



**AN INVESTIGATION OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS' VIEWS ON AI-ASSISTED LEARNING IN
ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

THESIS

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ABSTRACT

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The implementation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology in education has transformed learners' interactions with study resources, particularly in acquiring new languages. Understanding learners' perceptions becomes imperative with the new wave of AI-powered applications, particularly in AI-enhanced educational environments.

This study aims to examine the perceptions of secondary students in AI-assisted English language learning. Specifically, it studies students' perceptions of AI devices, the advantages and benefits, and the difficulties encountered while engaging with technology in the learning of the language.

This study adopted a qualitative phenomenological strategy. Ten students from MTs Mambaus Sholihin in Blitar, Indonesia, were purposefully sampled, ensuring a range of experiences in using AI technology. Data collection consisted of semi-structured interviews, which were analyzed thematically.

The results indicated that AI-powered educational resources, particularly ChatGPT, Grammarly, and Duolingo, equipped learners with L2 instant feedback. Advanced learning opportunities and out-of-class engagement were greatly valued. While students welcomed the technology, they were concerned about ambiguous AI responses, internet dependency, and data privacy. Most importantly, the unique and invaluable functions provided by teachers, as the trainer and guide, for the motivation to learn, culturally sensitive instruction, and the skill to adapt instruction, were highlighted.

To summarize, although AI technologies improve the efficiency of language learning, the best strategy remains a blended model where human instruction is paired with AI capabilities. Ensuring enhanced equity in the provision of digital resources, improving overall digital literacy, and creating more user-friendly interfaces with AI tools are vital recommendations for the study to aid in diverse educational settings.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In Chapter I, the author describes several components including research background, research gaps, research objectives, research significance, research scope and limitations, and a glossary of key terms.

1.1 Background of Study

The application of artificial intelligence (AI) in education has gained tremendous attention recently, especially in relation to language acquisition (Chen et al., 2022). The development of new AI tools, including NLP and machine learning, complements traditional teaching methods with more sophisticated instruments (Pokrivcakova, 2019). Such innovations enhance the way learners acquire new skills by providing multifaceted, adaptive engagement that was previously impossible. In English language teaching (ELT), AI-powered educational technology solutions offer more personalized, on-demand teaching sessions, instant diagnostic assessments, participatory simulations, and specialized cognitive exercises at various levels that aim to make the learning process not only easier but also more stimulating (Wang, 2024). Despite its benefits in education, trying to implement AI widely raises major issues related to equity, teaching effectiveness, and the readiness of education systems to seamlessly absorb this technology into their frameworks (Leahy et al., 2019).

AI-assisted educational tool applications, including chatbots, intelligent tutoring systems, and automated writing evaluators, are creating new opportunities for English language teaching and learning. According to Polakova

and Klimova (2024) stated that chatbots offer practice sessions for listening and speaking in a low-stress environment. Furthermore, intelligent tutoring systems are tailored to different learner preferences and work at varying speeds by providing targeted exercises with explanations that address skill gaps. Automated writing tutors incorporate AI algorithms to provide real-time assessment of grammar, coherence, and style issues for instant refinement of student work (Ozdere, 2025). Not only do these technologies enhance traditional classroom teaching and learning, but they also encourage self-directed knowledge acquisition that enables progressive self-directed learning outside of established school hours. These technologies are useful because they provide undeniable benefits; however, their impact is largely determined by the sophistication of the design, its relevance to the stated learning objectives, the appeal of the instructional tasks over time to the objective learner engagement (Bhutoria, 2022).

The use of AI in secondary schools offers personalized and efficient learning opportunities. However, it raises critical concerns about student attitudes toward AI technology, its effectiveness, and potential negative consequences. It is line with Vieriu and Petrea (2025) which stated that AI has its benefits; for example, it can help meet varying test standards for both high-performing students and those who need extra help. AI also helps reduce the teaching burden by automating monotonous activities such as marking tests and handling low-level educational functions (Chaudhry & Kazim, 2022). However, there remains the persistent problem of technological stagnation, or the default reliance on tools with little human involvement, which is detrimental to language learning since

most human language is acquired through interaction (Aijun, 2024).

Additionally, Yu (2020) concerns about data privacy, algorithmic inequality, and the digital divide all threaten the equitable distribution of AI educational resources. Using these tools requires intensive consideration in schools not only of the technical functions of AI but also of the tools' broader impact in seeking to enhance active learning among students while minimizing passive learning.

Moreover, since students' views on AI technologies are critical to the adoption, acceptance, and engagement of these emerging technologies in educational contexts, understanding their perspectives is crucial. As the primary users of AI tools, students' willingness to embrace these innovations is determined by: usefulness, ease of use, and enjoyment (Roy et al., 2022). Even the most sophisticated systems will fail to achieve their desired educational goals if students perceive AI applications as burdensome and unmotivating. On the other hand, Chen et al. (2020) argued that learners view AI as an important complement to their education, they are more likely to adopt these technologies in productive ways. For this reason, it is critical to gather feedback from students through surveys, focus groups, and pilot studies to refine AI solutions to adequately meet learner needs. By focusing on student needs first rather than technological capabilities, educators and software developers is able to implement AI-assisted learning environments that are pedagogically appropriate and socially acceptable.

As with almost all issues related to teaching and learning English as a second language with the help of AI technology, most of student acceptance and readiness differ greatly (Yoon, 2019). It is clear that some students appreciate the

use of AI because it can provide real-time feedback, offer customized learning sequences, or even interactive exercises, while others may be hesitant due to their lack of experience with the technology or digitally mediated pedagogical frameworks. Previous engagement with AI applications, pedagogical exposure in addition to their mastery of study habits in information technology, and personal preferences are key prerequisites that shape students' attitudes toward AI-assisted programs (Nah et al., 2023; Wei, 2023). To illustrate this point, students in traditional academic institutions who are accustomed to student-centered pedagogy may adapt more quickly than older students who simply do not understand online instruction sessions even though they describe themselves as tech-savvy learners. The striking diversity in acceptance underscores the need to address the question of why a particular student is or is not ready to learn and the importance of providing all necessary tools freely available without discrimination (Kalyani, 2024).

Additionally, while some students may find benefits such as adaptive learning features that tailor lessons to their skill level helpful, others may face challenges such as poor internet access, navigating AI systems, or lack of adequate support in utilizing these technologies (Ansor et al., 2023; Gligorea et al., 2023a). Additionally, learners who value collaboration and discussion may gravitate toward the more human-centered instruction offered by educators who use direct instruction with real-time explanations, empathy-driven dialogue, and interaction. The lack of rich social connection and engagement from AI-assisted

instructional environments may lead to boredom or discomfort for some learners (Kim, 2024)

In addition to addressing issues of accessibility and preference, the lack of real interpersonal contact coupled with increasing automation presents problems related to over-reliance on AI technology (Kokina et al., 2025). The imbalance can also inhibit independent thinking as learners come to expect errors to be flagged and corrected without them having to understand more deeply what went wrong (Szmyd & Mitera, 2024). In addition to the loss of critical thinking skills that result from the lack of direct interaction with instructors and classmates, which dulls students' emotional investment in meaningfully engaging with the learning activities they are participating in, it further erodes the appeal of logic rooted in verbal reasoning during instruction (Darwin et al., 2024). Finally, as perfect as today's AI systems are, they still have a worrying ability to mishandle relevant domains including complex aspects of language such as vernacular slang that draws from cultural expressions, providing erroneous insights that together can undermine the learning process intended to improve.

These issues underscore the importance of exploring how junior high school students view AI technology in relation to their English language learning. Understanding their preferences, difficulties, and expectations is critical to developing AI-assisted educational frameworks that enhance rather than replace instruction. Through investigating student attitudes, educators and developers can foster more inclusive and effective learning environments that leverage AI's strengths while mitigating its weaknesses. This type of research can also shape

pre-service and in-service programs by preparing teachers to use AI tools alongside instruction in ways that maintain the critical human element integral to language education.

The application of AI tools in education has important advantages that can improve educational outcomes (Wang et al., 2024). Moreover, the most striking is the capacity to offer personalized learning experiences. According to Zhai (2023) stated that AI systems can meet the needs of each individual learner by adjusting the difficulty of tasks for dedicated practice, reinforcing skills through tailored exercises, and addressing gaps where students struggle. In areas where abilities vary significantly from one student to another, such as language acquisition, this level of instruction ensures that learners master skills at their own pace (Lin et al., 2023).

Additionally, learners can identify errors and receive immediate feedback and corrections, giving students the opportunity to correct errors immediately (Patra et al., 2022). As a specific example, language learning apps offer instant detection of grammatical errors that suggest corrective steps along with explanations that help users improve faster than traditional methods. The real-time feedback students receive accelerates skill acquisition while simultaneously boosting confidence because improvements become observable over time, rather than after completing an entire course (Gaffar et al., 2024).

Moreover, an additional benefit relates to the availability of education outside of the traditional classroom schedule. According to Garcia et al. (2024) stated that students have greater access to educational resources, self-assessment

activities, and instructional support, increasing the overall convenience of learning. This is especially beneficial for students who require additional practice outside of structured lessons or for those who are in different time zones when taking classes online (Marzuki et al., 2023). By facilitating learning regardless of time or geographic location, AI promotes inclusivity and increases adaptability in education.

There are issues and challenges in adopting AI technology in education, even as its benefits have been highlighted. One criticism is that the emotional acuity of a human educator, who has the ability to read between the lines and detect signs of stress or lack of interest, is absent in AI (Humphrey et al., 2007). Providing moral support or guidance is another important aspect that affects student performance and one that AI cannot provide (Ahmad et al., 2023). Without these interpersonal connections, students may lack the essential communication skills and social skills that are developed through peer interaction during debates, discussions, and group work centered on class assignments.

Another worrying factor also points to a decline in students' creativity and critical thinking as a result of heavy reliance on technology (Sola et al., 2017). Unlike humans, who would inspire free thinking during lessons, AI would follow its teaching plan precisely while offering lessons and feedback without deviating from the established protocol. Take language acquisition for example, AI's focus on mastering grammar means it delivers content at the expense of olfactory breadth such as expressing sophisticated ideas eloquently or engaging in detailed discussions, which ultimately stifles creativity (Kim, 2019). Additionally,

inequities in access to technology can exacerbate existing disparities in education. Students from wealthy families are more likely to have access to high-speed internet, state-of-the-art devices, and premium AI learning subscriptions, while students from low-income communities' struggle with outdated technology and limited internet connectivity (Yeganeh et al., 2025). This digital divide can exacerbate existing achievement gaps and widen disparities for disadvantaged students.

These gaps demonstrate the underexplored areas that require additional examination. Many prior studies failed to consider some contextual elements or specific populations that are pertinent to the present study. Thus, this research intends to resolve such limitations through the more contextual and comprehensive analysis. This approach is anticipated to yield meaningful insights and add to the burgeoning literature within the discipline. The insights are anticipated to be beneficial for both theoretical frameworks and practical applications.

Moreover, the focus on the phenomenon in its diverse contexts remains incomplete, owing to the absence of some fundamental dimensions, which needs to be addressed. The study seeks to enrich both scholarly and practical understanding by including culture, socio-economics, and other situational factors, which have been largely ignored in previous studies. This approach will lead to better understanding and flexibility in the interpretation and application of solutions, thus enabling greater convergence of theory and practice. In this way, the research is directed toward closing the identified gap in the literature, while

also providing policymakers, educators, and community leaders, referred to as stakeholders in this context, contextually grounded and actionable evidence-based strategies.

1.2 Research Problems

Based on the background of the study, this research has arranged the research problems formulas as follow:

- a. What are junior high school students' perceptions of applying AI technology in English language learning?
- b. What elements shape the students' willingness or hesitation to accept AI technology?
- c. What issues and its impacts do students face when using AI-powered learning tools?
- d. How important is the human element in teaching, such as feedback and peer interaction, to students compared to AI learning?
- e. What are students' expectations for achieving a balance between face-to-face and AI approaches in language teaching?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

According to the formula above, the objectives of this research consist of:

- a. To investigate the junior high school students' perceptions about the application of AI technology in English language learning, and what elements shape their willingness or hesitation to accept this technology.
- b. To find out the issues do students face when using AI-powered learning tools, and what impact do these issues have on student learning experiences and outcomes.
- c. To dig up about how important is the human element in teaching, such as feedback and peer interaction, to students compared to AI learning.
- d. To investigate the students' expectations for achieving a balance between face-to-face and AI approaches in language teaching.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This analysis has significant implications for various groups in the field of education such as students, teachers, administrators, and educational organizations. A comprehensive description of its importance is presented below:

- a. **For Students:** The users of this research, in this case students, should understand its scope in terms of artificial intelligence to suggest tools capable of facilitating customized learning where each student can tailor lessons to their preferences and pace. Such individualization can lead to

increased self-confidence and overall achievement especially in English language education as it can increase learner engagement. Furthermore, this research encourage the development of systems that provide quick and useful feedback based on students' input by analysing their attitudes towards AI, thus helping them use language skills more effectively. Furthermore, this research will identify some important challenges such as low availability of modern technology or lack of personal interaction to ensure that future AI designs address these points for their greatest effectiveness and least barriers to student success.

- b. For Educators:** This study examines how teachers can effectively integrate AI into their teaching without sacrificing the essential human aspect of instruction. In addition, the study was addressed issues related to teacher professional development, helping them acquire the pedagogical competencies necessary to use AI in education and assisting them in meeting the diverse needs of learners. Furthermore, the study shows how leveraging artificial intelligence for basic functions such as assessment can reduce teacher workload, freeing up more time for teachers to engage in more practical, creative, and experiential teaching. The main objective of this study is to balance the evolving landscape of language teaching technologies with substantial pedagogical principles through the integration of AI while ensuring that instruction remains focused on student needs

- c. **For Stakeholder:** This study is important for various stakeholders such as policymakers, EdTech developers, and parents. For policymakers, this study will provide evidence-based recommendations that can help formulate policies to make AI tools accessible and useful; thereby, all students can bridge the digital divide. With these findings, EdTech developers will use them to improve AI applications to be more user-friendly, culturally appropriate, and aligned with learner needs which in turn will increase the effectiveness of these tools. Additionally, parents will gain deeper insights into the role of AI in education that will enable them to actively support their children's learning journey more effectively. In addressing these issues, this study advances inclusivity while also providing critical information that will further facilitate the integration of AI in education among all key stakeholders.
- d. **For Educational Institution:** This study provides important findings that help refine teaching strategies with the irreplaceable value of human instruction, emphasizing a more balanced approach to comprehensive language development. The results will also help other organizations understand how best to allocate their resources so that they can adopt AI technologies economically and scalable, thereby improving educational efficiency related to student learning outcomes that are significantly influenced by AI. In addition, early adopters of AI-powered education implemented responsibly have the opportunity to position themselves as

innovators, benefiting from greater market appeal for students and educators, while consolidating their position in the competitive world of modern education.

1.5. Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study aims to analyse secondary school students' attitudes towards AI-powered education in English language learning. The investigation will focus on students' perceptions, preferences, and concerns regarding the use of AI such as chatbots, intelligent learning systems, and automated writing evaluators. The scope of the study includes analysing the impact of these technologies on student engagement, personalized instruction, and skill acquisition as well as addressing issues such as data privacy concerns, algorithmic bias, and the digital divide.

However, there are some shortcomings related to this case. First, only high school students will be selected to participate in this study which will ignore all other educational levels. This narrow focus risks limiting the wider application of the results obtained from this sample. Second, this study is set to focus exclusively on English language learning; therefore, other subjects will not be part of this investigation. Third, surveys and interviews as the main data collection tools have self-reporting biases associated with their subjective nature. In addition, external factors such as the lack of adequate teaching resources in different schools as well as different levels of technological infrastructure and teacher enthusiasm are beyond the scope of this study but may affect the findings generated. Lastly, since AI technology is rapidly evolving, some findings may lag behind as new methodologies and tools are constantly emerging

1.6. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid any misunderstandings, the researcher provides definitions for each key term as follows:

1. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

For the purposes of this study, AI consists of computer programs or systems that simulate human cognitive processes such as natural language processing, learning, and adaptive reasoning (Wang, 2019). In the context of teaching English as a foreign language, the use of AI involves chatbot applications, intelligent teaching systems with real-time activity adjustments, and automated writing evaluation systems that focus on personalized feedback to increase learner engagement.

2. AI Assisted Learning

This concept deals with the integration of AI systems within educational frameworks to assist in the learning process (Tan et al., 2025). It includes systems that provide instant assessment, dynamic exercises, and customized learning paths, seeking to support pedagogical practices while paying attention to students at the micro level.

3. English Language Teaching (ELT)

ELT encompasses methods, approaches, and resources related to teaching English to speakers of other languages (Howatt & Widdowson, 2004). For this study, we focus on examining the integration of AI technologies into ELT in

relation to their effectiveness in improving language learning, learner engagement, and educational outcomes.

4. Perceptions

Perceptions refer to the process by which individuals interpret, organize, and give meaning to information obtained through their senses and experiences.

(Schommer, 1993). Perception is influenced by personal background, beliefs, emotions, knowledge, culture, and social interactions, which means that different individuals may interpret the same situation in different ways. In educational and social research, perceptions are often used to describe how people understand, evaluate, and respond to certain phenomena, experiences, or environments. Therefore, perception is not merely the act of seeing or hearing something, but also the cognitive and emotional interpretation that shapes an individual's attitudes, judgments, and behaviours toward a particular object or situation. This research investigates how learners respond to, and cope with, the challenges of AI-integrated English language learning. More specifically, the study seeks to determine learners' perceptions regarding the application of AI technologies, their adaptability to technology-based learning environments, and the degree to which the integration of technology is appropriate to their educational requirements and religious perspectives.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSIONS

The chapter under review offers an elaborate evaluation of the concepts and contemplates over the AI with respect to the literature. The assessment is organized into five primary concerns: the learners' perception of using AI for English learning, their firsthand encounters with AI based applications, the problems they encountered with respect to practical application, and their anticipations on AI features integration in education. The pedagogical discussion informs gaps and overlaps with previous studies and provides fresh perspectives on the influence of AI technologies on language learning and teaching. Emphasis is placed on the teaching implications of the findings, dealing with the use of AI in teaching English and how the obstacles could be lessened to improve the learning outcomes. The comparison with earlier studies not only confirms some assumptions but also shows unexplored aspects of the technology applied to teaching English. This analysis aims to structure the understanding of the consequences of AI use in English language teaching and learning in a student-centered way.

5.1 Students' Perceptions of Learning English with AI

The results of the study show that learners tend to perceive AI tools as beneficial and revolutionary in English language learning due to increased motivation, independence, and productivity. Although AI is recognized for its

ease of access and use, students also point to its drawbacks, especially regarding the lack of empathy and personalization for different levels of learning. This analysis examines these perceptions along with existing literature and provides recommendations for further integration of AI technologies in education.

5.1.1 Positive Perception of AI in Learning English

As noted by students, the use of AI in educational technology is helpful because it can provide real-time feedback, streamline instruction, and enhance self-directed learning practices. This is consistent with previous work focusing on the use of AI in language teaching and learning, particularly studies highlighting the positive impact of AI personalization and adaptation on learning (Davis et al., 2024; Gligorea et al., 2023b; Rane, 2025). For example, Davis et al. (2024) noted that learners are able to engage with material more deeply when content is presented at their level, a finding that nearly all participants in the study agreed with. Xiao (2025) described the positive impact of AI on the accuracy of immediate responses and streaming AI-assisted suggestions and comments on learning retention and fluency, which aligns with students' enjoyment of the instant feedback discussed in the study. Additionally, the elimination of delayed responses, common in traditional teacher-centered classrooms, adds to the argument for AI's capacity to foster just-in-time learning, which has been documented by (Rodrigues, 2024). They propose that timely support enables continued learner engagement and understanding of important concepts.

Also, students reported that AI-assisted language learning reduced anxiety due to its non-judgmental and patient interaction style. This is in line with

Mohebbi (2025) study, which showed that learners using an AI-based platform experienced a low-pressure environment that aided in appropriate error correction, an important aspect in developing confidence in the target language. The absence of socially induced shyness, considered a major barrier in face-to-face classes Stray (2023), appeared to be enabled by the AI's neutral and unbiased feedback. In addition, participants referred to AI as a "flexible tutor" due to its ability to change explanations according to the learner's pace that matches Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (McLeod, 2024). Other scholars such as Tajik (2025) have also commented on the buffering capabilities of AI, highlighting the ability of adaptive AI systems to recognize learners' existing competencies and design optimally challenging tasks within the ZPD, thereby maximizing cognitive development.

5.1.2 Challenges and Limitation

AI-integrated education tools fail to acknowledge a user's language skills, posing significant challenges to the comprehension of learners (Chen et al., 2023; Jie & Kamrozzaman, 2024). Students indicated to us that learning tools which incorporate AI have a significant limitation in the area of response personalisation to one's acquired linguistic skills and proficiency. Mismatching explanation difficulty with learners' developmental levels and AI systems failing to accommodate associated vocabulary and basic terms results in content generation which does not align with the learners' thinking (Walter, 2024). It has further been noted that AI's contextual adaptability insufficiencies are AI's largest constraints. Sociocultural adaptability deficiencies have proven to be critical everywhere

adapting lexicon is utilised (Samuel et al., 2023). Other authors have shown AI functionally competently producing language, but AI-controlled systems customised for the user's age, schooling history, or language ability do not possess the necessary intelligence to adjust (Kaleci & Türel, 2024).

A lack of descriptive adaptivity in lower proficiency explanation results in disengagement (Zhai et al., 2024). Enhanced engagement hinges on more sophisticated personalised AI-human interfaces. It can be derived from these conclusions that failure to reach contextual situational awareness results in AI educational devices deepening divides between learners and thousands of educational opportunities available via the Internet.

Furthermore, while learners valued the immediate feedback and information offered by AI, they placed equal importance on human teachers to fill the roles of emotional and motivational anchors. This aligns with previous work highlighting the unique functions of teachers in providing compassion, motivation, and social interaction (Huang, 2022). Research has demonstrated that human teachers understand and respond to students' morale and subtle emotional cues and adapt their methods to foster a positive learning atmosphere, functions that AI does not currently possess (Huang, 2022). For instance, in AI-enhanced classrooms, students continue to turn to human teachers for motivational and confirmation support, especially during intense learning moments (Zhai et al., 2024). Students' perception of the stark difference between AI logic and human emotional intelligence supports the growing body of literature on educational technology, which argues for AI as an adjunct instead of a replacement for

teaching (Xu, 2024). Understanding AI primarily as a tool to enhance teaching aligns with pedagogical frameworks that argue for harnessing technology to augment, not replace, the fundamentally human elements of education (Alam & Mohanty, 2023a; Chigora, 2024).

5.1.3 Implications for AI Integration in Education

This study confirms and adds to the research on AI in education with a specific focus on adaptive technologies and human-AI interaction. As noted in earlier works (Alam & Mohanty, 2023b; Soori et al., 2023), the efficacy of learning engines powered by AI is enhanced through the ability to provide feedback and perform functions on autopilot. However, our findings further illustrate that these systems often overlook cultural context and proficiency levels, which may be detrimental to the understanding of some learners. This concern aligns with study that found generic AI responses do not resonate linguistically or cognitively with non-native speakers and students from diverse, academically rich backgrounds. This study advocates for adaptive AI inclusivity such as culturally tailored examples and simplified vocabulary addressing gaps that AI has systemically perpetuated (Chiu, 2024).

Moreover, the consideration of a balanced AI and educator interaction at the partnership level in this study builds on ongoing technology debates within classroom contexts. For instance, while proponents like Javaid et al. (2023) assert that AI has educational value in performing monotonous chores such as grading and vocabulary drills, others (Long, 2024) voice concerns, suggesting an erosion of the relational aspect of teaching due to technology dependency. Our findings

endorse a blended approach as described by Gradini et al. (2025) that positions AI to handle lower-order cognitive processes and allows teachers to prioritise higher-order engagement, facilitating critical thought and emotional investment. This model not only enhances teaching effectiveness but also maintains the essential mentorship functions of teachers, which qualitative research emphasises (Meylani, 2024).

The gaps identified in the meta-analysis conducted by Cukurova (2025), such as exploring hybrid frameworks or preparation of teachers for AI used in teaching, are also relevant to future research directions proposed here. That review specifically pointed out the absence of research investigating how teachers could work with AI to develop higher-order skills. Addressing these gaps fosters an emerging belief that successful integration of AI into education relies on its capacity to integrate alongside human teachers as opposed to replace them.

5.2 Students' Experiences in Using AI Tools

Furthermore, the results of this research emphasise the increasing adoption of AI ChatGPT, Grammarly, Google Translate, and Duolingo in the English learning patterns of students. These applications have transformed the ways in which learners interact with language skills to include instant feedback, motivational drills, and self-directed study. Nonetheless, although students reported appreciation, some hurdles and constraints surfaced, pointing to the necessity for more systematic pedagogic integration of artificial intelligence in language teaching.

5.2.1 Positive Impacts of AI Tools on Language Learning

Positive feedback from students regarding AI tools due to convenience, instant accessibility, and interactivity confirms previous studies on learning with technology. Faramand et al. (2022) and Jegede (2024) point to the benefits of self-paced learning enabled by AI platforms, especially due to their instant feedback capabilities that are not provided by slow face-to-face classes.

The effectiveness of real-time grammar and spelling checking in improving students' writing ability has been documented in studies such as Yang (2025). This study showed that automated feedback corrected common errors and improved students' grammatical accuracy over time. The use of ChatGPT to support learners with sentence construction and vocabulary development complements Johnston (2024), who described the ability of AI to provide suggestions as being more helpful for learners to internalize some structures and use new words than passively viewing the material.

Additionally, the motivational impact of gamification systems, such as Duolingo, is consistent with previous studies on educational gamification (Shortt et al., 2023; Zhao et al., 2024). These studies argue that motivation-driven systems featuring rewards such as badges and progress tracking leverage intrinsic motivation, especially for learners who prefer more structured environments. This is in line with self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2012), which argues that actionable feedback combined with definable goals enhances motivation.

Another key benefit observed in this study was a shift toward more self-directed learning as beginner-level corrections no longer required teacher support.

This is in line with Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development" where AI tools serve as a buffer, allowing students to independently improve core skills before progressing to more sophisticated levels of instructor intervention. Similar findings have been noted previously by Mastrogiacomì (2024), who showed that autonomous practice facilitated through AI shifted the balance of instructional time toward deeper teacher-led discussions, thereby streamlining the focus of instruction.

5.2.2 Challenges and Limitations

AI technologies, including Google Translate and various chatbots, continue to suffer from issues related to accuracy and context, as well as a lack of teaching depth. This is in line with the work of Khosravi et al. (2022), who highlighted that while AI systems are capable of providing information quickly and in large quantities, they often do not adapt their explanations to the level of understanding of the learner. One example is Google Translate which, despite its widespread use in language education, is often criticized for not taking into account the context of subtle linguistic variables and offering translations that are phraseological correct but semantically incorrect (Azimbayeva et al., 2021). This situation is exacerbated by the lack of precision which can be detrimental rather than helpful in advanced language learning scenarios where idiomatic and cultural aspects are important.

As noted by several participants in this study, AI chatbots provided irrelevant or overly complex answers, further complicating the problem. This observation supports the previous work of George (2023), who noted that AI

responses are often too broad and apply one-size-fits-all logic that assumes prior knowledge, burdening students rather than aiding their understanding. The inability to tailor explanations to individual learning needs highlights the lack of pedagogical refinement underlying the design of these tools, an issue raised in previous research (Zou et al., 2025). In the absence of adaptive learning algorithms that match users' abilities, these AI tools risk becoming more detrimental to education than beneficial.

Another important issue highlighted in this study is the challenges faced by students in formulating appropriate questions when interacting with AI. Most students struggled with “what to type or how to formulate questions” that would yield useful answers, which is similar to the findings of Bozkurt et al. (2021) on user-AI interactions in education. Their study suggests that students lack adequate digital literacy skills to interact with AI in a meaningful way, hindering learning opportunities. This calls for more organized efforts to improve digital literacy that enable students to hone their question-forming skills. Without such training, the potential of AI as an educational tool remains unrealized.

In addition, the use of AI translators disrupts more advanced language lessons where deep understanding is essential. The tension between automation and interactive teaching has been noted previously by Heriyawati and Romadhon (2025), who stated that while AI can assist students in acquiring the basic content of a language, higher levels face serious challenges due to the inadequate provision of high-level linguistic competence. Educators who enjoy the

convenience of AI machine translation struggle with the lack of depth that rich contextual language instruction requires to teach rigorously.

5.2.3 Balancing AI and Traditional Instruction

The results of the current study support and build on previous studies that have looked at the application of artificial intelligence in language learning. Admane et al. (2024) and Bhatia et al. (2024) have noted the effectiveness of AI tools in increasing engagement and tailoring educational content to individual student needs. The present study adds further detail to these findings by showing that AI tools work best when they complement rather than replace traditional forms of instruction. This reinforces the position of Duenas and Ruiz (2024), who warn that over-reliance on AI for instructional services can be detrimental because such systems have little power to solve complex linguistic problems that require human intelligence.

Importantly, the current findings contradict some of the more optimistic views of AI replacing teachers in certain educational settings (Fitria, 2023). While AI tools focus on providing instant feedback and adaptive practice, they provide context-dependent human instruction for the complex and nuanced practice that AI requires above. Chang et al. (2023) study has shown that AI performs best when providing rote practice, instant feedback, and practice tailored to individual needs. Human instructors involved in a study described by Cong-Lem et al. (2025) that compared AI's inability to provide nuanced, contextual feedback to human feedback shed light on these limitations.

In addition, this study provides additional insights into the pedagogical framework of AI tools designed by Yusuf et al. (2025). Many existing AI-driven language applications operate without systematic instructional design, leading to fragmented learning. This explains why students in the current study performed significantly better when AI was implemented within a structured, teacher-directed curriculum compared to using AI independently. These findings resonate with the blended learning model proposed by Abedi (2024), which emphasizes the interrelated roles of technology and human instruction.

5.3 Challenges Encountered by Students

Use of AI-powered educational tools comes with challenges such as language complexity, accessibility, trust, data privacy, and prompt formulation to mention a few. These gaps underscore a neglect of adequately programmable AI tool design and implementation where younger or less proficient learners are concerned.

Students voiced that an alarming number of AI tools provided responses at a heightened level. Answers were riddled with vocabulary, formal language, and lengthy explanations that far exceeded necessary. Participants cited AI chat programs like ChatGPT and Grammarly provided responses to questions well beyond a primary education level which could only be understood reliably with supplemental instruction. This confirms previous investigations by Pellas (2023) which have pointed out the lack of adaptation of AI-generated content with regard to the age and language proficiency of the intended audience. The so called "language barrier" dilemma indicates the necessity for customization of AI tools,

such as preset levels of simplification adjusted to the educational level of the user (Hegde, 2021).

Many students, especially from rural and underserved regions, face challenges accessing AI tools because of an unreliable internet, institutional restrictions, or constant power outages. This gap deepens the existing inequalities in education technology as students from urban areas where the internet is highly accessible reap the benefits of AI-assisted learning while their rural counterparts lag behind (Mustapha et al., 2025). These findings are in line with previous research regarding the adoption of educational technology, where infrastructural barriers limit effective implementation.

Students voiced concerns over the trustworthiness of AI-generated corrections and answers, particularly when these countered feedback given by their instructors (Wang, 2024). This scepticism stems from a lack of visibility on the response generation processes undertaken by AI systems and whether these responses meet pedagogical expectations. This has also been documented in primary school children who, after presenting their essays, refused to accept changes made by automated systems because of the lack of alignment with human suggestions (Wu et al., 2021). To address these issues, educational AI tools must integrate components of explainable AI that provide simpler justifications for modifications and respond according to predefined educational standards.

For many students, concerns over data privacy and potential breaches restricted sharing personal and academic information with AI systems. These concerns reflect the more extensive sociocultural fears regarding AI technologies

and privacy, particularly when children are part of the equation. It is particularly concerning that prior studies on EdTech have consistently highlighted the inadequate protective strategies, fostering distrust among users (Eppard et al., 2021). Developers need to implement protective and transparent data collection and usage policies based on anonymization and unambiguous agreement frameworks to safeguard educators and students.

Some of the notable difficulties students encountered, such as irrelevant or overly complex responses, were due to insufficiently crafting smart prompts. This points to a gap in "prompt literacy;" meaning students do not know how to interact best with AI systems (Kabudi et al., 2021). This challenge was also documented with students' use of search engines. The inclusion of prompt training focused on AI tools at all educational levels would enable students to pose better queries which would maximize the benefits of AI tools (Burkhard, 2022).

5.4 Students' Expectations in Using AI

The results of the study underscore the symbiotic relationship between human teachers and AI in the context of English language learning. The students from MTs Mambaus Solihin recognized the faster response times and additional practice opportunities provided by AI. However, they noted the overwhelming benefits attributed to a human teacher. Students appreciated that human educators provided appropriate emotional support, cultural context, and flexible pedagogy tailored to individual student needs,

which AI is incapable of offering (Kucuk, 2023). This demonstrates an essential limitation of AI in its holistic learning experience capabilities encompassing both cognitive and affective dimensions.

AI's limitations regarding the emotional and motivational support it provides were viewed more critically by the students. Participants recalled countless examples wherein human teachers identify feelings of bewilderment and offer tailored lifting explanations calibrated to the students' emotional registers (Mahoney et al., 2021). A student remarking that “AI is smart, but teachers understand our feelings,” best captures this distinction. This also supports the findings of previous studies that AI can be exceptionally proficient at delivering course content, but AI fails to demonstrate sufficient socio-emotional intelligence essential for learning. Participants highlighted **teacher's** issuance of motivational support directed towards lower levels of student engagement that AI, in its present state, is unable to resolve.

As reported in the findings, students felt frustration when AI would offer rigid, overly general answers to questions, as opposed to a teacher who would use local or culturally relevant examples to explain concepts. Previous research, as referenced in this study, emphasizes the lack of focus on culture in the design of AI systems, pointing to the growing need for more responsive technologies (Wang, 2024). Moreover, students expressed strong preference for bilingual capabilities, explaining that using a native tongue would improve understanding for learners at all levels of proficiency.

This study further reported practical difficulties as a separate key finding. Students particularly in Islamic boarding schools reported challenges due to their remote location and poor internet access. This poses a critical gap in educational opportunities, highlighting the lack of availability of AI tools without internet dependence. Students's requests for more human-like intonation and better accent modeling point to the need for improved conversational interfaces that could foster engagement and improve learning outcomes (Wu et al., 2021).

Students acknowledged the value of AI as a supplementary educational resource for independent practice and homework. Throughout the study, students preferred a teacher-led approach to instruction, with AI taking a secondary role. Participants proposed a blended model with 70-80% of instruction being teacher-led and 20-30% AI-assisted. This preference is in line with blended learning principles which emphasize a prudent and purposeful use of technology within the classroom (Park & Doo, 2024).

The findings are particularly relevant to the AI development and pedagogy integration in education. First, the findings call for AI systems that better understand and respond to affective factors. Second, the findings underscore culturally adaptive AIs that provide contextualized examples and support in multiple languages. Third, the findings point to gaps like dependence on the internet infrastructure needing to be solved. These are areas that warrant further investigation alongside the refinement of human-AI instructional frameworks (Mertala et al., 2022).

The students' feedback corroborates that technology must supplement, and not supplant, the human elements of pedagogy. As one respondent pointed out, the process we define as learning involves much more than arriving at the correct solutions; it includes human interaction, cultural appreciation, and emotional scaffolding, areas where people can instruction are profoundly adept. The results indicate that the optimal strategy for teaching languages may be a balanced interplay between human instructors and AI resources, with each contributor leveraging their comparative advantages.

The results indicate that the optimal strategy for teaching languages may be a balanced interplay between human instructors and AI resources, with each contributor leveraging their comparative advantages. In such a model, AI could take on repetitive or highly individualized tasks, such as vocabulary drills, pronunciation guidance, or grammar exercises, allowing teachers to focus on facilitating meaningful discussions, fostering creativity, and addressing learners' emotional needs. This approach also empowers educators to become guides and mentors rather than merely providers of information, helping students navigate the social and cultural contexts that shape language use. In the long term, such synergy between human and artificial intelligence may not only enhance efficiency but also preserve the human touch that is essential for deep and lasting learning.

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APPENDIX 1

SEMI-STRUCTURE INTERVIEWS GUIDELINE

Section	Interviews' Questions	Implication
1	How familiar are you with AI tools like chatbots, grammar checkers, or language learning apps?	General Perceptions of AI in Learning
	What are your thoughts about using AI to learn English?	
2	Have you used any AI tools for English learning? If yes, which ones? Describe your experience.	Experiences with AI
	What do you like or dislike about these tools?	Tools
3	What difficulties have you faced when using AI tools?	Challenges and Concerns
	Do you worry about privacy or fairness when using AI? Explain.	
4	How important is teacher or peer interaction in learning English compared to AI tools?	Human vs. AI Interaction
	Do you think that AI can replace human teachers? Why or why not?	