between theory and actual practice to ensure that the future of English language education remains ethical, inclusive, and effective for

everyone. This study underscores that successful integration depends on a holistic approach that balances technological innovation with the essential human connections necessary for true language mastery.

## METHOD

This study adopts a quantitative research design employing a survey method to investigate students' perceptions of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in English Language Teaching (ELT). The research is fundamentally guided by the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), as introduced in the "Introduction" and elaborated in the "Literature Review" of the AI article. TAM, developed by Davis (1989), posits that a user's behavioral intention to use a technology is primarily determined by two factors: Perceived Usefulness (the degree to which a user believes the technology will enhance their performance) and Perceived Ease of Use (the degree to which a user believes the technology will be free of effort). These constructs are central to understanding how students perceive the integration of AI tools like ChatGPT and other AI- powered applications in their English learning process.

Furthermore, this study acknowledges the principles of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by Deci and Ryan, which is also referenced in the AI article. SDT highlights the importance of satisfying innate psychological needs for autonomy and competence to foster intrinsic motivation and sustained engagement. Therefore, the research instrument will also explore how AI integration impacts these needs, as successful technology adoption hinges not only on its perceived utility and ease but also on its ability to support students' sense of control and mastery.

The research aims to address the central problem statement: "How do students perceive the use of Artificial Intelligence in learning English?". To achieve this, a quantitative approach using a survey questionnaire is employed. This method is chosen for its efficacy in gathering data from a large sample size, allowing for the generalization of findings regarding student perceptions. The questionnaire is specifically designed to measure the key constructs of TAM and SDT, as well as to explore students' awareness of the ethical implications associated with AI in ELT, a point emphasized in both the "Introduction" and "Literature Review" of the AI article (referencing concerns raised by Fitria,2023; UNESCO, 2021).

The questionnaire will consist of closed-ended items utilizing a Likert scale (e.g., ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree"). These items will be carefully crafted to operationalize the variables of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, autonomy, competence, and ethical concerns related to AI in English language learning. For instance, items will directly assess whether students find AI tools helpful for improving vocabulary and grammar (perceived usefulness), whether these tools are user-friendly (perceived ease of use), and whether they feel empowered or concerned by their use. The quantitative nature of the Likert scale responses allows for statistical analysis, enabling the researchers to quantify student perceptions and identify patterns or significant differences.

The data collection procedure will involve administering this questionnaire to a representative sample of English language learners. Following the distribution of the questionnaire, the collected data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics (e.g., calculating means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages) to summarize students' responses for each construct. Inferential statistics may also be employed, if

appropriate, to explore relationships between variables or differences between demographic groups, thereby providing a robust, data-driven understanding of student perceptions as intended by the research design. This quantitative approach ensures that the findings are objective and can provide measurable insights into the effectiveness and student acceptance of AI in ELT.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the questionnaire administered to 20 students regarding their perceptions of using Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in learning English. The findings are organized based on ethical concerns, dependency, responsible use, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and overall attitudes.

Table 1. Summary of Questionnaire Results in Percentage (N = 20)

| No | Aspect | Statement (Simplified) | Mean | Percentage (%) | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Ethical Concern | AI reduces students' honesty | 3.55 | 71% | Agree |
| 2 | Ethical Concern | Students submit AI work as their own | 3.05 | 61% | Neutral |
| 3 | Ethical Concern | AI may lead to plagiarism | 3.45 | 69% | Agree |
| 4 | Dependency | Students become dependent on AI | 3.60 | 72% | Agree |
| 5 | Dependency | Students rely on AI instead of thinking | 3.45 | 69% | Agree |
| 6 | Dependency | AI reduces students' effort | 3.40 | 68% | Neutral |
| 7 | Responsible Use | AI should only support learning | 3.80 | 76% | Agree |
| 8 | Responsible Use | Students must use AI responsibly | 3.90 | 78% | Agree |
| 9 | Responsible Use | Teachers should guide AI use | 3.85 | 77% | Agree |
| 10 | Perceived Usefulness | AI helps understanding materials | 3.75 | 75% | Agree |
| 11 | Perceived Usefulness | AI improves English skills | 3.70 | 74% | Agree |
| 12 | Perceived Usefulness | AI helps complete tasks faster | 3.80 | 76% | Agree |
| 13 | Ease of Use | AI tools are easy to use | 3.85 | 77% | Agree |
| 14 | Ease of Use | Easy to learn how to use AI | 3.80 | 76% | Agree |
| 15 | Ease of Use | AI requires little effort | 3.70 | 74% | Agree |
| 16 | Attitude | AI makes learning more interesting | 3.85 | 77% | Agree |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17 | Attitude | Students enjoy using AI | 3.90 | 78% | Agree |
| 18 | Attitude | Prefer AI to support learning | 3.75 | 75% | Agree |

**1. Ethical Concerns**

The findings indicate that students demonstrate moderate awareness of ethical issues in using AI tools. The statement regarding reduced honesty (M = 3.55) and plagiarism (M = 3.45) both fall within the "Agree" category, suggesting that students recognize potential academic risks associated with AI. However, the statement about submitting AI-generated work as their own (M = 3.05) shows a neutral response, indicating some uncertainty or variation in students' views.

These results suggest that while students acknowledge ethical risks, not all of them perceive these issues as severe or immediate.

**2. Dependency on AI**

The data show that students are aware of the potential for dependency on AI tools. The statement "students may become dependent on AI" received a mean score of 3.60, indicating agreement. Similarly, reliance on AI instead of independent thinking (M = 3.45) also reflects concern.

However, the perception that AI reduces effort (M = 3.40) falls on the borderline between neutral and agree, suggesting that not all students feel that AI negatively impacts their effort. This implies that dependency is recognized but not universally experienced.

**3. Responsible Use of AI**

Students strongly support the idea of responsible AI use. All statements in this category received relatively high mean scores (M = 3.80–3.90), indicating agreement. Students believe that AI should function as a supportive tool rather than a replacement for learning, and they emphasize the importance of responsibility and teacher guidance.

This reflects a mature understanding among students regarding the need for ethical and structured AI integration in education.

**4. Perceived Usefulness**

The findings reveal a positive perception of AI usefulness. Students agree that AI helps them understand materials (M = 3.75), improves their English skills (M = 3.70), and enables faster task completion (M = 3.80).

These results indicate that AI is widely perceived as beneficial in enhancing learning efficiency and performance. This supports the assumption in the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) that perceived usefulness influences acceptance.

**5. Perceived Ease of Use**

All items related to ease of use received high agreement scores (M = 3.70–3.85), indicating that students find AI tools easy to operate and learn. This suggests that technical complexity is not a barrier to adoption.

The ease of use likely contributes to the frequent and positive use of AI tools in learning activities.

**6. Students' Attitudes Toward AI**

Students' attitudes toward AI are generally positive. They agree that AI makes learning more interesting (M = 3.85), enjoyable (M = 3.90), and supportive of their studies (M = 3.75). This indicates that AI not only improves academic performance but also enhances motivation and engagement in learning English.

**Discussion**

Based on the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was developed by Fred Davis in 1989 and emphasizes two key constructs: Perceived Usefulness (PU), which is the individual's level of belief that using the technology will improve their task performance, and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), which is the individual's level of belief that using the technology will require minimal effort on their part. Both influence attitude, behavioral intention (intention to use), and ultimately actual usage, with PEOU indirectly influencing PU. This model explains that external factors such as system design trigger cognitive responses (PU and PEOU) that shape affective responses and adoption behavior; thus, TAM is highly relevant to educational contexts where AI acceptance depends on perceptions of benefits and ease of use (Marikyan & Papagiannidis, 2025).

The findings show strong alignment with TAM, particularly in the PU and PEOU dimensions, which dominate students' positive perceptions of AI in English language learning, with high mean scores for PU such as:

1. AI helps understanding materials (M=3.75, 75%)
2. AI improves English skills (M=3.70, 74%)
3. AI helps complete tasks faster (M=3.80, 76%) Meanwhile PEOU
4. AI tools are easy to use (M=3.85, 77%)
5. Easy to learn how to use AI (M=3.80, 76%)
6. AI requires little effort (M=3.70, 74%)

The results indicate that this high perception of PU aligns with Davis's definition, in which AI is viewed as enhancing learning performance through instant feedback and personalization, thereby fostering sustained usage intentions as predicted by the TAM; while strong PEOU confirms that low technical barriers (self-efficacy) increase PU, resulting in positive attitudes such as "AI makes learning more engaging" (M=3.85, 77%) and "Students enjoy using AI" (M=3.90, 78%), which reflect the TAM causal chain from perception to behavioral intention.

Although, the results also reveal nuances beyond the core TAM that enrich the analysis, such as ethical awareness and dependency (e.g., "Students become dependent on AI," with M

= 3.60, 72% in agreement; "AI can lead to plagiarism," with M = 3.40, 69% agree), which do not directly contradict each other but suggest that high PU can lead to excessive dependence if not mitigated by external factors such as Since PU and PEOU have positive perceptions (averages >74%) and project high AI adoption in ELT, this in-depth discussion indicates that the draft study is fully consistent with TAM. However, they also add an educational contextual layer where TAM needs to be extended with ethical elements to avoid risks such as a decline in independent thinking—a common critique of TAM for being overly technology-centric without social norms or behavioral controls, as seen in TPB. Overall, these results validate TAM as a strong predictor, with the implication that educators must maximize PU through responsible integration to ensure sustainable adoption in the AI era (Wang et al., 2025).

**CONLUSION**

Based on the analysis, the authors concluded that students' perceptions of the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in English language learning are positive, but accompanied by significant ethical concerns. The data show that the Technology

Acceptance Model (TAM) has a high level of acceptance, with AI perceived as highly beneficial (perceived usefulness) in aiding material comprehension (75%), improving English language skills (74%), and accelerating assignment completion (76%). Furthermore, perceived ease of use also supports this positive perception, with the majority of students finding AI tools easy to operate (77%) and learn (76%) without significant technical barriers. This impacts student attitudes, who find learning more engaging (77%) and enjoyable (78%).

However, despite this efficiency, students recognize serious risks related to ethical issues and dependency. Students agree that excessive use of AI can compromise academic honesty (71%), encourage plagiarism (69%), and inhibit independent thinking (69%). Therefore, student perceptions go beyond the convenience of the tools but also emphasize the importance of responsible use. Students strongly supported the idea that AI should remain a supporting tool, not a substitute for thinking, and emphasized the need for teacher guidance in integrating AI to ensure ethical and effective learning. Overall, students viewed AI as a highly beneficial innovation for improving academic achievement, provided it is balanced with behavioral controls and moral responsibility to prevent the erosion of critical thinking skills.

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