

Is Artificial Intelligence a Utopia or the Future of Foreign Language Learning

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Received 01/10/2024

Accepted: 07/15/2024

Published: 07/28/2024

Abstract

The paper discusses the problem of the artificial future in learning the English language. English occupies a leading place in all spheres of human activity. In the 21st century, it is not easy to imagine human activity without the help of AI. AI, as a unique invention of humanity, has its history. It is also actively used in foreign language learning. Many researchers work in this field, but there is no single conclusion about the positive and negative aspects of using AI in language learning. The research was conducted according to the fundamental question of whether AI is the future or the utopia of learning English. Respondents answered five questions. The results show that all people use AI in their lives. AI is a practical tool in translation and automatic spelling correction. It is not surprising that all respondents have practical communicative experience with AI. Regarding the future of AI, the responses have demonstrated the undeniable need for AI and a positive attitude toward it. However, it is worth remembering that only the intelligent use of AI will have significant consequences in the future.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, English as the international language, English learning, foreign language learning, future, language, utopia

Cite as: Vornachev, A., Kushmar, L., Hrachova, I., & Nikolska, N. (2024). Artificial Intelligence a Utopia or the Future of Foreign Language Learning. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) Special Issue on CALL (10)*. 70-84. DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/call10.6>

Introduction

The 21st century is a century of rapid changes and technological progress.

AI has become progressively integrated into all aspects of human daily life. Many people use voice assistants like Siri, Google Assistant, and Amazon Alexa to perform different tasks. E-commerce platforms also use AI algorithms for product recommendations, personalized shopping experiences, dynamic pricing, fraud detection, and customer support through chatbots. AI features are integrated into smartphones and mobile applications for camera enhancements, predictive text input, voice recognition, virtual assistants, and health tracking. AI technologies are used in various healthcare applications, including medical imaging analysis, diagnostic assistance, personalized medicine, telemedicine, and wearable health monitoring devices. Many businesses deploy AI-powered chatbots and virtual agents for customer support, online help, and FAQ responses. AI tools and software are used in workplaces for data analysis, natural language processing, document automation, project management, and workflow optimization. AI is also available in medicine to solve complex clinical problems; education to help teachers improve personalized education for their students; home to help in everyday routine; Smarter Cars – GPS assists drivers while providing large-scale information. AI is applied in various fields, including safety, banking, business, criminology, sports, sales, real estate, and customer service.

AI has become deeply integrated into modern life. Firstly, automation and efficiency (AI technologies robotize monotonous tasks and processes, increasing effectiveness and productivity across industries). Secondly, it is personalization (AI algorithms analyze data to provide personalized experiences, e.g., online shopping recommendations and social media feeds). It is also financial services: AI algorithms analyze economic data to detect fraud, assess creditworthiness, and optimize investment strategies. Automated trading systems execute transactions at high speeds, leveraging machine learning to predict market trends and manage portfolios. And it is entertainment and creativity: AI enhances entertainment experiences through recommendation algorithms, content generation, and immersive technologies.

AI is so closely involved in human activity that a person becomes dependent on AI. AI is good because it facilitates all directions of the development of society, and people cannot solve simple tasks without the help of a machine. But when we think about English learning, it is necessary to answer the question: *Is AI a utopia or the future of foreign language learning?*

The question is both compelling and timely. As traditional educational paradigms evolve, AI offers innovative solutions to long-standing challenges in language acquisition. From personalized learning experiences to real-time feedback and interactive platforms, AI has the potential to revolutionize how English is taught and learned. However, the integration of AI in education is not without its controversies. This paper aims to explore the dualistic nature of AI in English language learning, evaluating its benefits and potential drawbacks. Ultimately, this discussion seeks to contribute to the broader discourse on the role of AI in shaping the future of education, with a specific focus on English language learning. The research encompasses several vital tasks: conduct a comprehensive review of existing literature, identify and analyze the current AI tools used in English language learning, investigate the benefits of AI in language learning and examine the potential drawbacks, synthesize the findings to provide a balanced perspective on whether AI represents a utopian vision or a realistic future for English language learning.

Literature Review

What is AI

AI was formally established in 1956 when

“Marvin Minsky and John McCarthy hosted the approximately eight-week-long Dartmouth Summer Research Project on AI (DSRPAI) at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire. This workshop, which marks the beginning of the AI Spring and was funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, reunited those who would later be considered as the founding fathers of AI. The objective of DSRPAI was to reunite researchers from various fields to create a new research area aimed at building machines able to simulate human intelligence” (as cited in Haenlein & Kaplan, 2019, p.3).

AI refers to creating computer systems that carry out tasks traditionally requiring human intelligence. These tasks include learning, reasoning, problem-solving, perception, understanding natural language, and interacting with the environment. AI aims to simulate human cognitive functions by machine learning, neural networks, natural language processing, computer vision, and robotics.

Turan (2017) defines Artificial intelligence “as highly progressing with high-performance capabilities such as controlling traffic, minimizing their speed, and making from self-driving cars to the SIRI, the artificial intelligence is rapidly advancing.” Turan adds:

“Recently, AI has been reflected as the synthetic representation of the human brain which tries to simulate the learning process to mimic the human brain power. It is necessary to reassure everyone that Artificial intelligence is equal to that of the human brain, which is unable to be created” (as cited in Zhang et al., 2016, p.176).

According to Shnureno (2018), AI has come:

“...into our daily lives mainly through mobile devices and the internet. Similarly, governments and businesses are increasingly use AI tools and techniques to solve problems and improve many business processes, especially online ones. Such developments bring new realities to social life that may not have been experienced before. These realities lead most of us to spend considerable time on various media environments and social platforms for professional or social reasons. Most of these online interactions are designed and driven by new technologies, especially AI”(as cited in Shnurenko et al., 2018, p.1).

English as a Global Language

Language is a means of communication and a mirror of people’s thoughts, feelings, ideas, and expressions. All languages are different but have something familiar: every language keeps the customs of its people.

The connection between the English language and the modern world is multifaceted and deep. English is the global lingua franca, an essential means of communication in business, science, technology, entertainment, and diplomacy.

Srinivas (2019) said, “375 million people speak English as a first language, and more than 750 million speak it as a second language. Moreover, English has official or special status in almost 70 countries” (p.68).

Srinivas (2019) says, “English has become the fastest-increasing language in this modern world, and it occupies the status of a commercial language by connecting the East, the West, the North, and the South” (p.66). Srinivas states:

“The English language is spread worldwide in science, engineering and technology, medicine, trade and commerce, scientific research, education, tourism, the Internet, banking, business, advertising, film industry, transportation, and pharmacy. Undoubtedly, English occupies a unique place as it is a dominant global language in the above mentioned fields, and the dominance of English has become like a snowball that is too big to prevent” (p.66).

Gohil (2017) wrote about the smartphone revolution in the 21st century:

“English has become necessary to stand out in the communication competition world. In today’s society, life becomes very complicated for anyone uncomfortable conversing in English. It is embarrassing not to speak English when it is most needed, and it is equally disheartening to fail” (p.11).

The combination of historical, economic, technological, cultural, and educational factors has contributed to the rise of English as a global language.

Learning English and AI

Dewil et al. (2021) defines learning as:

“the process of improving knowledge. Within the practice of participation, learners convey their experiences and social experiences through a range of direct and indirect ways to develop sensible skills and acknowledge their values. Due to the need for English as a universal language, its utility has become increasingly critical, particularly in countries where English could be a second language. Hence, it is necessary to develop learner’s skills in the simulation language environment” (p.2).

Srinivas (2019) argues that English is central to global education, deemed essential due to the prevalence of English-language textbooks in higher education.

“English has been widely used by the students, the teachers, and researchers around the world because English is the main medium used in the various fields of education and it is the only language where the information is stored in the form of books and journals in both printed and electronic form. There have been rapid changes in the field of the educational system; therefore, the students can make use of the resources available all around the world just by accessing the internet” (p.73).

Virtual Reality (VR) tools have been widely adopted in foreign language education for the last two decades. An Intelligent Virtual Environment (IVE) is suggested as a fusion of advanced technologies and tools, manifested in autonomous entities and agents, alongside efficient methods for their graphical depiction and diverse forms of interaction (Luck & Aylett, 2000, p.2).

Mukhallafi (2020) wrote down:

“AI makes it easy for instructors to measure their students’ levels precisely, which is something often difficult to achieve. It enables university teaching staff to assess the level of the educational processors and determine deficiencies in the lectures, scientific content, and the educational material introduced to students. AI helps meet the needs of each student according to his/her abilities and needs by introducing home assignments and monitoring the scores obtained by each student because it has smart programs that identify the students’ common mistakes, gives the instructors hints as to what the problems are, and introduces instant feedback in a file designed separately for each student. Furthermore, AI tools and programs can cope with classroom density” (p.43).

Learning English with AI is advantageous for anyone. It not only facilitates access to resources and communication with peers but also opens up doors to career opportunities, networking, and staying abreast of advancements in this rapidly growing field.

Teaching English as an International Language

An international language consists of spoken symbols (words and phrases) that people use to communicate with each other. This implies that the global language is a typical means of communication among people from different linguistic backgrounds.

In this context, McKay (2004) notes that Smith presents various claims regarding the connection between an international language and culture. These include the notion that learners of such a language need not assimilate the cultural norms of native speakers; the international language loses its association with any specific nation, and the educational objective of mastering an international language is to empower learners to effectively convey their ideas and cultural heritage to others (p.2).

A surge in English medium instruction refers to the adoption of English as the language of teaching for academic subjects (excluding English language itself) in regions or nations where the predominant language of the populace is not English (Macaro et al., 2018, p. 37).

Mukhallafi (2020) studied many of the difficulties of teaching/learning English with AI and noted:

“...using both traditional and digital communication strategies in the teaching/learning processes and activities is necessary. Thus, it is necessary to use AI applications such as simulation and communication programs as these simulate real life situations for conversation and communication in English, introduce practical training in language skills, and educational games based on language. Communication tools based on AI help design situations for practicing the accurate pronunciation of letters and words through sound drills and visual media. Such tools provide exercises for describing and interpreting images and everyday situations, for listening, and for practicing guided pronunciation” (p. 44).

Pettela (2020) suggested:

“AI and Teaching English as a second language requires training and practicing language skills. Since the opportunity to practice these skills in real-life situations is often not available, students’ chances of mastering these skills are diminished. Therefore, it is necessary to switch from traditional strategies to communicative ones and rely on digital tools to face difficulties in teaching/learning English. Teaching English as a foreign language is very essential in modern life. The main task of teaching English is to develop communicative competence, which is achieved through knowing how to use language elements and vocabulary to develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. It also includes how to use language to produce texts and how to use it to understand reading passages. It is required to use AI simulation and communication programs in English to simulate real life communicational situations, and introduce practical training in language skills. Communication tools based on AI help design situations for practicing the accurate pronunciation of letters and words through sound drills and visual media. Such tools provide describing and interpreting images and everyday situations, as well as listening and practicing guided pronunciation. They also allow learners to practice language skills and provide feedback for guidance” (p.2898).

Under these circumstances, Sumakul (2022) hypothesizes:

“The participants have positive perceptions regarding the application of AI technology in English as Foreign Language classrooms. The participants generally agreed that AI could help teachers teach and students learn. Moreover, two additional aspects were worth considering when integrating AI in language classrooms. They are students’ motivational levels and teachers’ technological and pedagogical knowledge” (p.249).

According to AbdAlgane and Alhalangy (2023), teachers and students require a reassessment:

“...at the potential advantages that AI could bring to the classroom and prioritize finding ways to implement it. Most teachers believe implementing AI is necessary to provide students with an excellent education. There is emerging evidence that using AI tools in the classroom improves the outcomes of both teachers and students. It is accomplished by enhancing the availability of up-to-date resources for teachers and the accessibility of real-world experiences for students. Students may find that learning a new language is more pleasant and satisfying if they have access to a wider variety of authentic resources by technological approaches” (p.41).

Method

The principal method in the study is naturalistic, where language is a pivotal source to collect the data. It was interacting with participants directly. Qualitative research methods are based on a natural background involving interviews, observation, and literature reviews. The purpose of a literature review is to answer questions about Artificial Intelligence in language learning.

Data Collection Strategy

The data was obtained in the interviews. The interview process includes applications to have used AI in English language learning.

A literature review with an analytic descriptive approach is essential for different types of research on knowledge development. The literature review is obtained from Google Scholar, Web of Science, and Scopus according to the keywords: artificial intelligence, English as the international language, English learning, foreign language learning, future, language, utopia.

Measuring Tool Validity

The questionnaire’s validity was authorized by twelve Ukrainian and Polish doctors of science specializing in teaching methodology. The questions were written in the English language according to the research problem (Table 1).

Table 1. *The questionnaire.*

QUESTIONNAIRE		
<i>Please complete this survey to tell us how satisfied you are with Artificial Intelligence.</i>		
	Gender	
	Age	
	Country	
No	Questions	Answer
1	How often do you use AI in everyday life?	
2	Do you use Machine Translation?	
3	Do you use AI as a writing tool?	
4	Do you speak with AI?	
5	Is AI a utopia or the future of English learning?	

Procedures of Field Application

The study tool was applied during the first term of the academic year 2022/2023 at three universities: Foreign Languages Departments of Kyiv National University of Trade and Economics (Ukraine), Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University (Ukraine), and The Poznań University of Life Sciences (Poland). One thousand and eighteen students took part in the survey. The participants were proficient English users. The demographic features are provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Demographic Features

Demographic Features		Country	
		Ukraine, %	Poland, %
Gender	Male	32 %	41 %
	Female	68 %	57 %
	No answer	-	2 %
Age	15-18	8 %	53 %
	19-25	72 %	38 %
	26-30	12 %	3 %
	31-40	4 %	2 %
	41-50	4 %	4 %

The interview was conducted face-to-face for 20-30 minutes and presented in written form. The data have been prepared for statistical processing.

Results

The qualitative data were analyzed following some steps. First, we thoroughly read the interview results to familiarize ourselves with their content. The second step involved analyzing answers in accordance with research criteria. Finally, we grouped data according to five questions in the questionnaire.

1. How often do you use AI in everyday life?

All participants answered the question *How often do you use AI in everyday life* with four different words and word combinations: *always, every day, seldom, and usually*, Figure 1.

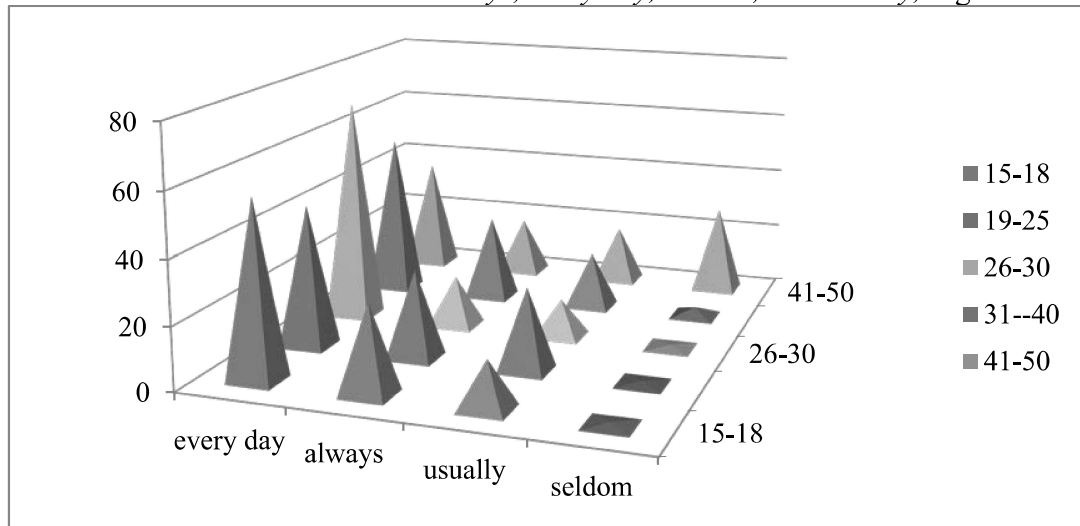


Figure 1. AI in everyday life.

Figure 1 indicates the following:

- All age categories use AI in everyday life. AI is used by most people from morning until night.
- Answers EVERY DAY, USUALLY, and ALWAYS reflect the same lexical meaning. Using synonyms indicates that all interviewees have one concept about AI – regularity.
- All indicators show that AI today occupies an integral place in human life because AI is present in all spheres of human activity – education, medicine, training, insurance, banking, communicating, buying, selling, traveling, etc. On the one hand, this is a necessity and a new opportunity in life. On the other hand, it is an addiction that affects the quality of life.

Stone et al. (2016) wrote, that AI is already reshaping our everyday experiences, primarily by enhancing human health, safety, and productivity. The emergence of superhuman robots is not imminent, and perhaps not even feasible. Although it's crucial to recognize and tackle the potential for misuse of AI technologies (p.6).

2. Do you use Machine Translation?

Machine translation plays a significant role in learning English, offering various benefits and opportunities for language learners. It can be called automatic translation.

Responses to this question covered five groups according to age, Figure 2.

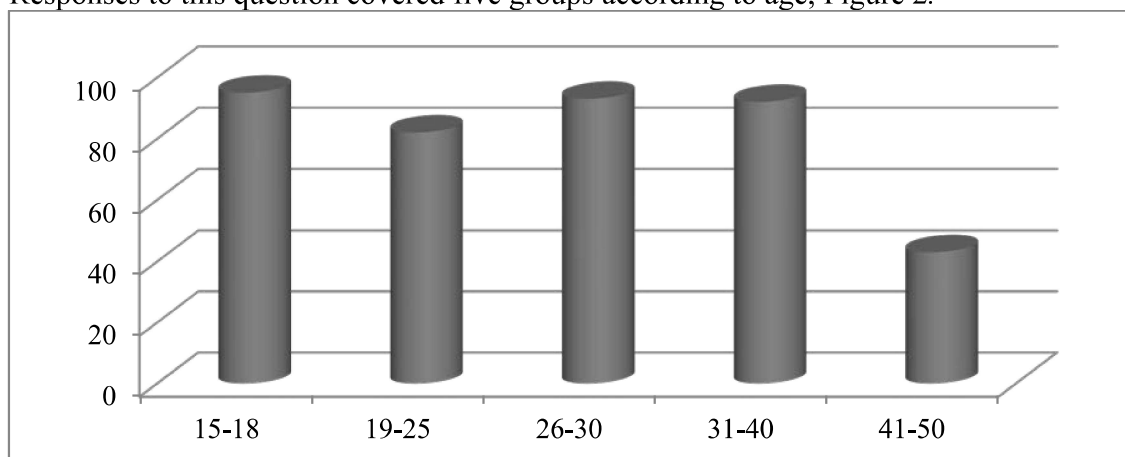


Figure 2. AI and Translation

Figure 2 indicates the following:

- Ninety five(95%) in the age of 15-18, 82% in the age of 19-25, 93% in the age of 26-30, 92% in the age of 31-40, and 43% in the age of 41-50 use machine translation.
- The highest index is 95% in the age of 15-18. It can indicate the skill in using modern technologies of the younger generation on the one hand and total dependence on technologies on the other.
- The lowest index is 43% in the age of 41-50. It can point to inactive use of technologies or lack of necessary skills in using new technologies.
- The middle index of 82% in the age of 19-25, 93% in the age of 26-30, and 92% in the age of 31-40 can prove the active, reasonable use of technologies.

Machine translation complements learning English by providing instant translation assistance – learners can use services like Google Translate to understand the linguistic meaning quickly. By translating sentences, paragraphs, or entire documents into their native language, learners can

grasp the meaning of English content within specific contexts, such as academic articles, news articles, or literature. Machine translation assists learners in expanding their English vocabulary. It also aids learners in understanding English grammar and syntax enabling them to practice English writing and receive feedback on their language proficiency. By composing sentences or paragraphs in their native language and translating them into English, learners can assess their language skills, identify errors, and improve their writing accuracy.

Machine translation facilitates cultural understanding and language immersion for English language learners. By translating English texts into their native language, learners can explore English-speaking cultures, traditions, and perspectives. Machine translation is good, but at the same time, it slows people down in their thoughts. A person stops solving translation errors independently, and AI comes first.

3. Do you use AI as a writing tool?

AI tools have become increasingly advanced to improve grammar, style, and structure in writing. AI is a powerful writing tool, offering various capabilities and benefits for writers across different genres and purposes.

We predicted that the response in all age categories would be 100% positive, Figure 3.

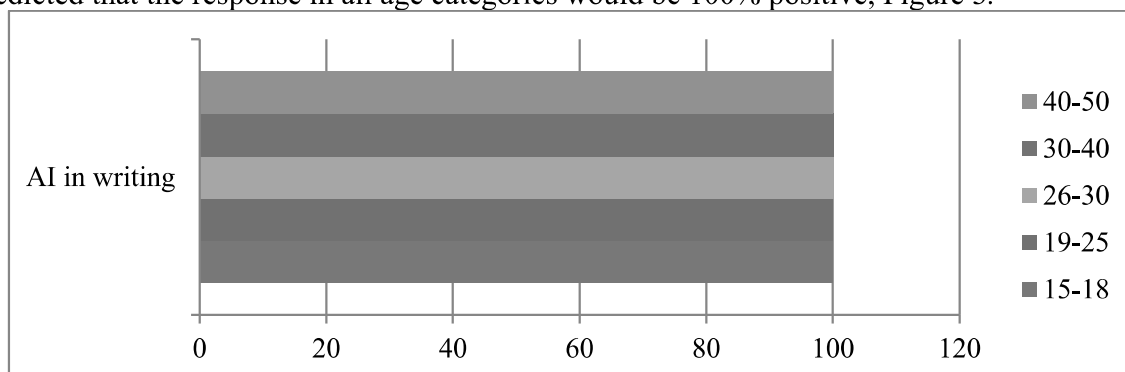


Figure 3. AI in writing

We also asked recipients about automatic error correction in writing, Figure 4.

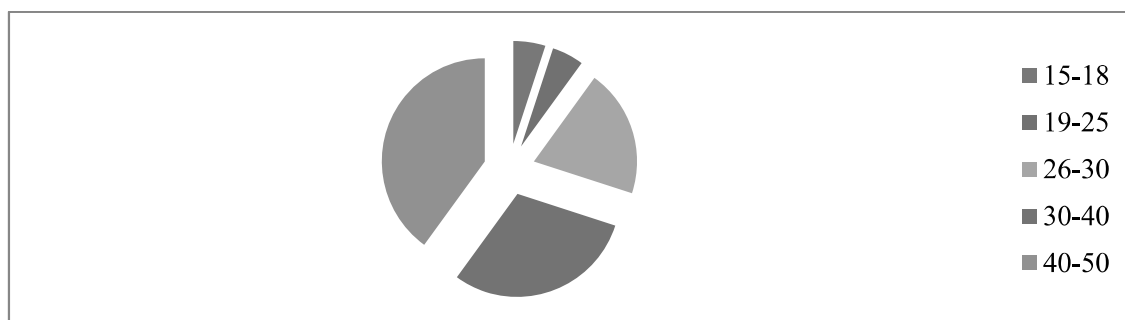


Figure 4. Attention to automatic error correction

Figure 3 and Figure 4 indicate the following:

- All informants use AI tools in writing.
- 98% of 15-25 age recipients ignore the automatic correction in writing, which indicates the complete trust of AI in making corrections and the lack of knowledge of proper writing.
- Other group categories demonstrate the importance of proper writing, evidenced by our experience with AI, where AI does not always correctly correct errors, sometimes changing words with entirely different meanings.

People ignored the importance of AI in writing. We can point to a remarkable improvement in correct grammar forms suitable to the topics people write with attention to punctuation marks.

AI can generate content across different formats, including articles, essays, blog posts, product descriptions, and social media posts. AI-based writing tools help writers improve the quality and clarity of their writing. These instruments provide grammar and spell-checking, style suggestions, readability analysis, and vocabulary enhancement. AI algorithms can detect errors, inconsistencies, and awkward phrasings in written text, providing recommendations for revisions and improvements. Language enhancement tools help writers refine their writing style, polish their prose, and ensure linguistic accuracy. AI facilitates language translation, enabling writers to translate written content between different languages accurately and efficiently. It supports creative writers' writing by providing inspiration, prompts, and innovative suggestions.

4. Do you speak with AI?

The first reaction was a misunderstanding when the interviewees heard this question. Almost everyone has asked what it means. After the explanation, nearly everyone smiled and wrote the answer Table 3.

Table 3. *Speaking with AI*

	15-18	19-25	25-30	31-40	41-50
Yes	95 %	82 %	81 %	42 %	2 %
No	5 %	16 %	15 %	51 %	94 %
No answer	-	2 %	4 %	7 %	4 %

Table 3 displays the following:

- The younger generation very often uses AI when speaking. It indicates the need to constantly train language skills and entertainment purposes to search for the necessary information to use AI assistance independently.
- The indicators show that middle-aged people (40-50 years) hardly use AI for communication. It shows that people don't need to live sustainably and don't know how to communicate with AI.

When speaking with AI, it is essential to communicate clearly and provide context to ensure AI understands the user's intentions and responds accurately. Additionally, users should be aware of the capabilities and limitations of AI systems and adjust their expectations accordingly.

Nowadays, people, especially the younger generation, feel an urgent need for honest communication. The world of AI has supplanted living speech; instead, artificial language connections prevail. People are looking for soul-to-heart conversations with AI, where it is possible to be yourself and not play a social role.

5. Is AI a utopia or the future of English learning?

The answers were related to the words Yes, No, I don't know, Figure 5.

Figure 5. AI: a utopia or the future in foreign language learning

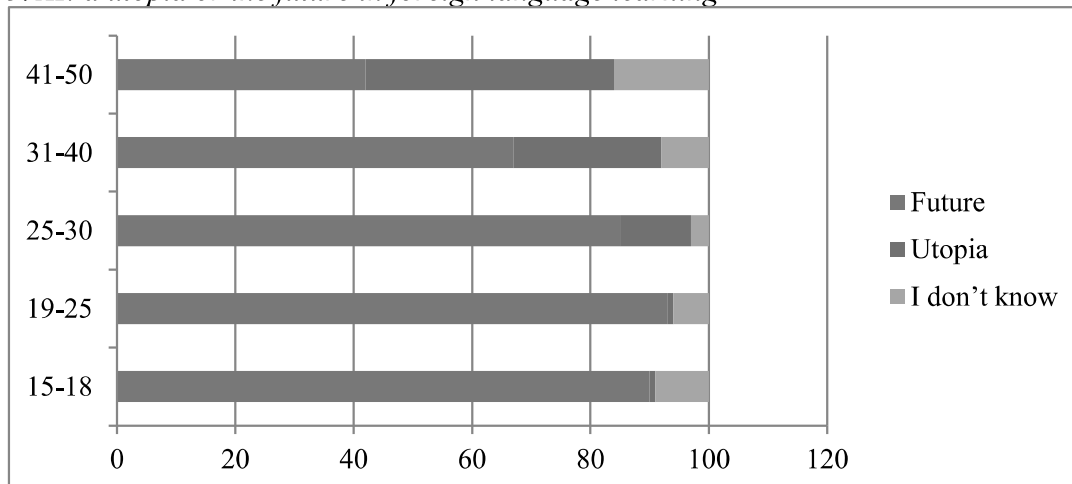


Figure 5 indicates the following:

- People of all ages answered about the future of AI in language learning.
- Most positive responses are from representatives of the younger generation, which indicates the total interaction of AI and life at this age.
- Middle-aged people state that AI can have negative consequences on language learning.

AI represents the potential for significant advancements in English learning and the realization of certain utopian ideals. It can provide personalized learning experiences according to individual learners' needs, abilities, and preferences. AI language learning platforms offer accessible and affordable resources to learners, regardless of their geographic location. Virtual reality (VR) driven by AI can create immersive language learning environments that simulate real-world contexts. AI algorithms provide instant feedback on pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary, helping learners identify parts for improvement. It is also important to note that learning English can be a necessary component in developing new stages of AI technologies.

As for utopian aspects, it can be differentiated: AI-driven language learning tools would be accessible to anyone with good internet connection. It has the potential to make English learning more effective by adaptive learning techniques, and personalized feedback. AI-powered language learning platforms can support lifelong learning initiatives, empowering individuals to consistently enhance their English language proficiency at their convenience.

Discussion

Artificial Intelligence is a significant achievement for humans. AI represents a new era of development. This coming era demonstrates a scientific and technological revolution in all spheres. AI is an automated system that can receive, process, and apply knowledge and skills. The system can interpret external data and select the best solution to the problem for the goal. The primary purpose of creating AI was to help people. Nowadays, scientists pay more and more attention to creating a brain model that will help reveal the secrets of thinking and understanding processes.

As the literature analysis shows, AI has its positive and negative aspects. The positive aspects of using AI are diagnosing diseases, analyzing and processing large amounts of data in

industry, economy, and law, saving time and money, and efficiency in banking, science, space, and others. Scientists also include the negative aspects such as mass unemployment, loss of control over AI, and development of conflicts on religious, social, and economic grounds.

When we talk about AI and learning English as a foreign language, it is necessary to pay attention to the active use of AI for effective language learning today. But will AI be able to help humanity or, on the contrary, hinder further language development?

There is a considerable number of applications and platforms today. Some are officially recommended, and some are only used for entertainment. In learning English, a special place is occupied by the motivational sphere due to cognitive and intellectual needs. Communication with AI is an activity that motivates the exchange of information and experience; it gets new knowledge and skills. AI contributes to understanding of recent phenomena; develops the necessary cognitive processes (perception, logical thinking, memory, and imagination); provides an opportunity to train independently and check the level of knowledge and skills on a particular topic; identifies specific gaps, refines them and completes the proposed tasks to improve results; monitors the performance of tasks; and performs a communicative function. AI provides different English language learning activities in various controlled practices, provides individual feedback, allows performing tasks anytime, and supports different learning styles. However, excessive use of AI in language learning has risks: loss of interest in language learning in a natural environment, crowding out of live communication, development of the so-called AI addiction, reduction of mental abilities – development of digital dementia and cybercrime.

Using AI in language learning is a future step toward successful mastery of lexical and grammatical patterns, as well as cultural immersion. Language learning involves more than just mastering vocabulary and grammar; it also requires social interaction, cultural understanding, and communication skills. Language is deeply intertwined with culture, context, and social norms. AI may attempt to take the subtleties of language use in different cultural contexts, leading to potential misunderstandings or misinterpretations. AI-driven language learning platforms raise ethical concerns related to data privacy, algorithmic bias, and the depersonalization of education. It is essential to ensure that AI technologies in English learning prioritize learners' privacy, equity, and well-being.

Teaching English with AI requires the presence of the Internet, but this is not always possible. One of the reasons is the war in the country. Nowadays, Ukraine can be an example of it. The lack of electricity and communication requires the use of printed textbooks and other educational tools of the old generation. The second reason may be the lack of a sufficient financial position to ensure access to AI while learning a foreign language. The low level of people's finances does not foresee the possibility of losses on quality education but only satisfies the necessary needs for food and medicine.

All these points are significant in studying AI's role in English language learning. It is worth striving to solve the existing problems to ensure a high level of language teaching with the help of modern technologies. Only the intelligent use of AI, considering all the positive and negative sides, will contribute to the practical realization of the English language. An essential condition for the successful use of AI in language learning is information and communication literacy, which is keeping the development of technology and using it actively under the needs of modern society.

Conclusion

AI is an integral part of modern human development. It covers all areas of life and aims to help in efficient technological processes. The objective of this study was to answer the question: *Is AI a utopia or the future of language learning?* AI represents a tangible future for English language learning. AI is used for language recognition, translation, vocabulary, and grammar. It is unsuitable for teaching foreign languages since it cannot accurately interpret cultural nuances and context. AI is a valuable tool in translating. It is a helpful writing tool, offering a wide range of capabilities in content generation, language enhancement, translation, text summarization, creative writing, and collaborative writing. Conversational interactions AI are becoming increasingly natural and personalized, offering users new ways to interact with technology. While AI holds great promise for the future of English learning, its success will depend on careful implementation, ethical considerations, and a balanced integration that enhances rather than diminishes the human aspects of education. AI complements human educators and foster meaningful language learning experiences prioritizing cultural understanding, communication skills, and lifelong learning.

Funding

This research is not funded.

Acknowledgments

Not applicable.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Authenticity

This manuscript is an original work

Artificial Intelligence Statement:

AI and AI-assisted technologies were not used

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