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Uneasy Integration: Teachers' Views on the Role of AI in English Language Education

دمج غير سهل: آراء الأساتذة حول دور الذكاء الاصطناعي في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية

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Abstract:

The integration of artificial intelligence in higher education has raised a controversial debate between advocates and opponents. This research seeks to investigate teachers' views on artificial intelligence role in English language education. It explores their perceptions and experiences regarding the integration of artificial intelligence into teaching practices. A qualitative method was adopted, using semi-structured interviews with eight teachers at three English Departments. Data were analysed through an inductive thematic analysis. Findings indicated that teachers had positive perceptions and experiences towards artificial intelligence adoption as a useful supplementary tool that should not replace teachers. They emphasised important benefits for teachers and students, but they reported certain challenges and concerns. Thus, they underscored the importance of professional training and the necessity of considering ethical standards to integrate artificial intelligence properly and responsibly. These results offer beneficial implications for teachers, researchers, and policy makers to effectively integrate artificial intelligence in English language education.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence role, English language education, teachers' views, interviews, thematic analysis.

الملخص

أثار دمج الذكاء الاصطناعي في التعليم العالي جدلاً واسعاً بين المؤيدين والمعارضين. يسعى هذا البحث إلى دراسة آراء الأساتذة حول دور الذكاء الاصطناعي في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية. البحث يستكشف تصورات الأساتذة وخبراتهم فيما يتعلق بدمج الذكاء الاصطناعي في الممارسات التعليمية. وقد اعتمدت الدراسة منهجاً نوعياً، باستخدام مقابلات شبه منظمة مع ثمانية أساتذة في ثلاثة أقسام للغة الإنجليزية. تم تحليل البيانات من خلال تحليل موضوعي استقرائي. أشارت النتائج إلى أن الأساتذة لديهم تصورات وخبرات إيجابية تجاه تبني الذكاء الاصطناعي كأداة تكميلية مفيدة لا ينبغي أن تحل محل الأساتذة. وقد أكدوا على فوائده المهمة للأساتذة والطلاب، لكنهم أشاروا إلى بعض التحديات والمخاوف. وبالتالي، شددوا على أهمية التدريب المهني وضرورة مراعاة المعايير الأخلاقية لدمج الذكاء الاصطناعي بشكل سليم ومسؤول. تقدم هذه النتائج أثراً مفيداً للأساتذة والباحثين وصناع القرار لدمج الذكاء الاصطناعي بفعالية في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: دور الذكاء الاصطناعي، تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية، آراء الأساتذة، المقابلات، التحليل الموضوعي.

1. INTRODUCTION

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into educational contexts has been increasing as it has transformed pedagogical strategies and methods worldwide. Within the sphere of English language education, the use of AI tools can personalize learning experiences, give insights on students' progress, reshape conventional English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching and learning methods and

strategies, sustain motivation and engagement, and automatise certain administrative tasks. However, it raises challenges and issues for teachers who aspire to use AI technologies to enhance their teaching methodologies, adapt to new technologies, and improve learning outcomes. It can also lead to students' overreliance, loss of their critical thinking abilities, and plagiarism.

Despite the increased attention in

precursory studies to integrating AI in educational settings, namely exploring EFL teachers' perceptions and attitudes (e.g. Hazaymeh et al., 2024; Resyadi, 2025), research on Algerian EFL teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding AI integration (e.g. Bessadat & Korichi, 2025; Djeghoubbi & Saad, 2024) is still little and needs more studies to be conducted. Thus, this study seeks to fill in this void and add to prior research by investigating teachers' views on the role of AI in English language education. It specifically seeks to explore the perceptions of Algerian EFL teachers towards AI integration in teaching practices. This is with a focus on understanding teachers' experiences and the advantages and challenges associated with AI integration. The following questions were addressed:

1. What are the perceptions and experiences of Algerian teachers towards AI adoption in English language education?
2. What is the role of AI adoption in English language education?
3. What challenges are associated with AI integration?
4. What concerns are raised by teachers regarding AI integration?

2. Artificial Intelligence in English Language Education

To fully understand and discuss the intricacies associated with AI adoption in English language education, it is necessary to set up a plain comprehension of the term AI. Generally, AI embraces a range of technologies that stimulate human capacities and intelligence to comprehend, learn, and even interact with the outside world (Holmes & Tuomi, 2022). Concepts, such as "thinking" and "intelligent" machines, were firstly introduced by Turing (1950), and it was maintained that creating fine-state

machines with outputs that could be identical to those given by humans is feasible (Turková et al., 2025). Coined by McCarthy et al. (1955), the concept of AI pertains to any "smart machines" and "computer systems" able to perform human-like, intelligent tasks, such as decision-making, reasoning, and problem-solving. In simple terms, AI studies intelligent behaviour to grasp human intelligence and produce helpful machines (Garnham, 2017). It is also crucial to differentiate between AI and generative AI (Gen-AI). The latter refers to AI technology that creates human-like and new content, like texts, images, codes, or videos with regard to complex prompts (Lim et al., 2023).

The integration of AI-based tools into numerous features of teaching and learning, such as assessment, syllabus design, and learning analytics is widely increasing in higher education, and it has an enormous potential to transform the language learning process (Chiu et al., 2023; Gao et al., 2024). AI has become an important assisting tool in the teaching process as it can individualise teaching, give access to several educational sources, and enhance work efficiency (Duda, et al., 2025). As Resyadi (2025) argued, AI tools can assist in developing learning situations that adapt to learners' needs, ensure personalized feedback, and help teachers to design successful educational materials and strategies.

In particular, AI integration in the teaching of EFL is increasing and remoulding traditional practices. Thus, AI adoption has helped to deal with certain challenges, like the lack of instant feedback, insufficient native language exposure, and active interaction (Shi et al., 2025). As an example, the use of AI chatbots has sustained interactional exchanges through

giving timely conversational feedback, promoting authentic settings, providing customised assistance, and enhancing students' language skills, vocabulary learning, pronunciation, and grammar (Li & Peng, 2021). AI has revolutionised EFL contexts by providing novel methods and approaches for both teachers and learners, which improves their experiences and strategies (Yamijala et al., 2025). In this respect, AI adoption can lessen teachers' workload, increase their efficacy through adaptive tools, and help them adopt new teaching practices and design lesson plans, learning tasks, or gauging systems (Dai & Liu, 2024). Furthermore, teachers can automate grading systems that help to assess students' writing by giving the necessary feedback about linguistic capacities and areas for development. AI can also affect students' psycho-emotional aspects, like enjoyment and motivation (Xin & Derakhshan, 2025), autonomy (Mahendra et al., 2023), willingness to communicate (Kim & Su, 2024), and engagement and involvement (Dai & Liu, 2024). Thus, AI technologies can give personalized, adaptive learning and feedback that meet students' needs, preferences, and proficiency degree which raise learning outcomes, boost language learning, and make it more engaging and enjoyable (Shi et al., 2025).

In spite of these benefits, AI adoption in EFL classrooms presents some challenges and raises certain concerns. As an example, Dong et al. (2021) mentioned technical skilfulness and price needed to maintain AI systems and the necessity to guarantee that its algorithms are impartial and are culturally relevant. In addition, Yu and Guo (2023) introduced common issues, such as "data security and privacy", "personalization and fairness", "opacity and inexplicability",

and "effectiveness and reliability", all of which require users to be cautious to engage in systematic and safe learning experiences. A vital concern is the scarcity of continuing teachers' professional development and training to successfully integrate AI in EFL contexts (Crompton & Burke, 2023). Researchers also referred to certain concerns, namely interaction threats, negative effects on students' research and writing skills or creativity, hallucination together with overreliance on AI tools that can influence their critical thinking capacities negatively (Hagendorff, 2024; Spector & Ma, 2019).

3. Teachers' Views on AI Role in English Language Education

Research has examined teachers' views on the role of AI in English language education. A number of studies have explored teachers' perceptions towards AI adoption in EFL classrooms, among which are the following. Sumakul et al. (2022) probed into the advantages and disadvantages of AI use in EFL settings. The analysis of the interviews indicated that EFL teachers regard AI integration helpful for teachers and students alike, especially to enhance education quality. Another study explored the perspectives of 17 instructors on AI adoption, namely ChatGPT, in EFL classes (Syafriyani et al., 2024). The results showed that the respondents admitted AI capacity to design advanced lesson plans and generate more ideas, personalize instruction, and boost language skills practice though they raised some concerns, as limited teacher-student interaction, conventional values undermining, in addition to ethical issues like bias and misinformation. Similar findings were reported by Hazaymeh et al. (2024). 46 EFL teachers answered an online survey and

argued that AI integration can help them to customise teaching approaches, facilitate learning, and enhance students' motivation and engagement. They also pointed that financial and technical issues can affect AI adoption. Resyadi (2025) investigated the benefits and perils associated with AI integration from 200 EFL novice teachers' standpoints using a survey and interviews. The results revealed that the advantages included better lesson plans, new assessment strategies, enhanced creativity and engagement, and the challenges included lack of infrastructure, inadequate digital literacy, and insufficient understanding of appropriate and advanced AI use. Thus, it was suggested that training sessions, ethical AI literacy programmes, and institutional assistance are required to deal with these challenges.

Within in the Algerian context, a few studies delved into the research regarding AI integration in EFL contexts. For instance, Djeghoubbi and Saad (2024) used semi-structured interviews with 5 teachers to explore their perceptions towards the integration of large language models into their teaching practices to improve students' writing skill. The respondents recognised the usefulness and potential of these models to give learners personalized feedback and enhance their engagement. However, AI dependency and academic integrity were among the major concerns mentioned. Benaicha and Semmoud (2024) investigated 200 EFL teachers' attitudes towards AI integration using a semi-structured questionnaire. The findings indicated that respondents have positive perceptions towards AI integration, but they have expressed their concerns about some issues, namely the change in their roles. Bessada and Korichi (2025) explored the perceptions

of 15 EFL instructors towards the integration of AI-based assessment techniques in writing. The analysis of the questionnaire results showed that most of the respondents did not use those assessment strategies, but 10% of the teachers who used them reported positive effects of this type of assessment as it can give objective and systematic feedback and lessen workload. However, they raised concerns about its cost, reliability, and the loss of students' interaction.

4. Research Design and Methodology

Data were collected from eight Algerian teachers at English Departments across three universities: Oum El Bouaghi, Guelma, and Souk Ahras. Following a qualitative method, the study used semi-structured interviews, with open-ended and closed questions, and a non-probability convenience sampling method to get a better understanding of teachers' perceptions, experiences, and perceived perils and benefits of AI integration. The participants answered the interview after ensuring the ethical basics of volitional participation and informed consent.

5. Results and Discussion

To analyse the data, a thematic analysis was used (Braun et al., 2019). Following are the emerging themes supported by sample answers of teachers and discussion.

The first emerging theme was related to AI perceptions and experiences that reflect teachers' familiarity and use of AI tools in EFL contexts, which gives answer to the first research question. The findings showed that teachers are fairly, moderate, or very familiar with AI tools, especially ChatGPT, Grammarly, automated assessment tools, and chatbots. Ahmed expressed his familiarity with AI

technologies by saying “I am very familiar with these tools, not only from a pedagogical standpoint but also from a research perspective. My work in Applied Linguistics and my use of Python for linguistic analysis have allowed me to explore how Large Language Models can be leveraged for corpus building and academic writing”. This demonstrates that the necessity to and the extent of utilizing AI for educational purposes raises acquaintance with its main tools and technologies and influences teachers’ decision of whether to use it or not. But, most of the teachers revealed that they did not use AI in their classrooms though they admitted its advantages and affordances and consider it as an assisting tool: “Primarily, it is a support because it saves time and aids in different tasks” (Amine).

The second research question was related to role of AI adoption in English language education. The findings showed that teachers recognised AI role due to its benefits for both teachers and students, which is the second emerging theme. As Samira reported: “For students: It can be a source of authentic language exposure, enhance language competence through providing correct language forms, rich vocabulary, variety of discourse genres used in appropriate contexts which can result in developing students’ communicative competence, and promote autonomy. For teachers: It can help in saving time and effort. It can be used as an additional resource for providing knowledge, effective instructional strategies, designing lesson plans, suggesting activities, tasks, and teaching materials. It can be a source of personalized learning for both of them: teachers and students”. Furthermore, teachers argued that language skills can

benefit from AI adoption, as noted by Ismail “All [language] skills can benefit from AI integration because, for instance, students can use AI tools to practise all those skills: They read what AI provides, they can talk and listen to AI Chatbots, etc.”. Ahmed corroborated this view as follows: “Reading and writing first in terms of activities. In terms of lesson preparations and group organization listening and speaking second”. In particular, Sara argued that the writing skill can mostly benefit from AI adoption by saying: “I believe writing is the skill that can most benefit from AI integration. AI tools like Grammarly or Quill Bot can provide students with immediate personalized feedback on their writing, particularly clarity, cohesion, punctuation, and organization”. In addition, AI can support communication and interaction, as Hafida explained: “AI can support communicative language teaching, especially because AI systems are becoming more conversational. They can interact with learners, sustain discussions, and simulate communication. AI can also support listening and speaking by detecting pronunciation issues, correcting mistakes, and providing feedback. While it cannot replace human interaction, it can complement communicative teaching by offering additional opportunities for interaction and practice”. AI can also support personalized learning for students: “through enhancing self-directed learning, promoting autonomy, providing immediate feedback about grammar, language use, rich exposure to language styles, registers, etc.” (Samira). These results go in line with those of previous research (e.g. Bessadat & Korichi, 2025; Dai & Liu, 2024; Djeghoubbi & Saad, 2024; Li & Peng, 2021; Shi et al., 2025).

In particular, teachers acknowledge

the benefits of AI technologies, especially outside the classroom, as they are pivotal and can be utilised for different purposes. Samira summarised this view as follows: “Yes, I have used some AI tools, mainly before the classroom session but rarely during it for preparing lessons, saving time, finding sources, solving some knowledge-related issues or problems, etc.”. Ismail added that these tools can be used to give feedback, “So far, I have not used AI tools in my classes. I only use Grammarly sometimes when reviewing M2 and PhD students’ works (dissertations, theses, research papers, etc.)” Teachers mentioned some types of AI tools that can be used due to their utility, as Adam added: “Mostly all of them can be used to summarise and simplify content (LLMs); some other types are used for designing graphics, word maps, videos, etc., others for quizzes and games, all that you can imagine”. Ahmed stated that “Gen-AI (ChatGPT/Claude) can be used to generate authentic materials and simulate academic debates in addition to corpus analysis tools to analyse frequency and collocations in Academic English”. In other words, teachers mainly used AI tools to lessen their workload outside the classroom and enhance their teaching strategies within the classroom at a lesser extent, depending on the learning situation requirements. These findings go with the ones of other studies (e.g. Dai & Liu 2024).

The results also showed a diversity in opinions as most of the teachers did not use AI within the classroom confines, and when used, it was to save time and effort while doing professional tasks. Some AI tools, as Ahlem noted, can be used to make effective presentations: “Canva and Kahoot although they are not entirely AI tools but have some AI features. Canva creates engaging

presentations, and Kahoot can be used for vocabulary revision, grammar practice, reading/listening checks; it helps in maintaining learner engagement and facilitates formative assessment”. Furthermore, Ahmed described some classroom tasks, such as linguistic tasks, wherein AI was used: “All types of lessons and thesis drafting. Sometimes my students use AI to detect TYPES, TOKENS, LEMMA in Applied linguistics” in addition to writing tasks, as argued by Ismail “When students are required to write about a topic, they do not have much information about, they can be allowed to look for some information about it using AI, and then synthesize those ideas on their own”. In addition, teachers who used AI claimed that their teaching practices changed since its use, as being succinctly stated by Adam “Yes, greatly. It saves a lot of time in lesson design and makes lessons more attractive by integrating interesting visual aids, what enhances learners’ motivation and encourages interaction”. AI can also affect students’ autonomy and motivation, as Hafida reported, “AI can positively affect students’ motivation by increasing engagement and providing immediate support. It can also support learner autonomy by allowing students to work independently, seek explanations, and practice on their own, as long as it does not replace thinking or effort”. These results go in harmony with those previous studies (e.g. Kim & Su, 2024; Mahendra et al., 2023; Xin & Derakhshan, 2025).

Despite these benefits, teachers pointed out certain challenges regarding AI integration, which is the third emerging theme. This gives answer to the third research question related to those challenges. The first challenge is related to

the difficulty of keeping pace with new technologies and students' AI awareness, as Hafida maintained, "One of the main challenges is keeping up with the rapid pace of AI development. New tools appear constantly, making it difficult to stay informed. Another challenge is remaining one step ahead of students, who often belong to a highly tech-savvy generation". In addition, overreliance and validity of information were examples of challenges mentioned by Amine. This view was detailed by Samira, who stated that certain challenges were related to students' psychological features or assessment procedures that hinder AI adoption: "We can face difficulties in implementing AI in the classroom, such as students' lack of motivation and overreliance on AI without relying on personal mental and cognitive abilities like critical thinking, questioning, and reflecting. Difficulties of assessment; for instance, when correcting students' productions (mainly written ones), it is difficult to decide if it is human-produced or AI-generated. Therefore, you may be confused which one is really human-performed". Challenge was tied to AI lack of understanding or explanation of certain pertinent concepts: "AI is not capable of always explaining concepts pertaining to language, particularly exceptions to grammatical rules. It tends to overgeneralize, requiring constant verification of the content it generates" (Sara). As Ahmed and Ismail noted, other challenges pertain the necessity of tools needed to implement AI and proper training in AI use, as mentioned by Crompton and Burke (2023).

To deal with these challenges, especially as most teachers claimed their scepticism in their capacities to effectively

use AI, teachers highlighted the need for professional development as they rarely had the opportunity for such training. For instance, one teacher underlined the requisite for professional training "that focuses on concrete classroom applications, such as using AI to design grammar activities, support writing practice, and how to illicit useful accurate feedback. Learning through real examples, demonstrations, and practice tasks would help teachers integrate AI effectively into teaching" (Sara). Ahlem elaborated this viewpoint and mentioned some kinds of professional training, such as "Training on practical AI tools, holding workshops, teacher communities, seminars, and regular meetings to guide ethical and pedagogical use, sharing best practices and strategies for AI-supported conduct". These are in addition to AI literacy training programmes, regulating AI use and adoption, and careful supervision for students, (Leila). These findings go along the views of some researchers (Dong et al., 2021; Yu & Guo, 2023).

With respect to these challenges, teachers also indicated certain barriers that make it difficult to integrate AI. These are tied to technical, insitutional, or pedagogical ones: "In the Algerian context, the main barrier to AI integration is the lack of resources and technical means. Apparent resistance from some teachers is often linked to the fact that technology does not necessarily make their work easier and may even increase their workload" (Hafida). Samira added other barriers, such as financial and administrative: "Yes, there are a lot of barriers that prevent both teachers and students from adequate AI integration in EFL classrooms, such as financial issues mainly for students. Technical issues related to lack of necessary equipment or means for

using AI effectively, such as internet access, availability of digital devices, lack of professional development in terms of AI tools' mastery. Also, administrative constraints". These views corroborate with the ones mentioned in prior studies (e.g. Crompton & Burke, 2023; Dong et al., 2021).

The last question especially pored over any concerns teachers raise in relation to AI adoption. In fact, teachers expressed some concerns with respect to AI integration that emerged in the fourth theme. For example, Sara delineated AI misuse equated with its overreliance to accomplish academic tasks: "I am very concerned particularly about students' overreliance on AI. I already noticed that my students tend to reach for such tools first when faced with questions related to their lectures rather than first attempting to think about the answer". She went further to explain that this directly affects students' language development and critical thinking skills: "Overreliance on AI can lead to students not engaging in critical thinking as they may accept AI generated answers as correct automatically without questioning or analysing them. Additionally, while it can offer great opportunities for practicing language skills, AI tends to value standard patterns and common structures, which may limit students' exposure to creative language use, limiting their language development". In other words, teachers agreed that AI overreliance can reduce critical thinking and creativity and hinder language development, though as Ahmed noted, it is "an issue that needs experimentation" to examine it carefully and investigate the effect of its proper use on students' skills. The findings also raised certain concerns, namely ethical ones, related to plagiarism, academic integrity,

and inaccuracy of AI content. This view is sated clearly by Samira: "We are highly concerned because this may seriously impact the quality of teaching as well as that of learning. Even though AI can help develop our language competence, provide us with plenty of real-life instances, it can be a misleading source of incorrect, erroneous, unauthentic language inputs and wrong references which do not prevent authorship and then risk of plagiarism. In addition, teachers'/students' overreliance on AI tools' use when performing their tasks does not help in providing fair assessment or feedback". These are in addition to bias and privacy concerns, as mentioned by Sara "One major issue is the handling of students' personal data, as AI platforms often collect, store, or analyse sensitive information. There is also the risk of bias in AI-generated content, which could misrepresent linguistic or cultural norms". These concerns were mainly expressed in prior research (Bessadat & Korichi, 2025; Djeghoubbi & Saad, 2024; Hagendorff, 2024; Spector & Ma, 2019; Yu & Guo, 2023).

Therefore, teachers underscored certain guidelines and policies that need to be set up to ethically and responsibly integrate AI in their classrooms and control its use by students as well. For example, Hafida argued that those guidelines are necessary, mainly for classroom assessment: "Ethical guidelines and policies should mainly focus on the use of AI in tests and examinations, as this directly affects the credibility and fairness of the educational system. While AI use in teaching and learning can remain a pedagogical choice, its use in assessment requires clear regulation". Sara expanded upon this viewpoint and specified some examples; she maintained that "These should include

guidelines on data privacy and student consent on the use of their data with AI. Most importantly, transparency in AI use should be prioritized, requiring making flagging when and how AI tools are employed". Leila particularly emphasised those guidelines with regard to students: "I think at the level of each university, they should set platforms to detect AI-generated content. They should hold workshops and seminars on the ethical use of AI and should raise learners' awareness on how to use it in an intelligent way without depending on them or overusing them. They should also set some guidelines and punishment for excessive use of AI tools".

6. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to probe into the issue of AI adoption in English language education. It investigated Algerian teachers' views on AI role in English language education. It specifically explored their perceptions and experiences regarding AI integration in EFL classrooms. The findings indicated that teachers showed a fair to a high degree of familiarity of AI tools, namely ChatGPT, Grammarly, or assessment tools. But, the majority of them did not integrate AI in their teaching practices though they highly acknowledge its role and benefits at many levels. They mentioned some challenges they faced or might face when using AI in the classroom or barriers that hindered the integration. To address those challenges, policy makers and institutions must implement AI literacy programmes and professional training sessions that can help to adopt AI effectively and supply the necessary resources that aid teachers in AI adoption. Teachers raised certain concerns related to plagiarism, overreliance, academic integrity, bias, and ethics. To use AI ethically and responsibly,

teachers underlined the need to establish certain institutional guidelines and policies to control AI use and integration by teachers and students. Future research should use other tools together with interviews and rely on focus groups to collect data or make comparative studies between the perceptions of teachers and students. In addition, more teachers can be targeted to participate in future studies, focusing on their demographic variables, teaching experience, majors, or other variables. Teachers especially need to raise students' awareness about plagiarism and use reliable checkers to detect it. They should not be sceptical about using AI in their classrooms and should change their roles from just providing knowledge to guiding students in their AI use. Thus, they should use some AI-driven platforms to provide personalized, timely feedback and help students study alone, teach them how to assess AI-generated content critically, and stress the ethical use of AI. Importantly, they should use AI as an assisting tool to reduce their workload by designing engaging lessons, helpful reading texts, and varied assessment tasks.

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