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AI-READY: EVALUATING EFL TEACHERS' PREPAREDNESS FOR THE FUTURE OF LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

Sahal R. Alshammari
Amrendra Kumar Singh*

ABSTRACT

Artificial intelligence is being introduced into language teaching at a fast rate and is likely to change the face of educational approaches, especially in the EFL context. The present study investigates the readiness of EFL teachers to adopt AI tools, specifically ChatGPT, into their teaching practices, attitudes, benefits, and challenges. A mixed-methods design was utilized to investigate the attitudes, knowledge, and experiences of 150 EFL teachers regarding AI use in the classroom with questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Results indicate that educators are relatively well-prepared for the introduction of AI, which they perceive as the most influential element affecting educators' confidence and competence in using new technologies. Educators who have been trained in AI tend to understand the potential that AI can bring into classrooms in terms of personalization of learning by AI, immediate feedback, and gamification of education that results in greater engagement by students. On the other hand, general concerns regard ethical issues: data privacy and algorithmic bias. Besides, financial and infrastructural barriers, especially in resource-poor settings, were major obstacles to AI adoption. The study underlines the serious lack of knowledge in AI research and techniques in instructors, thus calling for targeted professional development that is urgent. These findings call for comprehensive regulations, ethical frameworks, and investments to be put into place to ensure the use of AI in an equitable manner. The research provides significant insights into the intricacies of incorporating AI into language instruction, promoting a hybrid paradigm that utilizes AI's advantages while preserving the fundamental function of educators. This research provides a framework for stakeholders to overcome obstacles and enhance AI's revolutionary capabilities in EFL training.

Key words: Artificial Intelligence, ESL, EFL, language teaching, Saudi Arabia, teachers' preparedness

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Sahal R. Alshammari, Department of Languages and Translation, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Northern Border University, Saudi Arabia (Sahal.alshammari@nbu.edu.sa)
Amrendra Kumar Singh, Department of Anthropology & Tribal Studies, Central University of Jharkhand, India (amar.jnu@gmail.com)

INTRODUCTION

Recent progress in artificial intelligence has influenced many aspects of our lives, and the field of language teaching and learning is no exception. Among the AI technologies that have recently gained much attention regarding the potential for innovation in how we think about language education are language models, especially GPT (Generative Pre-trained Transformer) and ChatGPT (Radford et al., 2018; Lund & Wang, 2023). These AI tools introduce new methods of enhancing learning through personalized tutoring, immediate practice, and feedback for the learners. According to Bin-Hady et al. (2023), and Amin (2023), how well AI will be integrated into the teaching and learning process depends on how teachers are prepared and perceive these technologies. Educators are the key to integrating AI into their teaching practices, and their attitudes and beliefs may decisively influence how effective this integration will be in a classroom context. Recent studies confirm the above assertion, for example, Zhai et al. (2021) and Alnasib (2023). Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI), which is a branch of AI technologies, is used to describe systems that can generate text, images, or other media based on prompts. Large Language Models (LLMs) like ChatGPT are sophisticated GenAI tools trained on massive datasets to mimic human-like language interactions. As opposed to the conventional rule-based chatbots, LLMs respond dynamically to user inputs, making personalized tutoring, contextual feedback, and interactive language practice possible. This paper discusses ChatGPT as a prominent generative artificial intelligence tool with the potential to transform language learning with features like real-time feedback and one-on-one teaching, unlike previous AI tools that had limited themselves to pre-programmed answers or task automation.

This paper, therefore, tries to investigate teachers' perceptions of AI and its place in the language classroom. By investigating teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and concerns related to AI integration, we will, therefore, obtain a clearer picture of those factors that either facilitate or impede successful AI integration into language teaching and learning (Polak et al., 2022). We will touch on a variety of issues related to teacher perceptions, such as readiness for accepting AI

technologies, knowledge of and skills in AI-related technology, and attitudes concerning perceived benefits and challenges relating to the integration of AI in language education (Qin et al., 2020; Guzman & Lewis, 2019). We will also look into how teachers perceive the impact of AI on their roles and responsibilities in the classroom and their concerns about ethical considerations, such as academic integrity and the potential replacement of human instructors (Ali et al., 2023; Li & Mak, 2022). There are recent studies and research findings in the year 2023 by Ahmed and in the year 2024 by Tossell et al. that provide a wider view of teacher perceptions toward AI. Specifically, we will further analyze such factors that shape the attitudes of teachers toward AI: their level of technology proficiency, professional development opportunities, and the support given to them by their educational institutions (Alnasib, 2023; Polak et al., 2022).

Moreover, in this regard, we are going to look at the implications of teacher perceptions for the effective integration of AI into language teaching and learning. This study highlights the need for targeted interventions and professional development programs that take into consideration the concerns of educators, thus arming them with the knowledge and competencies necessary to embed artificial intelligence in their pedagogical practices, supported by the research of Zhai et al. (2021) and Alnasib (2023). This paper, therefore, tries to contribute to this ongoing discourse and deal with the challenges associated with this integration by emphasizing what it considers a crucial unit of analysis: educators' perceptions regarding artificial intelligence and its incorporation into educational settings. This research will also be important in guiding educators, researchers, and decision-makers by ensuring that evidence underlies the need to develop and apply AI-based teaching tools and methods that consider a teacher's perspective. That would lead us in the right direction for creating a balanced and effective approach toward the integration of AI in language teaching and learning. The integration will be able to use the strengths of AI technologies optimally, retaining at the same time the essence of human instructors in guiding and facilitating learning processes (Cowie & Alizadeh 2022; Alhalangy & AbdAlgane, 2023).

LITERATURE REVIEW

AI in Language Teaching and Learning

The innovation of AI has continuously revolutionized language education, providing new ways for improved learning. The release of GPT by OpenAI in 2018 marked an important era in language technology and thus enabled the human-like text generation capabilities of answering, translating, and summarizing. Of late, ChatGPT is one of the recent tools that have been popularly used, benefiting learners due to their potential to complement learners by improving productivity in some learning areas that require much time (Lund & Wang, 2023). It also provides language practice and feedback, though its replacement in an EFL classroom is doubted by Kasneci et al. (2023) and Valova et al. (2024). Research highlights the uses of AI in language education, especially ChatGPT. Bin-Hady et al. (2023) demonstrated its potential to improve linguistic abilities, aid literacy development, and provide opportunities for collaborative practice. Their study presented the ChatGPT AIALL model and focused on its place in interactive learning environments and adaptive teaching. Moreover, AI's transformative potential for education is consistent with its position as a driver of the fourth industrial revolution (Dai et al., 2020). Loeckx (2016) emphasized AI's potential to reduce the workload of teachers and students while enhancing the quality of learning experiences. Contemporary scholarly research focuses on three major themes of incorporating artificial intelligence (AI) into language teaching: its revolutionary capacity, pedagogic difficulties, and ethical matters. Bin-Hady et al. (2023) and Amin's (2023) research points towards the capacity of AI for personalized teaching and instant feedback, with Kasneci et al. (2023) warning against sole reliance on AI for such critical purposes. Ethically, major concerns involve confidentiality of data (Li & Mak, 2022) and algorithmic bias (Zhai et al., 2021), with technical difficulties such as infrastructure shortcomings (Cowie & Alizadeh, 2022) also being major. All of these research works enlighten educators on the supportive and revolutionary aspects of conventional teaching methods, hence warranting reflective thought on their use.

Despite its potential, challenges remain. Zhai et al. (2021) framed these as technical, pedagogical, and ethical. From a technical perspective, even though AI personalizes learning, it does so at the cost of reconceptualizing the educator's role in dealing with resistance or overreliance. Students' reliance on AI tools can also undermine deep learning, while ethical concerns—data privacy—are paired with concerns about balancing gamified learning with meaningful education. One of the most important advantages of AI is personalized learning: it analyzes data about students to tailor material and enable self-paced progress. AI-driven chatbots improve real-time language practice, improving proficiency and confidence with immediate feedback on pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary (Amin, 2023; Gholami et al., 2025). While overcoming the barriers of the classroom, AI integration has to balance the strengths of technology with the indispensable role of human instructors in fostering deeper language engagement.

Teachers' Readiness for AI Integration

AI integration in education significantly depends on teacher readiness and attitudes (Zhai et al., 2021). This generally comes out of resistance due to poor or outdated professional development, while overreliance is due to uncritical expectations and over-emphasis on technology rather than learning outcomes (Zhai et al., 2021). Misconceptions about and misunderstanding of the role AI can play tend to daunt educators, as most underrate the potential of AI for transforming classrooms (Trivette, 2012; Sumakul, 2019). The Horizon Report (2018) has emphasized a need for reimagining educators' roles anew to avoid the dichotomies of resistance and overreliance on effective integration of AI. Educators need to exercise self-developmental activities if the potential of AI is to be fully put into use (Alshumaimeri & Alshememry, 2024). Therefore, effective pre-service and in-service training is needed to properly arm teachers with the wherewithal to focus on learner needs rather than tool adoption (Burton et al., 2018). Teacher attitudes and expectations greatly influence AI adoption (Lee, 2020). Alnasib (2023) found faculty readiness to be significantly related ($p < .01$) to variables such

as perceived advantages of AI, attitude, and behavioral intention to use AI. Moreover, readiness also differed significantly by gender, age, and teaching experience; thus, attesting to a strong need in tailoring the training programs.

Despite positive attitudes toward AI, educators often lack specific knowledge and skills for effective implementation (Polak et al., 2022). This gap hampers AI adoption, even though tools like Homework Bot show potential. Bridging this gap requires addressing both technical and pedagogical training needs. Educators unfamiliar with AI perceive it as merely a modern tool, underestimating its transformative role (Hadwin & Oshige, 2011). The rapid development of AI tools necessitates that training remains relevant, comprehensive, and accessible. Ensuring balanced adoption that prioritizes learning outcomes will maximize AI's transformative potential in education while alleviating teacher concerns.

Challenges and Barriers to AI Integration in Language Teaching

Several challenges have hindered wider applications of AI in language teaching. Firstly, the lack of technological skills and knowledge of teachers to meaningfully integrate the AI tool into their teaching and learning is lacking (Qin et al., 2020). Secondly, most teachers tend to underestimate the potential of AI by viewing it as just a tool for education rather than a transformative phenomenon in education (Trivette, 2012). The mismatch between the technological function of AI and language teaching methodology based on interpersonal communication has resulted in a disconnect between theoretical paradigms and technological advancements in the field of language teaching and learning (Guzman & Lewis, 2019). Most teachers are unsure because of a lack of understanding of the role AI will play in reshaping language instruction (Roll & Wylie, 2016).

AI-enhanced language learning applications often provide subpar feedback and focus on discrete grammar and vocabulary drills rather than fostering collaborative learning. Ethical concerns arise when institutions rely on automated bots to replace human tutors, leading to fears of job loss among educators (Li & Mak, 2022). Plagiarism is another issue, as students using ChatGPT risk inauthenticity and over-

reliance on AI (Ali et al., 2023; Chassignol et al., 2018; Horakova et al., 2017; Jiao et al., 2023; Knox, 2020; Luckin, 2017; Murphy, 2019). Studies by Ahmed (2023) and Tossell et al. (2024) reveal that students appreciate ChatGPT's speed and ease of use but distrust its accuracy and prefer teacher-led writing tasks. High costs and limited resources impede Intelligent Virtual Environment (IVE) adoption in EFL classrooms (Cowie & Alizadeh, 2022). Educators are skeptical of virtual avatars, which struggle with unscripted situations and subtle language nuances (Lotze, 2018; Alhalangy & AbdAlgane, 2023). Effective integration of AI in EFL requires proper teacher training and a balanced approach that complements traditional methods.

AI Integration in EFL/ESL

Artificial intelligence is being integrated increasingly into the teaching of EFL and ESOL, with important benefits and challenges identified. Its potential has lain in personalizing learning, increasing learners' engagement, and reducing the administrative burdens of the teacher mostly in the EFL setting, it seems. As argued by Alhlagmy & Abdalgane (2023), AI applications dealing with both adaptive learning and natural language processing have improved learning outcomes. However, schools are not widely supporting these developments while they are supposed to train both teachers and learners. Supporting evidence regarding their effectiveness was available in the research by Almohesh (2024). Still, their survey points out impediments such as the lack of technological skills by educators and the general misconceptions about AI taking over teaching. Ahmed (2023) discovered that Saudi EFL students appreciated AI tools like ChatGPT but preferred the presence of a teacher for engagement and development. This underlines that AI cannot substitute for teachers, at least in giving individual attention. Ethical and pedagogical issues also emerge: Aljabr (2023) observed that Saudi learners, though well-informed about AI, showed no concern for the credibility of what AI generates. Tossell et al. (2024) observed students' initial skepticism about using AI tools for writing assignments, which later turned into cautious acceptance provided there was human oversight. In general, integrating AI into EFL requires a balance between the benefits it

offers and professional development for educators, ensuring it augments and does not replace traditional methods of teaching.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How do teachers feel about their preparedness of using AI tools in the teaching and learning of language, like ChatGPT?
2. What are teacher's perspectives on the challenges and potentials of offering an AI-supported environment in an EFL classroom?

METHODOLOGY

To investigate the way language teachers understand AI and its place in a classroom setting for language learning, we adopted a mixed-methods research design – a method of research that combines qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis techniques to understand the research problem (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

Participants

The study approached 150 teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) from a pool of professionals employed in primary and secondary schools or higher education. The applied sample included people who were selected purposefully to identify diverse profiles in terms of teaching experience, ability to use technology, and interest in contrasted experiences with AI tools (Adedokun, 2016). Approval was provided for this study by the IRB, Northern Border University. Informed written consent from all respondents was sought to make the participation voluntary, with full assurance of confidentiality. Consent to publish anonymized results of this study was also sought.

Instruments

The data collection process consisted of two main instruments: a survey using Google Forms was distributed and interviews that were

half structured. The data collection tool was developed using Google Forms to gather quantitative data on teachers' perceptions of AI and its role in the language classroom (Appendix A). While the survey generally classified 'AI tools' without distinction, respondents were made very clear that the research focused on Generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT. The interview questions also stressed experiences with chat-like AI systems, thus guaranteeing respondents' answers were grounded in LLM-tool capacities and boundaries. A total of 150 EFL teachers were recruited from different environments of Saudi Arabian schooling, including urban and rural public schools and higher-education institutions. Approximately 60% of teachers worked in environments with limited technological means, and 40% worked in urban settings with ample means. This classification allowed for the representation of different socioeconomic and technological environments necessary for studying equity in the adoption of artificial intelligence.

The survey questionnaire was based on the work of Amod (2023) and Alnasib (2023) and was reviewed by two professors in the department to ensure its validity and reliability. Questions in the survey included the Likert scale, focusing on several administrators' perceptions such as the interest and willingness of teachers to use AI technology, their knowledge, awareness, and skills to use AI, and its benefits and problems associated with the integration of AI in language education. The survey questionnaire also collected demographic information, including age, gender, teaching experience, and technology proficiency. Semi-structured interviews with a subset of twenty teachers were conducted to gather qualitative data on how they perceive and experience artificial intelligence in language teaching and learning, the data was collected from interviews conducted using video conferencing platforms, such as Zoom or Skype, ranging from 45 to 60 minutes each. Kallio et al. (2016), the interview questions were formulated to stimulate more elaborate responses, enabling teachers to articulate their personal experiences, concerns, and perceptions linked to the incorporation of AI in the learning environment.

DATA ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

Table 1

Summary of Descriptive Statistics and AI Training Analysis

Variable	Statistic/Category	Value	Percentage/ Mean
Years of Experience	Average	8.5	-
	Median	13	-
	Minimum	1	-
	Maximum	24	-
	Standard Deviation	5.39	-
Gender	Male	16	38%
	Female	26	62%
Education Level	Bachelor's	38	90%
	Master's	4	10%
	PhD	0	0%
AI Training Received	Yes	28	66.6%
	No	14	33.3%
Knowledge of AI Tools	Trained (Mean)	4.21	-
	Not Trained (Mean)	3.46	-
Understanding AI Benefits	Trained (Mean)	4.36	-
	Not Trained (Mean)	4.00	-
AI for Engagement (EG)	Trained (Mean)	4.50	-
	Not Trained (Mean)	4.14	-
AI for Real-time Feedback (IF)	Trained (Mean)	4.21	-
	Not Trained (Mean)	4.07	-

The dataset offers insights into the demographics, educational qualifications, AI training, and perspectives of EFL teachers concerning the importance of AI in education (Table 1). The respondents possess an average teaching experience of 8.5 years, with a range from one to 24 years and moderate variability (SD = 5.39). Female educators comprise the majority at 62%, whereas their male counterparts account for 38%. Regarding education, the majority of respondents (90%) have a Bachelor's degree, 10% hold a Master's degree, and none have a PhD. Concerning AI training, 66.6% of

participants indicated they had received training, whilst 33.3% had not. Educators with AI training assessed their proficiency in AI tools more favorably (mean = 4.21) than those without such training (mean = 3.46). Trained respondents exhibited a superior comprehension of AI's advantages (mean = 4.36) compared to their untrained counterparts (mean = 4.00). Teachers with AI training demonstrated a greater consensus about AI's potential to improve student engagement via gamified learning, averaging a rating of 4.50, in contrast to 4.14 for those lacking training. Trained teachers rated AI's capacity for real-time feedback (IF) at 4.21, while untrained teachers rated it at 4.07, indicating a small preference for the former. These findings underscore the substantial impact of AI training on educators' knowledge and views, indicating that engagement with AI education is associated with a more positive outlook on its prospective uses in pedagogy. The demographic statistics and differing levels of expertise offer another source for comprehending the various viewpoints among EFL teachers.

Table 2

Perceived Benefits of AI Trained and Non-Trained

Aspect / Perceived Benefit	AI-Trained Avg. Rating (out of 5)	Non-Trained Avg. Rating (out of 5)	Correlation Coefficient
Knowledge of AI tools	4.21	3.46	-
Understanding AI benefits	4.36	4.00	-
Awareness of gamified learning	4.50	4.14	-
Real-time feedback (IF)	4.21	4.07	0.70
AI provides real-time feedback (IF) with the automation of tasks.	-	-	0.70
Enhancing student motivation through engagement (EG) with learning styles	-	-	0.45
Personalizing language instruction with analytics	-	-	0.39
Facilitating continuous learning	-	-	0.36
Enhancing collaborative learning	-	-	0.31

In turn, the trained AI teachers, across all aspects, evinced much better acquaintance and knowledge of AI technologies than their untrained counterparts, convincing proof, in effect, of the effectiveness of such training programs. Strong correlations with 0.70 for AI to provide real-time feedback and to automate tasks; at a medium level, motivational enhancements, instruction personalization, and facilitation of more frequent and collaborative learning point out its multifaceted benefits for educational contexts (Table 2).

Table 3

Teachers' Perceptions Toward the Readiness and Integration of AI

Category	Item	M	SD	Description
Readiness to Integrate AI	Knowledgeable about AI tools	3.71	1.22	Moderate familiarity with specific AI tools.
	Understanding AI benefits/limitations	4.19	0.74	High understanding of AI's potential benefits and limitations.
	Explored AI research	3.26	1.13	Moderate engagement with AI-related research.
	Awareness of AI vs. traditional tools	3.69	1.02	Moderate to high awareness of AI's uniqueness.
Perceived Benefits	Tailored instruction (P)	3.98	0.78	Strong agreement on AI's ability to personalize instruction.
	Automating tasks (EF)	3.95	0.76	High agreement on AI's support in automating tasks.
	Real-time feedback (IF)	4.12	0.59	Very high agreement on AI's ability to give immediate feedback.
	Motivation through gamification (EG)	4.26	0.63	Strong belief in gamified learning as an engaging method.

Category	Item	M	SD	Description
Perceived Challenges	Data privacy/security concerns	3.67	0.85	Moderate concern about data privacy and security.
	Ethical concerns (data usage)	3.74	0.91	Moderate to high ethical concerns regarding data usage.
	Biases in AI content	3.83	0.82	Moderate concern about potential biases in AI.
	Privacy/security of student data (DP)	3.83	0.93	Moderate concern about student data privacy.

The analysis of teachers' perceptions toward the readiness and integration of AI tools in language teaching reveals several key insights. In terms of readiness, teachers demonstrated a moderate level of familiarity with specific AI tools (mean = 3.71, SD = 1.22) and a strong understanding of the potential benefits and limitations of AI in language teaching (mean = 4.19, SD = 0.74). However, engagement with AI-related research was somewhat lower (mean = 3.26, SD = 1.13), indicating room for improvement in exploring the academic and practical implications of AI. Teachers showed moderate to high awareness of the distinctions between AI-powered tools and traditional digital learning tools (mean = 3.69, SD = 1.02) (Table 3).

Strong consensus existed on how AI might help improve the efficiency of personalized learning experiences (mean = 3.98, SD = 0.78) and free teachers from some tasks like grading and feedback to focus on other elements of teaching (mean = 3.95, SD = 0.76). They welcomed the fact that AI will be able to immediately provide feedback to learners (mean = 4.12, SD = 0.59) and engage learners with gamified learning experiences (mean = 4.26, SD = 0.63). These results suggest that educators perceive AI as improving efficiency and enhancing engagement in language instruction. Concerns: The teachers showed a moderate level of concern regarding data privacy and security (mean = 3.67, SD = 0.85) and ethical issues regarding data collection and usage (mean = 3.74, SD = 0.91). They also worried about possible biases in AI-generated content with a mean of 3.83 ± 0.82 and student data privacy collected by AI tools, with a mean of 3.83 ± 0.93. These concerns flag the necessity of having robust guards and guidelines from clear ethical rules for the development and usage

of these tools within educational settings. This would imply that though teachers are very optimistic about the benefits of integrating AI into language teaching, such as enhancing personalization, engaging learning, and efficiency, on the whole, teachers are still very skeptical about its ethical and practical implications. Most importantly, addressing these concerns through more training, policy development, and improvement of technology is key to increasing acceptance and its actual use within educational settings.

Table 4

Challenges, Group Comparisons, and Correlations in AI Adoption

Aspect	Details	Type	Analytical Insights
Challenges and Concerns			
Privacy and security of student data	Concerns about data misuse and security	Ethical/Technical	Highlights the need for compliance with data protection laws and transparent policies to mitigate trust deficits.
Bias in AI algorithms	Risk of unfair or inaccurate evaluations	Ethical/Technical	Bias can perpetuate inequities, necessitating robust testing and ethical oversight of AI systems.
Over-reliance on AI	Potentially reduces teacher-student engagement	Pedagogical	Emphasizes balancing AI tools with human interaction to preserve meaningful educational relationships.
High cost of AI tools	Financial constraints for schools	Financial	Affordability remains a major barrier, suggesting subsidies or cost-effective alternatives are critical.
Digital equity and access	Lack of infrastructure in underserved areas	Financial/Social	Infrastructure gaps hinder AI adoption, emphasizing the importance of equity

			in technology access.
Group Comparisons			
Training	Teachers with AI training rated knowledge, benefits, and engagement higher	Key Factor	Training is the most influential factor, significantly enhancing awareness, confidence, and readiness to integrate AI.
Experience	No significant difference in attitudes based on teaching experience	Limited Impact	Teaching experience does not strongly correlate with AI readiness, indicating openness to AI depends on exposure and training.
Education Level	Most respondents had Bachelor's degrees, limiting variability	Limited Impact	Educational level did not significantly impact AI perceptions, suggesting that readiness transcends formal qualifications.
Correlational Analysis			
Privacy concerns vs. AI feedback	Weak inverse correlation between privacy concerns and AI perceptions (-0.09)	Weak Negative	Teachers prioritizing data security show reduced enthusiasm for AI feedback, underscoring the need to address privacy fears to foster AI adoption.
Willingness to adjust teaching strategies	No significant correlation between attitudes toward AI	Not Significant	Willingness to adapt does not directly influence AI perceptions, pointing to the need for systemic support and resources to encourage integration.

A multi-faceted context in language education arises from various challenges, specific group factors, and their interrelations as per the inquiry into artificial intelligence incorporation. More specifically, educators express fears regarding privacy and security about the

misuse of data and the inadequacy of its safeguarding measures. The ethical and technical dilemmas underline the need for conformity with the protection rules for data and transparency in the handling of sensitive information. Fears of biases within AI algorithms are hindering the adoption of these technologies due to educators' fears about unfair or inaccurate assessments of students in language tests. Major financial hurdles persist because the high costs associated with AI technologies, coupled with a lack of infrastructure, are amplifying disparities, especially in under-resourced regions. For instance, 54.8% of teachers said they had not investigated research on the effects of AI, likely because of such obstacles. What is more, 29.3% of the teachers reported a moderate comfort level—Level 3; whereas only 21.95% attained the highest level of comfort—Level 5, hence exhibiting uneven preparedness among the teachers (Table 4).

While assessing factors affecting readiness for AI, training emerged as a strong determinant. Educators trained in AI averaged 4.5 in terms of confidence measures, compared to 3.43 for untrained educators. This reveals a huge significance after training in the development of professional attitudes that increase awareness and confidence in AI. On the other hand, relevant teaching experience and qualifications did not seem to influence readiness toward AI. The value of the correlation between years of teaching experience and readiness was -0.08, which means a very negligible side effect. Moreover, the score of readiness across educational levels is not very different: 3.93 for a Bachelor's degree, 3.98 for a Master's, and 4.15 for a High Diploma in addition to having a Bachelor's degree. These are signals of readiness beyond such conventional measures of tenure and formal education. Some of the findings from the correlation research include: Privacy concerns had a rather small negative association, -0.09, with positive perceptions of AI, indicating that those who valued data protection least or were at least concerned, were more inclined toward exuberance with AI feedback systems. Yet, the belief in the capability to enhance collaborative learning with AI showed a moderate positive association, 0.67, with educators' willingness to collaborate on AI integration. These results strengthen calls for training, security protocols, financing, and balancing so as not to lose the teacher-student interaction in an effective integration

of AI.

Qualitative Analysis

Table 5

Enthusiasm and Considerable Apprehensions Over AI Integration

Key Themes	Participant Insights
Privacy and Ethical Concerns	Teachers (e.g., T1, T5, T13) expressed significant concerns about data security, bias in AI algorithms, and fairness.
Financial and Infrastructure Barriers	Many (e.g., T2, T4, T15) highlighted high costs, poor digital infrastructure, and inequitable access as major barriers.
Training and Awareness	Participants (e.g., T3, T7, T19) stressed the importance of training while pointing out gaps in awareness and technical expertise.
Balancing AI and Pedagogy	Teachers (e.g., T6, T8, T17) emphasized the need for a blended approach to maintain teacher-student interaction.
Optimism About AI Potential	Optimistic participants (e.g., T10, T12, T20) praised AI's ability to personalize learning and recommended collaborative efforts.

The participants' qualitative input indicates both enthusiasm and considerable apprehensions over AI integration in language instruction (Table 5). Although many acknowledge AI's transformational potential, essential concerns regarding ethics, finance, and pedagogy must be resolved for successful adoption.

Privacy and ethical issues surfaced as the primary obstacles, with numerous participants highlighting concerns over data security and equity. T1 observed that "the absence of transparency regarding the utilization of student data undermines trust in these systems." T5 articulated that "bias in AI algorithms could unjustly affect students from diverse cultural backgrounds," underscoring significant ethical deficiencies in algorithmic design. These views highlight a prevalent skepticism towards contemporary AI systems when efficiency seems to take precedence over equity and data security. This skepticism presents an obstacle to AI implementation, indicating the necessity for stringent protections, such as transparent algorithms and adherence to

data privacy legislation, to enhance educators' trust. Financial limitations and insufficient infrastructure were identified as major obstacles, especially in underprivileged areas. T4 remarked, "In rural schools, we lack reliable internet; how can we consider implementing AI?" T2 stated, "AI tools are prohibitively costly for the majority of schools, rendering them accessible solely to a select elite." These comments demonstrate the underlying disparities that AI may exacerbate, particularly in resource-limited environments. In the absence of infrastructure investments and subsidies for AI technologies, the digital divide will be exacerbated, preventing numerous schools from capitalizing on technology breakthroughs. Mitigating these gaps necessitates policy-level actions and focused funding to guarantee that AI tools are accessible to the most vulnerable groups.

Training became the cornerstone of effective AI integration, highlighting substantial disparities between trained and untrained educators. T3 remarked, "The training was pivotal; I now possess confidence in utilizing AI to engage my students." T11 acknowledged, "I am uncertain about how to begin with AI tools; they appear excessively complex." These divergent experiences underscore the transforming capacity of professional development in fostering favorable attitudes towards AI. The deficiency in knowledge and technical proficiency among several educators indicates that training programs must be both accessible and customized to the particular requirements of language instructors. Scalable and context-aware programs are crucial for equipping educators with the competencies to adeptly utilize AI.

Notwithstanding its potential, excessive dependence on AI was identified as a pedagogical issue. T8 said, "AI may facilitate teaching, but it jeopardizes the personal connection we maintain with students." T6 expressed analogous apprehensions, remarking, "I am receptive to experimenting with AI, yet I fear it may undermine the fundamental nature of teaching." These concerns illustrate widespread anxieties around the dehumanization of education, with participants underscoring the necessity of maintaining the relationship dimensions of teaching. A hybrid strategy, incorporating AI as an auxiliary resource instead of a substitute, may alleviate this conflict by

harnessing AI's efficiency while preserving significant teacher-student engagement. Notwithstanding these limitations, participants exhibited confidence in AI's potential to transform education. T12 asserted, "AI has the potential to transform education, but only if we receive guidance on its effective utilization." T20 underscored the significance of collaborative endeavors, asserting, "Educators require platforms to exchange ideas and strategies; cooperation is essential for optimizing AI for all." This enthusiasm signifies a conviction in AI's capacity to customize learning and enhance efficiency. Collaborative methodologies, wherein educators exchange resources and exemplary practices, can cultivate a culture of innovation and inclusivity, expediting the integration of AI in language instruction.

The varied viewpoints of participants underscore the dual nature of AI integration in education: substantial potential alongside considerable hurdles. Ethical dilemmas, budgetary limitations, and apprehensions regarding excessive dependence highlight the obstacles to adoption, whereas enthusiasm for personalized learning presents a potential solution. To guarantee equitable and effective integration, stakeholders must emphasize ethical precautions, address disparities through targeted finance, and invest in educator training. By integrating AI's capabilities with the human aspects of instruction and promoting collaboration among instructors, AI can serve as a potent instrument to augment, rather than obstruct, language education.

DISCUSSION

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in language education offers a transformative potential, although it is mitigated by constraints that underscore its preliminary application. The findings of this study highlight significant topics related to EFL teachers' preparedness, perceived advantages, and obstacles to AI integration, situated within the context of the current literature.

Preparedness and Professional Advancement

The study indicates a moderate level of preparedness among EFL

teachers, consistent with Alnasib (2023), who found a substantial correlation between AI integration readiness and both training and perceived advantages of AI. Trained educators have greater confidence in utilizing AI tools, corroborating Zhai et al.'s (2021) claim that professional development is essential for AI integration. The deficiency in exposure to AI-related research, as evidenced by this study (mean = 3.26), reflects the findings of Polak et al. (2022), highlighting a gap in educators' involvement with academic discussions on AI. This inconsistency indicates an immediate necessity for scalable, contextually tailored training programs. The Horizon Report (2018) highlighted the need to reconceptualize educators' duties in the AI era, a recommendation that has only been partially implemented, as demonstrated by the varying confidence levels across educated and unskilled teachers in this study. Hadwin and Oshige (2011) emphasize that direct engagement with AI is essential for educators to recognize its potential to improve learning outcomes. Consequently, professional development initiatives must prioritize not only tool proficiency but also the pedagogical transformations necessary for AI-enhanced instruction.

Perceived Advantages of Artificial Intelligence in Language Instruction

Educators in this research recognized AI's capacity for individualized learning, automated feedback, and gamification, aligning with Amin's (2023) conclusions regarding AI's proficiency in customizing training for diverse learners. The strong consensus about AI's capacity to deliver real-time feedback (mean = 4.12) corroborates the findings of Gholami et al. (2025), which illustrated AI's effectiveness in improving language practice efficiency. Teachers' enthusiasm for gamification (mean = 4.26) corresponds with Zhai et al.'s (2021) acknowledgment of AI's ability to enhance student engagement. Nonetheless, skepticism persists regarding AI's complete replacement of human educators, reflecting apprehensions articulated by Ahmed (2023) and Tossell et al. (2024). Students prioritize teacher-mediated feedback and interactive experiences above AI-generated content, highlighting the necessity for a balanced, hybrid instructional strategy. Although AI can enhance instruction, it

cannot duplicate the detailed, context-specific feedback offered by human educators.

Obstacles and Impediments

The results underscore considerable problems, encompassing ethical dilemmas, budgetary obstacles, and technical constraints. Teachers exhibit moderate concerns over data privacy (mean = 3.67), mirroring prevalent anxieties noted by Li & Mak (2022) and Guzman & Lewis (2019). The absence of transparency in AI algorithms amplifies these problems, potentially resulting in bias and unfairness, as stated by T5. Confronting these difficulties necessitates strong ethical principles and institutional backing, as suggested by Luckin (2017). Financial limitations significantly hinder AI adoption, especially in marginalized areas. The elevated expenses of AI tools and insufficient infrastructure referenced in this study align with the findings of Cowie & Alizadeh (2022). In the absence of targeted investments and equitable access initiatives, AI may exacerbate educational inequities, a worry highlighted by Lotze (2018). Furthermore, excessive dependence on AI has surfaced as an educational issue. Teachers' concerns over the decline of teacher-student interactions, as highlighted by T8 and T6, align with Sumakul's (2019) cautions about the dehumanization of education. The incorporation of AI must prioritize its function as a helpful tool, maintaining the relationship aspects of teaching.

Ethical and Educational Implications

The ethical implications of AI in education are important to its implementation. Concerns regarding data misuse and algorithmic bias, as emphasized in this study, align with the findings of Knox (2020). These concerns require transparent policies and ethical oversight to foster confidence among educators. The possibility of AI unintentionally perpetuating prejudices, as shown by T5, emphasizes the necessity for thorough validation of AI tools before their deployment in educational settings. From an educational standpoint, educators underscored the significance of sustaining substantive contacts, consistent with Ahmed's (2023) findings. This study

underscores that AI ought to augment, rather than supplant, conventional instructional methodologies. T20 proposes that collaborative frameworks may enhance knowledge sharing among educators, promoting a culture of creativity and critical engagement with AI technologies.

Consequences for Policy and Practice

The results hold substantial consequences for politicians and school administrators. Investment in infrastructure and accessible AI solutions is essential for bridging the digital divide, as highlighted by Zhai et al. (2021). Moreover, prioritizing the establishment of comprehensive professional development programs is essential to equip educators with the requisite skills for effective AI integration. Policy frameworks must address ethical considerations, ensure adherence to data protection standards, and promote algorithmic openness. Involving educators in the collaborative development of AI policies may bolster trust and adoption, consistent with the participatory methodologies proposed by Roll & Wylie (2016).

CONCLUSION

AI can be viewed as a great opportunity to enhance educational outcomes, which, though, heavily relies on educators' readiness and taking into account possible concerns on their part. This paper discusses some issues relevant to integrating AI into language education: the rather average state of educators' readiness, the potential of AI for personalized learning, and ethical, financial, and pedagogical challenges. The results obtained in the study are interpreted within the context of available literature and indicate the multi-layered nature of ChatGPT integration into EFL classes. The teachers are moderately ready to adopt AI, influenced by professional development. Teachers who received AI training showed greater familiarity, confidence, and positive views regarding AI tools compared to those who did not receive any training. This corroborates research by Alnasib (2023) and Zhai et al. (2021), which points to the necessity of professional development that fits the context in which

educators are supposed to practice and is accessible, providing them with much-needed competencies for AI integration. Identified gains include personalized learning experiences, timely feedback, and increased excitement due to game-based learning, as echoed by Amin (2023) and Gholami et al. (2025). In turn, this has led to the perception that AI is going to replace educators, hinting at the need for a hybrid approach whereby AI enhances the presence of traditional face-to-face teaching but does not replace it.

These include high ethical considerations of data privacy and algorithmic bias (Li & Mak, 2022; Knox, 2020) and economic barriers regarding high costs and missing infrastructure in underprivileged areas (Cowie & Alizadeh, 2022; Lotze, 2018). The findings of this study call for policy measures, transparent guidelines, and investment in infrastructure that can soften these challenges and create trust among educators. The research identified that AI integration is a collaborative effort by educators, policy framers, and technology developers. There is a need for a hybrid model of teaching where AI would supplement, not replace, human interactive contact. Further, it outlines the need for investment in professional development, equal availability of AI technologies, and ethical frameworks. Longitudinal studies into teacher perceptions over time and the impact of AI on student achievement remain important areas where future research is needed to inform future AI integration efforts.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Sl No.	Questions	Responses				
	Demographic Information					
1	What is your age?					
2	What is your gender?					
3	How many years of experience do you have in teaching EFL?					
4	What is your highest level of education?					
	Readiness to Integrate AI Tools	**SD**	**D**	**N**	**A**	**SA**
	Awareness and Familiarity with AI in Language Teaching					
5	I am knowledgeable about specific AI tools designed for language learning, such as language learning apps, chatbots, or virtual tutors.					
6	I understand the potential benefits and limitations of using AI in language teaching.					
7	I have explored research or articles on the impact of AI on language learning outcomes.					
8	I am aware of the differences between AI-powered tools and traditional digital learning tools.					
	Beliefs and Attitudes Towards AI in Language Instruction					
9	I believe AI can provide personalized learning experiences tailored to individual student needs.					
10	I think AI can assist in identifying and addressing learning gaps in students.					
11	I am confident that AI can help in creating more engaging and interactive language lessons.					
12	I believe that the use of AI in language teaching can help to differentiate instruction for diverse learners.					
	Technical Skills and Preparedness					
13	I am comfortable navigating and using various AI tools for educational purposes.					
14	I have experience integrating new technologies into my teaching practice,					

	which can support the adoption of AI tools.					
15	I can evaluate and select appropriate AI tools for different language teaching objectives.					
16	I can monitor and assess student progress using AI tools.					
	Willingness to Engage with AI in Teaching					
17	I am open to experimenting with AI tools and learning from any challenges that arise.					
18	I am eager to collaborate with peers to integrate AI into our collective teaching practices.					
19	I am willing to adjust my teaching strategies to effectively incorporate AI technologies.					
20	I am committed to staying informed about new AI developments and how they can be applied in language teaching.					
	Perceived Benefits and Challenges of AI Integration					
	Perceived Benefits of AI in Language Instruction					
21	AI can adapt to different learning styles, making language instruction more effective for diverse learners.					
22	AI technologies can facilitate immersive language learning experiences through simulations and virtual reality.					
23	AI-powered analytics can provide teachers with data-driven insights into student performance and learning progress.					
24	AI tools can enhance collaborative learning by enabling peer interactions and group activities in digital environments.					
25	AI-driven language learning platforms can provide access to authentic language materials and real-world language use.					
26	AI can support the continuous learning of students outside the classroom by offering supplementary resources.					
	Challenges and Concerns about AI Integration					
27	The high cost of AI tools and platforms may limit their accessibility for some educational institutions. (Reverse-scored)					

28	I am concerned that over-reliance on AI tools may reduce opportunities for meaningful teacher-student interactions. (Reverse-scored)					
29	The integration of AI in language teaching may raise issues related to digital equity and access. (Reverse-scored)					
30	I worry about the potential biases in AI algorithms that could affect the fairness of language assessments. (Reverse-scored)					
31	AI tools may not fully understand the cultural nuances of language, potentially leading to misunderstandings in language instruction. (Reverse-scored)					
32	I believe the use of AI in language teaching may require extensive teacher training and professional development. (Reverse-scored)					
33	The high cost of AI tools and platforms may limit their accessibility for some educational institutions. (Reverse-scored)					
	Ethical and Privacy Considerations of AI in Language Teaching					
34	I am concerned about the data privacy and security of students when using AI-powered language learning tools. (Reverse-scored)					
35	The use of AI tools in language teaching may raise ethical concerns regarding data collection and usage. (Reverse-scored)					
36	I believe it is important to have transparent policies on how AI tools handle student data.					
37	I am worried that AI tools may inadvertently perpetuate stereotypes or biases in language content. (Reverse-scored)					
38	The use of AI in language instruction should be regulated to ensure it adheres to ethical standards.					
	Perceptions of AI Integration in EFL Teaching					
	Main Benefits					
39	AI can tailor language instruction to individual students' needs, adapting lessons based on their proficiency levels and					

	learning styles. (P)					
40	AI tools can automate tasks such as grading and feedback, allowing teachers to focus on more complex aspects of teaching. (EF)					
41	AI provides real-time feedback on language exercises, helping students improve their language skills more rapidly. (IF)					
42	Interactive AI tools can enhance student motivation and engagement through gamified learning experiences. (EG)					
	Main Challenges					
43	Adapting existing curricula and lesson plans to incorporate AI tools may be complex and time-consuming. (IC)					
44	Technical difficulties such as software compatibility and internet connectivity can hinder the effective use of AI tools. (TI)					
45	Extensive training is required for teachers to effectively utilize AI tools in their teaching practices. (TN)					
46	Ensuring the privacy and security of student data collected by AI tools is a significant concern. (DP)					

***Key: SD**: Strongly Disagree; **D**: Disagree; **N**: Neither agree nor disagree; **A**: Agree; **SA**: Strongly Agree.*

Personalisation (P); Efficiency (EF); Instant Feedback (IF); Engagement (EG); Integration Complexity (IC); Technical Issues (TI); Training Needs (TN); Data Privacy (DP)

*Note: References to 'AI tools' in this survey pertain specifically to Generative AI applications, such as ChatGPT.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Sahal R. Alshammari, Department of Languages and Translation, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Northern Border University, Saudi Arabia
Email address: Sahal.alshammari@nbu.edu.sa

Amrendra Kumar Singh, Department of Anthropology & Tribal Studies, Central University of Jharkhand, India
Email address: amar.jnu@gmail.com

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