REVISTA KRONOS

Artificial Intelligence: Its influence on EFL lessons in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT   Lately, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a milestone in educational issues, hence it has spread out to promote self-learning in the academic world. Undoubtedly, AI has brought many advantages although it might reduce the learners' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Concordantly, the main purpose of this research was to analyze the pros and cons of using AI in English as a foreign language. Thus, sixty-nine professors from three universities in Ecuador participated in this research. A ten-question survey was applied to know how AI has been implemented into EFL classes. Google Forms was the tool used to collect the information and opinions provided by interviewers. Quantitative and descriptive methods were applied to carry out this study, and the data was analyzed through Likert scale charts. Closed questions were structured to assess university professors' knowledge about AI. The results showed that not all professors had used AI in English classes; most of them stated that some technological resources could be useful alternatives to improve the teaching practice while others highlighted that AI might bring drawbacks since human interactions may be reduced. Furthermore, EFL professors listed technological resources such as Duolingo, Rosetta Stone, Hello Talk, ChatGPT, Grammarly, Google Board, Talkpal, and Speech Ace, which can be used to enhance EFL lessons. Based on the survey results, professors state there are upsides and downsides when using AI in EFL classes. Nevertheless, they highlight that applying any technological tools should be focused on the EFL learners' language acquisition.

KEYWORDS   EFL Professors, AI Pros and Cons, AI Resources, English Lessons, Higher Education

Inteligencia artificial: su influencia en las clases de inglés como idioma extranjero en la educación superior

RESUMEN Últimamente, la inteligencia artificial (IA) se ha convertido en un hito en la educación, lo que ha llevado a su uso generalizado para promover el aprendizaje autodirigido en el mundo académico. No hay duda de las múltiples ventajas de la IA, a pesar de la posibilidad de que dificulte el pensamiento crítico y la resolución de problemas de los estudiantes. En consecuencia, el objetivo principal de esta investigación fue analizar las ventajas y desventajas del uso de la IA en el aula de inglés como idioma extranjero (EFL). En este estudio participaron sesenta y nueve profesores de tres universidades de Ecuador. Se aplicó una encuesta de diez preguntas para evaluar la implementación de la IA en las clases de EFL. Los formularios de Google sirvieron como herramientas para recolectar datos y opiniones de los participantes. En este estudio se emplearon métodos cuantitativos y descriptivos; y, el análisis de datos se realizó mediante gráficos de escala Likert. Se diseñaron preguntas cerradas para evaluar la comprensión de la IA por parte de los profesores universitarios. Los resultados revelaron que todos los profesores habían utilizado IA en sus clases de inglés. Si bien la mayoría reconoció los beneficios potenciales de ciertos recursos tecnológicos como alternativas para mejorar las prácticas de enseñanza, otros expresaron su preocupación por los posibles inconvenientes de la IA debido a una posible disminución de la interacción humana. Además, los profesores identificaron diversos recursos tecnológicos que podrían mejorar las lecciones de inglés como: Duolingo, Rosetta Stone, Hello Talk, ChatGPT, Grammarly, Google Board, Talkpal y Speech Ace. Según los resultados de la encuesta, los profesores reconocieron tanto las ventajas como las desventajas del uso de la IA en las clases de EFL. Sin embargo, enfatizaron que el foco principal de cualquier herramienta tecnológica debe ser facilitar la adquisición del lenguaje para los estudiantes.

PALABRAS CLAVE Docentes de inglés, ventajas y desventajas IA, recursos IA, clases de inglés, educación superior.

INTRODUCTION

State-of-the-art technological resources have brought opportunities and challenges to the field of Education; nonetheless, while some professors find it easy to adjust to them, others still struggle to keep up-to-date and make the most of its features within the classroom. Despite some professors might have not noticed it, adaptive Web-based educational systems and intelligent Web-based educational systems were and are part of their teaching practice; indeed, learners have used, and are currently using, and are highly likely to continue utilizing them for some purposes in educational contexts.

Brusilovsky et al. (1996) cited by Brusilovsky and Peylo (2003) hold that the first pioneer intelligent and adaptive Web-based educational systems were developed in 1995-1996; since then, many interesting systems have been developed and reported. Plus, Brusilovsky and Peylo (2003) said that these systems attempted to be more intelligent by incorporating and performing some activities traditionally executed by humans, such as coaching students or finding out their common mistakes.

As time passed by, these systems have been updated and upgraded. As a result, nowadays a lot of the state-of-the-art systems are driven by Artificial Intelligence (AI) According to Chen et al. (2020) the introduction, advancements, and proliferation of technology, more particularly, artificial intelligence, have made it easier for instructors to dispense their duties more effectively and efficiently. Professors need to get familiar with these resources to strengthen and make their teaching practice more effective.

To illustrate this fact Chen et al. (2020) hold that by using these platforms, instructors can perform different administrative functions, such as reviewing and grading students' assignments more effectively and efficiently and achieve higher quality in their teaching performance. These upsides have provided opportunities for professors to devote more time to planning, and foster quality teaching since the time that used to be spent on administrative stuff is likely to be dedicated to their teaching practice.

The analysis carried out by Chen et al. (2020) shows that AI has indeed been applied in educational institutions in different ways, including in the automation of administrative processes and tasks, curriculum and content development, instruction, and student learning processes. The above analysis takes us to the gap that this research attempts to fill in, since English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching plays a paramount role in the education field; therefore, it is necessary to consider professors' perceptions of AI and how learners use it daily.

In their review, Edmett et al. (2023) identified five key areas in which AI is being used in English Language Teaching (ELT) for the development of speaking, writing, and reading skills, to support pedagogy and for self-regulation. The results showed that AI is here to stay so EFL professors should adjust themselves not only to improve their teaching performance but also to take advantage of AI features to get learners to develop English language skills.

Despite these findings, it seems that some University English professors are not used to including AI in their teaching practice or they are still analyzing its upsides and downsides when it comes to integrating it into such teaching strategies while others have already dared to use it somehow. Regarding this challenge, 1348 English professors from 118 countries were interviewed by Edmett et al. (2023). The results showed a lack of formal training and readiness for AI in the teaching field, with many of these educators feeling unprepared and asking for better training in AI integration.

Alhalangy and AbdAlgane (2023) concluded that artificial intelligence (AI) has a positive impact on the field of English language teaching (ELT) and learning; however, it needs to be better integrated into educational settings. Professors and students need to be

more aware of the new applications and tools that have flooded the field of AI in recent years. Along the same line, in a study carried out in a Chilean university Vera (2023) found that while many studies emphasize the potential benefits of incorporating AI in language learning, some concerns and reservations need to be addressed. These concerns have already been studied in some countries; therefore, it is needed to spread the scope of the investigations toward the integration of AI in the EFL classroom in the university context.

Consistently, this study aims to find out what university EFL professors know about AI and how often they employ its devices; whether AI has brought advantages or disadvantages to teaching day in and day out, whether it increases or decreases their pupils' performance; whether they feel trained enough to integrate AI in the EFL classroom; and, whether they would suggest employing AI in their teaching practice. The previous questions were responded by EFL professors from three Ecuadorian universities whose results are expected to bring insights beyond perspectives or concerns so that EFL professors make the most of AI without reducing learners' creativity or leading them to cheat or commit plagiarism.

DEVELOPMENT

THE INTEGRATION OF AI IN EDUCATION

In the late 80s, an article about Computer Assisted Language Instructions (CALI) and AI was published by Bailin (1988) He claimed that AI goal is the replication by machines of significant aspects of human cognitive abilities and to test whether or not a machine could be considered "truly" intelligent a person should interact with it and believe she/he interacted with another human. Nonetheless, some researchers claim that the integration of technology into education could either nurture learners' creativity or degrade it.

Regarding this concern, Bereczki & Kárpáti (2021) highlighted that even expert professors have difficulties implementing technology-based creativity-fostering instruction within regular curricular timeframes and accomplishing high levels of technology integration. A study carried out in Estonia by Chounta et al. (2022) suggested that professors have limited knowledge about AI and how it could support to be efficient and effective in their work practice them in practice. They perceive it as an opportunity for education, though.

In this respect, Brusilovsky and Peylo (2003) stated that since the development of the first adaptive and intelligent Web-based educational system, many interesting systems have been reported. To illustrate, Cancino and Panes (2021) set that Google Translate was upgraded to be driven by artificial intelligence that incorporates an algorithm that mirrors what neurons do in a human brain reducing 60% of translation errors in comparison with the former version launched in 2006 which means that some old-fashion systems are being upgraded to be driven by AI.

Having mentioned the rapid upgrade and integration of technologies powered by AI in education, we can take it for granted that they are here to stay. Along the same vein, Saleh et al. (2021) concluded that many countries have regarded the development of AI technology as a national priority. The main feature of the innovative AI-based education ecosystem is the precision, individualization, and adaptation of education services and management. This fact takes us to analyze AI in the EFL setting since some AI technologies expect to replicate EFL professors' performance.

AI IMPACT ON EFL PROFESSORS' PERFORMANCE

Nobody could deny that EFL professors play one of the most important roles in ELT. Since the first appearance of adaptive and intelligent technologies, AI systems developers have attempted not only to support them in administrative tasks such as grading tasks, planning lessons, and providing feedback but also to replicate their performance when it comes to developing their teaching practice in the EFL classroom. Thus, some researchers believe that some features should be executed by cutting-edge technologies to be considered actual intelligence.

> CALI-AI must have the ability to present stimuli in ways in which a teacher would: in the form of drills, in the form of conversation within or independently of a simulated context, etc. Second, it must have the ability to process the student's responses to the stimuli and, in so doing, correct errors as a teacher would. Finally, it should have the ability to give hints, supply correct forms and teach vocabulary, as much as a teacher would, in relation to the student's ability and the kind of learning situation. (Bailin, 1988, p. 42)

On the other hand, some researchers hold that AI's main purpose is nothing but enhance the teaching practice "Therefore, these programs and applications can be used by professors as very effective supporting tools because they might liberate somehow professors from tiring, energy- and time-consuming activities such as grammar or pronunciation drills" (Pokrivcakova, 2019, p. 138). The insights cited above lead us to wonder whether EFL professors welcome the integration of AI in the EFL classroom, or they are still worried about its drawbacks.

Despite the AI advantages, Pokrivcakova (2019) recognizes there had been neither empirical research on professors´/teacher trainees´ attitudes toward using AI-powered tools, nor research on their preparation for the application of AI-powered tools in their classes. This fact might lead EFL professors to assume that the AI aim is to substitute them at all. Apropos professors' substitution, Srinivasan (2022) holds that from being the sole influence on learning, digital technologies, and AI are transitioning the teacher to being more of a facilitator and coach than being the singular source for learning.

AI IMPACT ON EFL LEARNERS' PERFORMANCE

Although this research does not aim at EFL learners or the impact of AI on their English language skills, the authors think it is relevant to know what the literature says about the use of AI for learning English as some studies highlight its upsides whilst, other researchers claim that creativity and critical thinking are at risk, besides AI might lead EFL learners to use it in ways that are everything but ethical.

To begin with, Bajaja and Sharmab (2018) suggested a framework for a virtual teacher that interacts with learners in a scalable manner using natural language processing, to dynamically determine their learning styles. It is known that adaptive technologies can customize learners' learning styles and need to provide them with a better learning experience and outstanding outcomes.

Along the same vein, a study carried out by Gayed et al. (2022) examined the participants' written text along lexical diversity and fluency by using a developed AI-based web application called "AI KAKU" The results were not in line with the researchers' expectations as the participants did not show significant improvement when writing by themselves but when it came to writing with the support of the application. That is, AI helped learners to express their feelings and ideas easily with its instant support in texts that were not fully written by themselves, which means they didn't improve their writing skills.

Regarding speaking skills, Edmett et al. (2023) brought out some AI-driven technologies such as speech recognition, adaptive learning, automatic speech analysis, and voice assistance which are meant to enhance EFL learners' speech. As for reading, the same author states that learners also learn vocabulary and understand meaning via games beyond what a textbook or classroom can provide. These insights mean that English learners are familiar with the use of AI regardless of some aspects like transparency, ethics, plagiarism, or privacy.

Concerning ethics, Saleh et al. (2021) hold that AI has raised many ethical issues in terms of providing personalized advice to students, collecting personal data, data privacy, and the ownership of responsibilities. According to these issues, Alhalangy and AbdAlgane (2023) findings showed that the ethical responsibility for making the most effective use of AI in the classroom now falls on both educators and students themselves. These challenges are contrasted by some findings that show the great benefits of AI for learners.

For instance, Hwang et al. (2020) said that students can benefit from smart tutors and asynchronous learning in advancing learning outcomes. Sun and Li (2020) also state that AI inspires EFL learners' interest and initiative by comparing with some existing teaching methods, to improve their learning effects and application ability of English. To illustrate, Sumakul et al. (2022) hold that the Elsa Speak application could help users to know more about the parts of the speech and if they are serious at improving their pronunciation this app might be of great benefit. The literature made the benefits for EFL learners crystal clear although the stakeholders should take into consideration the given remarks.

MAKING THE MOST OF AI IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

Having analyzed the literature on the integration and the impact of AI in the EFL classroom, it is a must to find out how to take advantage of the promising features mentioned above. Therefore, it is necessary to focus on the development of creativity and critical thinking, which were considered at risk by some authors, and the cause of some reservations and concerns pointed out by English language professors in some interviews of the previous literature review. Nonetheless, it seems that some data not only contradict these negative insights but demonstrate hopeful results about enhancing learners' creativity and critical thinking in the EFL classroom as in the following quotation.

> Expert professors in this study valued six overarching technology-enhanced creativity-fostering approaches across the curriculum: (1) igniting students' creativity; (2) supporting idea development; (3) creating digital products; (4) scaffolding students' creative processes; (5) augmenting creative collaboration among students; and (6) facilitating the evaluation of creative student outcomes. Within these general approaches, professors also identified several both subject-specific and general strategies to promote creativity with technology". (Bereczki & Kárpáti, 2021, p. 19)

The results bring out some areas where AI develops creativity as well as the strategies that could be applied to increase it. Moreover, Alhalangy and AbdAlgane (2023) concluded that AI can enhance the language skills of EFL students, they also highlight the benefits of using AI in the ELT process as well as the importance of instructors' performance and learners' collaboration and enthusiasm in determining the degree to which these goals are achieved. Bearing in mind these inputs, it seems that AI supports and improves the English Language teaching practice.

Furthermore, some researchers have studied the accuracy of AI to evaluate and provide feedback to dialogues and other types of speaking activities usually guided by EFL professors. Deriu et al. (2021) evaluated some popular conversational systems also known as chatbots and social bots. They concluded that the evaluation needs to be adapted to take aspects such as the dialogue system's purpose, the target audience, and the dialogue system

implementation itself into account. The above findings demonstrate that AI can provide feedback and evaluate dialogues based on storage information or preset patterns but not as a human teacher would do.

It seems that adaptive AI can be used to personalize EFL programs to meet the learners' needs; to support professors with administrative tasks such as grading, providing feedback, planning, and giving instructions to tutor and motivate learners by using virtual reality; as well as to enhance learners' motivation and creativity. To sum up, Zhu (2017) concluded that combined with English teaching, the artificial intelligence-based college English teaching system will greatly facilitate the teaching-learning process.

AI INTEGRATION INTO THE EFL CLASSROOM

The quick development of cutting-edge technologies has made it hard to set boundaries when categorizing AI systems. In some papers, these state-of-the-art technologies are referred to as virtual reality, adaptive, and intelligent web-based systems; other researchers group them by the areas where they are being used in ELT, for instance, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary; while some studies categorize them by their pedagogical features such as monitoring, tutoring, adapting, collaborating, solving problems, developing learning autonomy, and so on.

Edmett et al. (2023) listed some AI-driven tools by their use: Language learning apps, Language generation AI, Chatbots, Automated grading, Speech recognition, Text-to-speech tools, Data & Learning analytics, and Virtual & augmented reality. The findings show that from these categories, the most used AI-powered technologies were the Language learning and Language generation apps, and the Chatbots. The same authors asked 1,348 English language professors from 118 countries and regions how they used these tools. The findings demonstrate that the most recurrent uses are related to creating material, helping learners practice English, and creating lesson plans.

The potential of AI systems has been analyzed by plenty of researchers. AI offers educators several opportunities for improved planning g (e.g., by defining students' needs and familiarizing professors with such needs), implementation (e.g., through immediate feedback and teacher intervention), and assessment (e.g., through automated essay scoring) of their teaching (Celik et al. 2022). Without any doubt, AI systems are here to stay and the biggest responsibility to make the most of them in the EFL classroom is on professors' shoulders. Nevertheless, they should know at least some of the available tools that could be integrated into their teaching practice. To address this issue, some of the most used AI resources are listed in the annex below.

METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH MATERIALS

The participants in this research were sixty-nine professors from public and private universities. The instrument used was a survey to determine whether professors have used AI in their English classes. It was applied through Google Forms with an initial and deadline time. The Likert scale showed the percentages in each question, the answers permitted us

to figure out how many tools of AI are well-known for professors and how often they apply them in teaching-learning processes.

RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, a quantitative research approach was employed to investigate the utilization of AI in English language classrooms. A survey instrument was developed to gather data from a sample of sixty-nine professors across public and private universities. The survey included questions designed to assess the frequency and methods of AI integration in teaching practices. Data collection took place over one week, with responses analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify trends and patterns. Ethical considerations included ensuring participant anonymity and voluntary participation. Limitations of this study include the professors' schedules in their universities, while efforts were made to enhance validity through careful survey design and reliability through consistent data collection procedures.

RESULTS & ANALYSIS

English practices, including how AI has been implemented into EFL classes, how prepared educators are when using AI, the effectiveness and drawbacks of applying AI in EFL teaching, and whether English professors can apply AI in the EFL classroom.

Participants were asked about what AI means, their responses were tools, computer thinking, apps, and a kind of mechanism, which were mentioned many times. For Boers et al., (n.d.) AI is a sort of system that works rationally trying to emulate intelligent human conduct. Comest (2019) and Zhong (2006) cited in UNESCO (2021) agree with the idea that AI is a machine that can imitate functions of human intelligence. Therefore, AI can be seen as a system, machine, or mechanism whose only purpose is to simulate human-like cognitive functions. By comparing the definitions provided by the interviewees with those offered by the experts it can be stated that professors' perceptions of AI are limited to viewing it merely as a tool rather than understanding its full scope (see Figure 1).

Once the concept of AI is understood, it is imperative to highlight the different AI tools that professors currently employ in their classes. ChatGPT is the one that is most frequently used by the participants. According to Miller, this is a versatile tool and both faculty members and students can take advantage of it to boost skills such as listening, writing, and speaking. Nevertheless, this tool might bring many challenges and concerns like plagiarism, cheating, or even the vanishment of some professions including teaching. Kostka and Toncelli (2023) evoke the idea of other authors to employ a distinct type of assessment and make some changes in the teaching process including critical thinking and reflection to spur students not only to use Chat GPT as a tool, but others appropriately and efficiently. However, other tools such as Duolingo, Write and Improve, Speak and Improve, and Vokis which are already used by the participants, don't need these types of abilities, instead, they might be an aid to support English classes. Thus, all professors need to be aware of the upsides and drawbacks they might face using AI tools guaranteeing an equal, inclusive, and ethical use of AI in educational contexts, which is suggested by UNESCO (2021), in AI and education guidance for policy-makers that emerged due to rapid and accelerated technological advancements.

Figure 1. AI apps and platforms used in class.

Question 2: Which AI tools do you employ in your class?

AI Tools	Frequency	Porcentage
Duolingo	22	19%
Write and Improve	20	17%
Speak and Improve	16	14%
Vokis	13	11%
Chat GPT	27	23%
Others	17	15%
Total	115	100%

Among these advancements, AI has brought insights to improve teaching practices to make them more interactive, productive, efficient, and engaging. However, something that concerns the contestants is plagiarism, academic dishonesty, and cheating. Chen and Lin (2023) have enlisted in their study some of these apprehensions that current educators are facing as well, consequently, they propose "five action-driven and conceptually intertwined guiding principles in the acronym POWER" which encompass purposeful, optimal, wise, ethical, and responsible as core values. Even though their target audience is young children, it can be applied to all the educational members by adapting to the needs of each group. In this case, for higher education, students need to understand the concept of each principle, considering the questions, but the application must be modified with other examples according to their age.

Most participants have not taken part in seminars or workshops. Only 27% responded they had already taken it. In this new era, some fields have been transformed thanks to technology, and education is no exception. However, there is a gap that needs to be filled between educators and AI due to the rapid advancements. How is it possible to accomplish this? There are other aspects to consider before employing AI, its practical applications, and the potential challenges, not only by simply taking the course but also by effectively using it in the classroom. Luckin et al. (2022) suggest training people in *AI Readiness* which is described as the level of readiness among educators for the application of artificial intelligence (AI) in the classroom in terms of their knowledge, skills, vision, and ethical concerns. So, if we want the digital world to favor us in different aspects, we need to be prepared enough for the uses of AI, but most importantly, to be aware that the app, tool, or mechanism will adjust to our needs appropriately. For that reason, machines will never be able to fully replace human intelligence as they lack consciousness and are consequently incapable of discerning either empathy or individual needs.

Although, most of the faculty members said that they have not participated in AI courses, seminars, or workshops. Educators who have had these opportunities report positive outcomes and a favorable impact on their pedagogical practice. Based on their experience, digital intelligence has been an innovative tool, which has enabled them to stay up to date with the constantly changing teaching methodologies. Consequently, more interactive and creative activities have been created for their classes leading to better time management and the development of new skills.

The experience has allowed them to gain a deeper understanding of AI concepts and applications for education. Furthermore, AI assistance has strengthened educational approaches. Since students are more confident when they have access to technological assistance. Moreover, the perceptions gained from this training have advantageously influ-

enced lesson planning, assignment grading, and rubric creation, which indicates practical benefits for educators.

Apart from the advantages mentioned by the participants, Miller (2024) explains that data-driven platforms can evaluate the learner's performance and then provide personalized recommendations to meet the student's needs. When correctly integrated into the teaching techniques, these programs help create customized learning approaches that adapt to the skills and weaknesses of each student. Nevertheless, it is crucial to explore responsible ways to use AI. Students should be involved in this process because they will soon be part of a society that relies on AI to enhance their activities.

Therefore, it is of paramount importance that educators receive training in these methodologies as the appropriate use of AI technology, plus an understanding of its upsides can improve academic outputs and enhance the learning experience. As evidenced by the feedback given by the educators who have participated in AI training programs, even though they are a minority, the positive comments demonstrate how AI can improve their engagement in teaching methods (see Figure 2).

This chart depicts the figures about the frequency of artificial intelligence utilization in education, different responses were obtained. Approximately, 26.09% of the surveyed persons mention that they regularly incorporate AI into their strategies. This suggests a favorable understanding of AI benefits and effectiveness in the academic framework and a positive acceptance.

Likewise, 37.68% of the respondents stated that sometimes they implement AI tools in their pedagogical methods. Accordingly, to many educators belonging to this category, it can be inferred that professors utilize AI periodically, but not consistently, meaning that it is part of their approach, but it is not their principal methodology. These results indicate that although people are aware of the advantages of including automated intelligence in their educational approaches, certain aspects make AI incorporation challenging or they require more preparation in this field to make appropriate use of this revolutionary innovation.

Finally, the categories of rarely and never have percentages of 26.09% and 10.14%, respectively. It demonstrates that the employment of AI is reduced in learning processes, which could be due to different factors such as limited access to training, lack of awareness of its advantages, as related to the previous question, or personal preferences, which are common challenges to the integration of artificial intelligence in education. In addition to the aforementioned challenges, UNESCO IESALC (2023) observed, after carrying out a webinar, that around 40% of almost 1,300 participants hadn't used artificial intelligence and stated that the reasons might be lack of time, anxiety, or because it is not available in their setting. These findings are aligned with the previously discussed results, which confirmed that there is a notable underutilization of artificial intelligence in education. However, these figures show an emerging awareness of this technology and the broad possibilities it offers, meaning that educators may gradually implement it in their classroom approaches.

Consequently, a considerable number of educators employ AI regularly or occasionally, revealing a positive inclination toward the application of technology in their daily lessons, this implies a possible increase in its utilization in the future. The aforementioned is evident, as the results of this question indicate that a substantial number of professors, 26.09%, already use AI regularly and even more participants 37.68%, employ it occasionally, there is considerable potential growth.

The results regarding the participants' perception of AI on the academic achievements of students provide a riveting insight into the attitudes of educators towards this tool. 58, 97% of the respondents either strongly agree or agree that it will improve the academic accomplishment of their students, suggesting there is a positive outlook on the potential

Figure 2. AI usage frequency in English teaching practice.
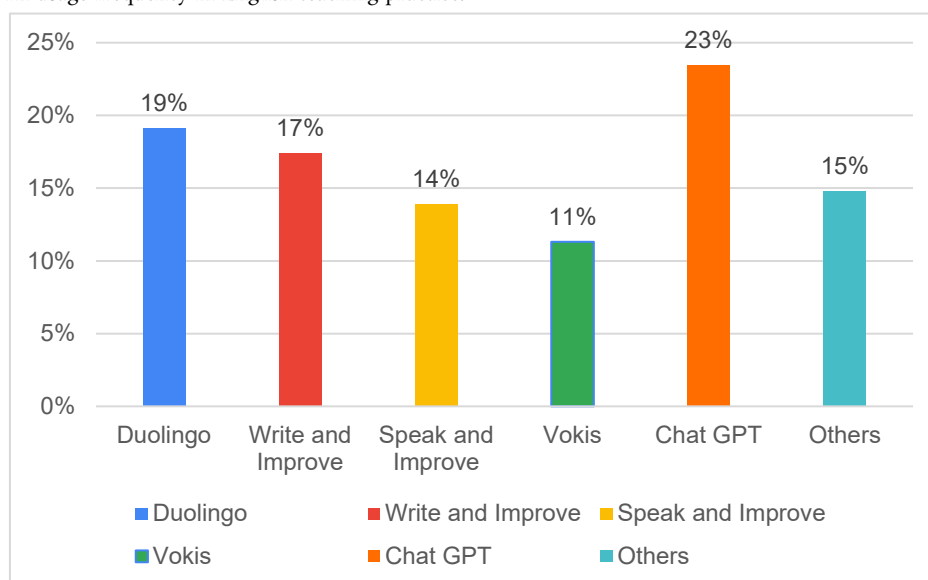
benefits of AI in education. However, 34.78% maintain a neutral position, which denotes uncertainty or lack of information about artificial intelligence. Furthermore, 7,25% of participants disagree, despite being a minority, this depicts reservations or skepticism to the use and implementation of this system.

Conclusively, the fact that people did not choose disagreement may indicate a general openness to this innovation, however, it does not show an interest in exploring AI advantages or the reasons for this. Eventually, a positive trend towards the utilization of this tool may appear since according to Heaven (2023) of MIT Technology Review, there was an initial panic regarding AI in education. Nevertheless, currently, the potential benefits of artificial intelligence chatbots, like ChatGPT, in pedagogic settings are being reevaluated by the instructors, as shown by the results of this survey. Likewise, the implementation of these programs requires time and resources, as recognized by Douglas.

The responses of the participants about whether AI will come up with efficient and practical ideas for teaching planning and the statement of whether it can be taken for granted that AI will cut off the time devoted to grading showed similar percentages.

A noteworthy number of respondents stated that they strongly believe that artificial intelligence can offer practical solutions to reduce the time devoted to the grading process. Thus, there is optimism and confidence in the capacity of AI. The figures of the second statement are slightly lower, indicating less trust in the capacity of AI to handle grading tasks appropriately. Approximately, 55,79% of the participants agreed with both statements. Based on this, it can be determined that in general, the utilization of AI in educational planning processes is supported. Furthermore, an outstanding minority of participants remained neutral. This reflects a lack of conviction, ambiguity, or mixed perceptions of AI's effectiveness.

In addition, it can be noticed that regarding the capacity of AI to develop efficient and practical ideas for teaching planning, only 1,45% disagree, and there is a major difference in relation to the time-saving benefits in grading since 10,14% do not rely on the ability of AI in this task. A likely reason for this might be the general danger of using AI tools to outsource works like grading, or concerns with privacy as professors must assess the level of identifying information, they provide programs and what companies behind these tools could do with that information (Miller, 2024).

Finally, similar to the previous questions no participants expressed disagreement with the statements, which conveys a neutral position towards the application of AI in education. Even though most of the respondents see potential in AI reducing grading time and lesson preparation improvement, there is a variety of opinions. The percentages of neutral and disagreement responses highlight the need for further clarification on the impact of automated systems in grading processes.

CONCLUSIONS

Summing it up, artificial intelligence is gaining wider acceptance in the education field. It might lead professors into a period of pedagogical innovation rather than the end of education (Heaven, 2023). Consequently, a vast majority of professors are open to implementing AI into their lessons. Even though some of them have not taken part in formal training in this area, they claim to apply it because of the benefits and positive outcomes that AI provides to English classroom settings.

Professors who are proficient in applying AI will be able to advise their students on how to use AI technologies in a way that promotes: ethics, transparency, and innovation. Learners who overuse or rely too much on these electronic tools may exhibit a lack of effort, diligence, and critical thinking when it comes to even the simplest activities which can result in plagiarism or cheating. Thus, the importance of personalized learning pathways that adjust to the unique strengths and weaknesses of every student.

The application of AI tools does reduce the time in planning and grading; instead, professors could dedicate more time to fostering academic student success by integrating AI into English lessons. Therefore, AI is a complementary tool for professors to guide and advise students to use AI appropriately. However, further training is required for both professors and students to be well-equipped to face tech demands.

In addition, more long-term AI applications will curve up students' achievement, especially in the development of receptive and productive English skills. Based on the results and the findings of the different authors, these systems can be personalized and adapted according to the needs of each student. They will master the language through constant practice and reinforcement due to continuous usage, customizing these applications according to their needs and learning pace. After all, existing teaching methods integrated with AI tools can result in a holistic and comprehensive approach to English language education.

CONTRIBUTOR ROLES

Daniela Espinoza: Formal lead analysis, investigation, methodology.

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ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

The authors state that there are no ethical implications.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no financial and non-financial conflicts of interest that could have influenced the work presented.

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ANNEX

In an attempt to shed light on the upsides of AI in EFL teaching practice, some of the most popular AI technologies have been listed and grouped by technological features and English language skills:

1) **Adaptive EFL learning apps**

   a) *Duolingo*

   b) *Rosetta Stone*

   c) *Hello Talk*

2) **Machine learning apps**

   a) *ChatGPT*

   b) *Grammarly*

   c) *Google Bard*

   d) *Google Translate*

3) **Speech recognition apps**

   a) *Speak & Improve*

   b) *Talk Pal*

   c) *Elsa Speak.*

   d) *Speech Ace*

4) **AI Presentations, planning, assessment**

   a) *Gamma. app*

   b) *Canva*

   c) *Magicschool.ai*

   d) *Gemini*

5) **AI assessment apps**

   a) *Write & Improve*

   b) *EF Standard Test*

   c) *iTEP Test of English*