

THE ROLE OF AI IN SUPPORTING LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

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Abstract: This article discusses the role of AI in supporting language learning for international students.

Key words: language, international, important, artificial intelligence, learning.

Аннотация: В этой статье обсуждается роль искусственного интеллекта в поддержке изучения языка иностранными студентами.

Ключевые слова: язык, международный, важный, искусственный интеллект, обучение.

More students are looking to Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a complement to their learning process. Computer programs and AI-powered language apps have unique and appealing features. These AI systems deliver interactive language exercises and engage learners. They also beat human teachers in providing instant feedback with accuracy. It's no secret that artificial intelligence has taken the world by storm and affects all areas of life and business. AI-powered tools like [ChatGPT](#), [Gemini](#), and [Bing](#) continue changing how people perform everyday tasks. In fact, some tools even allow you to [build a chatbot of your own](#). Needs in heterogeneous foreign language classrooms? In the past years, digital technologies have become scientific and practical focal points in the English language teaching (ELT) world. Whether digital media [are] "friend or foe" (Grimm et al. 2015), technology-enhanced language learning (TELL) has been part of an international discourse, varying between "euphoric proposals," "pessimistic stances," and "opinions which stress that the risks of digital media need to be addressed" (2015, 210). Regardless of general TELL, research studies have shown that "technology can influence the processes and outcomes of education, and many countries are investing in technological support for teaching and learning" (Paiva and Bittencourt 2020, 448). The dynamic development of new technologies and the concomitant digital transformations result in significant challenges both for society as a whole and at all levels of the education system. One of the latest technological developments, which raises more and more interest in connection with these questions, is artificial intelligence (AI). There are many different definitions of what exactly AI is. However, there seems to be a certain semantic lowest common denominator: "Artificial intelligence (AI) is a broad term used to describe a collection of technologies that can solve problems and perform tasks to achieve defined objectives without explicit human guidance" (Healey 2020, 3). The development of so-called narrow AIs

(less complex algorithms that are good at doing one thing in particular, e.g. Siri, AI-powered vacuum cleaners) explicitly shows that data-driven, multi-layered technologies based on algorithms have transformed from a niche discipline into a highly relevant technology for educational, including language learning, purposes. The potential of these programs to analyze unprecedented amounts of data, collected in real time, combined with novel methods from the field of AI, are bringing the optimization of teaching and learning processes into particular focus. Thus, Big Data, combined with sophisticated analytical processes (learning analytics) give hope for a new era of personalized learning, formative assessment, and activating, student-centered, and collaborative forms of learning (Cope and Kalantzis 2016), since, by means of educational data mining, learning processes could theoretically become highly individualized. In this context, new technologies affect the educational system much more substantially than merely on the level of didactic surface structures. This is because they blur the boundaries between formally organized learning environments in schools and informal learning opportunities in leisure time and at home (Seufert et al. 2018). They challenge learners and teachers to adopt an entirely new approach to these new digitally enhanced educational spaces. However, due to the complexity of such systems, the development of AI-based foreign language learning environments that adapt to learner heterogeneity, thus enabling high-level subject learning and practice, is still in its infancy. Although foreign language learning programs are among the most widely used applications on the Internet, and Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) software of various kinds has widely been used for several decades, until today, only very few products have more than rudimentary features of intelligent adaptive systems. In some aspects, only a small number of applications provide a learning experience beyond linear paths, simple right-wrong feedback routines, or a 'one-size-fits-all'-approach (Blume et al. 2017). A great desideratum is to intensify interdisciplinary cooperation between (computer-)linguists, experts in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL), educational scientists, psychologists, computer scientists and interface designers in order to develop smarter foreign language learning systems. This paper aims to critically examine the potentials and challenges of developing AI-enhanced CALL-software to enhance adaptive, individualized, and, in certain respects, intelligent practice in the foreign language classroom. The following section provides an introductory, practical discussion of terms, methods, and common application types of (narrow) AIs in foreign language learning processes. We will then, as the main focus of this paper, address features of intelligent practice in the foreign language classroom, the possibilities of using AI to create adaptive learning environments, and typical architectural elements of intelligent learning systems. Subsequently, this paper provides insights into two current research and development projects. The article concludes with a utopian outlook into the foreign language

classroom of the year 2040. Traditional language teaching methods have taken a revolutionary turn with AI's intervention. Its [benefits](#) are notorious, and its application will continue molding the evolution of education techniques worldwide. Fewer language learners are opting for taking lessons in a classroom. Learners are avoiding studying textbooks, memorizing grammar, and attending lectures. Boring teaching techniques have been cast aside to allow room for a different approach to language instruction. The new learning experience considers students' **individual learning styles**. It directs them toward their goals and approaches their difficulties. Language education methods now incorporate techniques to **engage** learners and foster **better results**.

Additionally, technology keeps receiving updates. Machine translation and natural language processing are two branches of AI in language learning. They bring about incredible features such as speech recognition and instant feedback. Their application opens new doors of opportunity for organizations, teachers, and students alike.

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