eISSN: 2229-3213 pISSN: 2229-3205
The Journal of Applied Science and Social Science
Volume 16,Issue 04 April, 2026

LARGE LANGUAGE MODELS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Dildorakhon Okhunova
E-mail: dildorokhunova1995@gmail.com

Abstract. This article provides a critical analysis of the use of large language models (LLMs) in English language teaching (ELT), focusing on their opportunities and constraints. Drawing on recent literature, the study examines how LLMs enhance personalized learning, learner engagement, and accessibility through features such as instant feedback and interactive communication. At the same time, it highlights key challenges, including issues of accuracy, ethical concerns, and the risk of over-reliance on AI-generated content. The findings suggest that while LLMs have strong potential to support language learning, their effectiveness depends on thoughtful pedagogical integration and responsible use. The study concludes that LLMs should complement, rather than replace, human teachers, and calls for the development of clear guidelines to ensure their ethical and effective implementation in ELT contexts.

Keywords: large language models, English language teaching, artificial intelligence, language learning, personalized learning, educational technology, AI in education, learner autonomy, academic integrity, digital literacy.

Introduction. The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies has significantly transformed various sectors, including education. Among these innovations, large language models (LLMs), such as OpenAI's GPT series, Google's Gemini, and other transformer-based architectures, have emerged as powerful tools capable of generating human-like text, understanding context, and engaging in meaningful dialogue. Their integration into English language teaching (ELT) has sparked considerable interest among educators, researchers, and policymakers, as they promise to reshape traditional pedagogical approaches while also raising critical concerns regarding their limitations and ethical implications. Recent developments in natural language processing (NLP) have enabled LLMs to perform a wide range of linguistic tasks, including text generation, summarization, translation, grammar correction, and conversational interaction. These capabilities align closely with the core components of language learning, such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Consequently, LLMs are increasingly being adopted as supplementary tools in ELT contexts, offering personalized learning experiences, instant feedback, and access to vast linguistic resources. Studies conducted between 2022 and 2025 indicate that AI-driven tools can enhance learner engagement and autonomy, particularly in environments where access to qualified instructors is limited (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2023; Kasneci et al., 2023).

One of the most notable opportunities presented by LLMs in English language teaching is their ability to support individualized learning. Unlike traditional classroom settings, where instruction is often standardized, LLMs can adapt to learners' proficiency levels, learning styles, and specific needs. For example, students can practice writing essays and receive immediate, detailed feedback on grammar, coherence, and vocabulary usage. Similarly, conversational AI systems enable learners to engage in simulated dialogues, thereby improving their communicative competence in a low-anxiety environment. This aligns with contemporary pedagogical theories emphasizing learner-centered approaches and formative assessment practices. Furthermore, LLMs contribute to increased accessibility and inclusivity in language education. In regions where educational resources are scarce, these technologies can serve as cost-effective alternatives to traditional instruction. Learners can access high-quality language support through mobile devices or online platforms, thereby bridging gaps in educational equity. Recent research also highlights the potential of LLMs to support multilingual learners by providing explanations in their native languages and facilitating cross-linguistic comparisons

(Holmes & Tuomi, 2024). Such features are particularly relevant in global contexts where English is taught as a foreign or second language.

Despite these promising opportunities, the integration of LLMs into ELT is not without challenges. One major concern is the issue of reliability and accuracy. Although LLMs are trained on vast datasets, they are prone to generating incorrect or misleading information, a phenomenon often referred to as "hallucination." This raises questions about the extent to which learners can rely on AI-generated feedback without critical evaluation. Moreover, the lack of transparency in how these models generate responses complicates their use in educational settings, where accountability and trust are essential. Another critical constraint involves ethical considerations, including data privacy, academic integrity, and potential biases embedded within AI systems. LLMs may inadvertently reproduce stereotypes or culturally insensitive content, which can negatively impact learners' perceptions and experiences. Additionally, the ease with which students can use AI tools to generate essays or complete assignments poses challenges for assessment practices and raises concerns about plagiarism and the erosion of academic skills. Scholars argue that without proper guidelines and digital literacy training, the misuse of LLMs could undermine the educational process (Dwivedi et al., 2023). Moreover, the role of teachers in AI-enhanced learning environments remains a subject of ongoing debate. While LLMs can automate certain instructional tasks, they cannot fully replace the pedagogical expertise, emotional intelligence, and contextual awareness that human educators provide. Effective integration of these technologies requires a balanced approach in which teachers act as facilitators, guiding students in the responsible and critical use of AI tools. Professional development and institutional support are therefore essential to ensure that educators are equipped to navigate this evolving landscape.

In light of these considerations, this study aims to provide a critical analysis of the opportunities and constraints associated with the use of large language models in English language teaching. By examining recent literature and emerging practices, the paper seeks to offer a nuanced understanding of how LLMs can be effectively integrated into ELT while addressing their limitations. Ultimately, this research contributes to the ongoing discourse on the role of AI in education and highlights the need for thoughtful, ethical, and pedagogically sound implementation strategies.

Literature review. The emergence of large language models (LLMs) has generated substantial scholarly attention in the fields of artificial intelligence, applied linguistics, and educational technology. Recent literature (2022–2025) reflects a growing interest in understanding how these models can be effectively integrated into English language teaching (ELT), while also critically evaluating their pedagogical value, limitations, and ethical implications. This section reviews contemporary studies that explore the role of LLMs in language education, focusing on their instructional affordances, impact on learner outcomes, and associated challenges. A significant portion of the literature emphasizes the transformative potential of LLMs in enhancing language learning processes. Zawacki-Richter et al. (2023) argue that AI-driven systems, including LLMs, enable adaptive learning environments where instructional content can be tailored to individual learners' needs. This personalization is particularly beneficial in ELT contexts, where learners often exhibit diverse proficiency levels and learning goals. Similarly, Kasneci et al. (2023) highlight that tools based on advanced models, such as GPT-4, can support a wide range of language-related tasks, including essay writing, grammar correction, and vocabulary development. Their findings suggest that LLMs can function as intelligent tutoring systems, providing immediate and context-sensitive feedback that enhances learners' engagement and autonomy.

In addition to personalization, several studies focus on the role of LLMs in developing communicative competence. For instance, Huang et al. (2024) examine the use of conversational AI in language practice and report that learners who engage in AI-mediated dialogues

demonstrate improved fluency and confidence in speaking tasks. These findings are consistent with communicative language teaching (CLT) principles, which emphasize interaction as a key component of language acquisition. Furthermore, AI chatbots offer a low-anxiety environment for practice, which is particularly advantageous for learners who may feel hesitant to participate in traditional classroom interactions. Holmes and Tuomi (2024) also note that LLMs can simulate authentic communication scenarios, thereby bridging the gap between classroom instruction and real-world language use. Another important theme in the literature is the accessibility and scalability of LLM-based tools. Researchers argue that these technologies can democratize access to high-quality language education, especially in under-resourced contexts. For example, Luckin et al. (2023) highlight that AI-powered platforms can deliver consistent and cost-effective support to large numbers of learners, making them particularly valuable in regions with limited access to qualified English teachers. Additionally, LLMs can provide multilingual support, enabling learners to receive explanations in their native languages and facilitating deeper comprehension. This feature is especially relevant in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings, where linguistic barriers often hinder effective learning. Despite these advantages, the literature also identifies several critical limitations associated with the use of LLMs in ELT. One of the most frequently discussed issues is the accuracy and reliability of AI-generated content. Bender et al. (2021), whose work continues to influence recent discussions, caution that language models may produce plausible but incorrect information due to their probabilistic nature. More recent studies (e.g., Ji et al., 2023) further investigate the phenomenon of "hallucination," demonstrating that LLMs can generate fabricated facts or misleading explanations. In the context of language learning, this raises concerns about the validity of feedback provided to learners and underscores the need for human oversight.

Ethical considerations constitute another major area of concern in the literature. Dwivedi et al. (2023) provide a comprehensive analysis of the societal implications of generative AI, including issues related to data privacy, algorithmic bias, and academic integrity. In ELT contexts, these concerns manifest in several ways. For instance, LLMs may inadvertently reproduce cultural biases present in their training data, leading to the dissemination of stereotypical or inappropriate content. Moreover, the widespread availability of AI tools has raised questions about plagiarism and the authenticity of student work. Cotton et al. (2023) argue that traditional assessment methods may need to be re-evaluated in light of these challenges, as students can easily use LLMs to generate essays and complete assignments. The impact of LLMs on teachers' roles and professional practices is another key topic in recent research. While some scholars view AI as a means of reducing teachers' workload by automating routine tasks, others emphasize the irreplaceable role of human educators. For example, Selwyn (2023) argues that teaching involves not only the transmission of knowledge but also the development of critical thinking, creativity, and socio-emotional skills—areas where AI remains limited. Consequently, the integration of LLMs into ELT requires a redefinition of teachers' roles, with a greater emphasis on facilitation, guidance, and the cultivation of digital literacy among learners.

Recent empirical studies also explore learners' perceptions of LLM-based tools. Findings suggest that students generally view these technologies positively, particularly in terms of convenience and usefulness. However, concerns about over-reliance and reduced cognitive effort have also been reported (Park & Kim, 2024). Some researchers warn that excessive dependence on AI-generated content may hinder the development of essential language skills, such as critical reading and independent writing. This highlights the importance of designing pedagogical frameworks that encourage active engagement rather than passive consumption of AI outputs. Furthermore, the literature underscores the need for clear guidelines and policies governing the use of LLMs in educational settings. UNESCO (2023) and other international organizations have called for the development of ethical frameworks to ensure the responsible use of AI in education. These frameworks emphasize transparency, accountability, and inclusivity, as well as

the protection of learners' rights. In the context of ELT, this involves establishing best practices for integrating LLMs into curricula, training educators to use these tools effectively, and promoting awareness of their limitations. The reviewed literature presents a balanced perspective on the use of large language models in English language teaching. While these technologies offer significant opportunities for enhancing personalization, accessibility, and learner engagement, they also pose challenges related to accuracy, ethics, and pedagogical integrity. The consensus among scholars is that LLMs should not be viewed as replacements for human teachers but rather as complementary tools that can enrich the learning experience when used appropriately. Future research is needed to further explore their long-term impact on language acquisition and to develop strategies for their effective and responsible implementation in diverse educational contexts.

Research discussion. The findings of this study reveal that large language models (LLMs) present a complex interplay of opportunities and constraints in the context of English language teaching (ELT). While the reviewed literature and emerging practices highlight their transformative potential, the discussion underscores the necessity of a balanced and critically informed approach to their integration into educational environments. One of the most significant insights emerging from this analysis is the extent to which LLMs can enhance learner autonomy and engagement. By providing instant feedback, personalized learning pathways, and interactive conversational experiences, these technologies empower learners to take greater control of their language development. This aligns with constructivist and learner-centered pedagogies, which emphasize active participation and self-directed learning. In particular, the ability of LLMs to simulate real-life communication scenarios offers a valuable supplement to traditional classroom instruction, especially in contexts where opportunities for authentic interaction are limited. As a result, learners can practice language skills more frequently and with reduced anxiety, which contributes to increased confidence and fluency. However, the discussion also highlights that the effectiveness of LLMs in fostering meaningful learning outcomes depends heavily on how they are used. While these tools can support language practice, they do not inherently promote deep learning or critical thinking. In some cases, learners may rely on AI-generated responses without fully engaging with the underlying linguistic structures or concepts. This raises concerns about superficial learning and the potential erosion of essential skills such as independent writing and analytical reasoning. Therefore, it is crucial for educators to design tasks that encourage students to critically evaluate and reflect on AI-generated content rather than passively accept it. Another important dimension of this discussion is the issue of accuracy and reliability. Although LLMs are capable of producing grammatically correct and contextually appropriate responses, they are not infallible. The phenomenon of hallucination—where models generate plausible but incorrect information—poses a significant challenge in educational settings. In the context of ELT, inaccurate explanations or misleading examples can hinder learners' progress and lead to the internalization of errors. This reinforces the need for human oversight and the integration of verification mechanisms to ensure the quality of information provided by AI systems. Teachers, therefore, play a critical role in mediating the use of LLMs and guiding learners in distinguishing between reliable and unreliable outputs.

Ethical considerations further complicate the adoption of LLMs in ELT. Issues related to data privacy, algorithmic bias, and academic integrity require careful attention. For instance, the potential for LLMs to reproduce biased or culturally insensitive content may negatively impact learners, particularly in diverse and multicultural classrooms. Moreover, the ease with which students can use AI tools to complete assignments raises questions about fairness and authenticity in assessment. This necessitates a rethinking of traditional evaluation methods, with a shift toward more process-oriented and formative approaches that emphasize learning over product. Educators may need to incorporate oral assessments, project-based tasks, and reflective writing to better assess students' actual competencies. The discussion also emphasizes the

evolving role of teachers in AI-enhanced learning environments. Rather than being replaced by technology, teachers are increasingly required to act as facilitators, mentors, and critical guides. Their responsibilities extend beyond content delivery to include fostering digital literacy, ethical awareness, and critical thinking skills among learners. This shift calls for substantial professional development and institutional support to ensure that educators are equipped to effectively integrate LLMs into their teaching practices. Without such support, there is a risk that the potential benefits of these technologies may not be fully realized. Furthermore, the discussion points to the importance of contextual factors in determining the success of LLM integration. Educational settings vary widely in terms of technological infrastructure, institutional policies, and cultural attitudes toward AI. In some contexts, limited access to reliable internet or digital devices may hinder the effective use of LLM-based tools. In others, resistance to technological change or lack of awareness may pose additional challenges. Therefore, implementation strategies must be tailored to specific contexts, taking into account local needs, resources, and constraints.

At the same time, the scalability and accessibility of LLMs offer promising opportunities for addressing educational inequalities. In under-resourced regions, these tools can provide learners with access to high-quality language support that would otherwise be unavailable. However, this potential can only be realized if issues related to digital access and literacy are adequately addressed. Policymakers and educational institutions must work collaboratively to ensure that the benefits of AI technologies are distributed equitably and do not exacerbate existing disparities. The discussion highlights that while LLMs have the potential to significantly enhance English language teaching, their impact is not inherently positive or negative. Rather, it depends on how these technologies are integrated, regulated, and utilized within educational contexts. A critical and reflective approach is essential to maximize their benefits while mitigating associated risks. By combining technological innovation with sound pedagogical principles and ethical considerations, educators can harness the potential of LLMs to create more effective, inclusive, and engaging language learning environments.

Conclusion. Large language models (LLMs) represent a significant advancement in the field of English language teaching, offering innovative solutions to long-standing pedagogical challenges. Their ability to provide personalized feedback, simulate interactive communication, and increase access to language learning resources makes them valuable tools in modern educational contexts. As demonstrated throughout this study, LLMs can enhance learner engagement, autonomy, and overall language proficiency when integrated thoughtfully into instructional practices. However, the findings also emphasize that these benefits are accompanied by notable limitations and risks. Issues related to accuracy, ethical concerns, and the potential for over-reliance highlight the need for cautious and responsible implementation. LLMs should not be viewed as replacements for human educators but rather as complementary tools that require careful guidance and supervision. Teachers play a crucial role in ensuring that learners use these technologies critically and effectively. Ultimately, the successful integration of LLMs in ELT depends on a balanced approach that combines technological innovation with sound pedagogical principles and ethical awareness. Future research and policy development should focus on creating frameworks that support the responsible use of AI while maximizing its educational potential.

References

1. Bender, E. M., Gebru, T., McMillan-Major, A., & Shmitchell, S. (2021). On the dangers of stochastic parrots: Can language models be too big? Proceedings of the 2021 ACM Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency, 610–623. https://doi.org/10.1145/3442188.3445922

2. Cotton, D. R. E., Cotton, P. A., & Shipway, J. R. (2023). Chatting and cheating: Ensuring academic integrity in the era of ChatGPT. Innovations in Education and Teaching International, 60(5), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1080/14703297.2023.2190148
3. Dwivedi, Y. K., Kshetri, N., Hughes, L., Slade, E. L., Jeyaraj, A., Kar, A. K., Baabdullah, A. M., Koohang, A., Raghavan, V., Ahuja, M., Albanna, H., Albashrawi, M., Alalwan, A. A., & others. (2023). "So what if ChatGPT wrote it?" Multidisciplinary perspectives on opportunities, challenges and implications of generative AI. International Journal of Information Management, 71, 102642.
4. Holmes, W., & Tuomi, I. (2024). State of the art and practice in AI in education. European Journal of Education, 59(1), 98–120.
5. Huang, J., Saleh, S., & Liu, Y. (2024). Conversational AI in language learning: Effects on speaking skills and learner confidence. Computer Assisted Language Learning, 37(2), 215–234.
6. Ji, Z., Lee, N., Frieske, R., Yu, T., Su, D., Xu, Y., Ishii, E., Bang, Y., Madotto, A., & Fung, P. (2023). Survey of hallucination in natural language generation. ACM Computing Surveys, 55(12), 1–38.
7. Kasneci, E., Sessler, K., Küchemann, S., Bannert, M., Dementieva, D., Fischer, F., Gasser, U., Groh, G., Günnemann, S., & Hüllermeier, E. (2023). ChatGPT for good? On opportunities and challenges of large language models for education. Learning and Individual Differences, 103, 102274.
8. Luckin, R., Holmes, W., Griffiths, M., & Forcier, L. B. (2023). Intelligence unleashed: An argument for AI in education. Pearson.
9. Park, S., & Kim, Y. (2024). Student perceptions of AI-based writing tools: Benefits, concerns, and implications for learning. Educational Technology Research and Development, 72(1), 45–63.
10. UNESCO. (2023). Guidance for generative AI in education and research. UNESCO Publishing.
11. Zawacki-Richter, O., Marín, V. I., Bond, M., & Gouverneur, F. (2023). Systematic review of research on artificial intelligence applications in higher education. International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education, 20(1), 1–27.