

## THE IMPACT OF AI ON ENGLISH PROFICIENCY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

**Akmalkhonova S.**

Student, University of World Languages

E-mail: [sarvinozakmalkhanova2004@gmail.com](mailto:sarvinozakmalkhanova2004@gmail.com)

**Abstract.** Artificial Intelligence (AI) has changed English language teaching and learning in higher education, especially in non-native English-speaking countries like Uzbekistan. This article looks at how AI helps improve English skills through personalized learning, instant feedback, and gamified learning environments. Real-world case studies from international universities highlight both the benefits of AI on language performance and the importance of human guidance in its use. The article concludes that AI works best when combined with a balanced educational approach that mixes technology with traditional teaching methods. It stresses the need for both students and educators to understand AI and be aware of ethical issues to ensure effective and sustainable language learning in higher education.

**Annotatsiya.** Sun'iy intellekt (SI) oliy ta'limda, ayniqsa O'zbekiston kabi ingliz tili ona tili bo'lmagan mamlakatlarda, ingliz tilini o'qitish va o'rganish jarayonini sezilarli darajada o'zgartirdi. Ushbu maqola SI ning ingliz tili bilimini rivojlantirishdagi rolini shaxsiylashtirilgan o'qitish, tezkor fikr-mulohaza, va o'yinlashtirilgan o'quv muhitlari orqali tahlil qiladi. Xalqaro universitetlardan olingan haqiqiy misollar SI ning til o'rganishdagi ijobiy ta'sirini va inson o'qituvchining yo'naltiruvchi rolini ta'kidlaydi. Maqola SI eng samarali bo'lishi uchun an'anaviy o'qitish usullari bilan uyg'unlashtirilgan muvozanatli pedagogik yondashuv doirasida qo'llanilishi kerak degan xulosaga keladi. Shuningdek, barqaror va samarali til o'rganishni ta'minlash uchun talabalar va o'qituvchilarning SI savodxonligi hamda axloqiy ongini rivojlantirish zarurligini ta'kidlaydi.

**Аннотация.** Искусственный интеллект (ИИ) сильно изменил процесс преподавания и изучения английского языка в высшем образовании, особенно в странах, где английский не является родным, таких как Узбекистан. В этой статье обсудим роль ИИ в улучшении уровня владения английским языком через персонализированное обучение, мгновенную обратную связь и игровые образовательные среды. Реальные примеры из международных университетов показывают как положительное влияние ИИ на результаты изучения языка, так и важность роли преподавателя. В статье выводится, что ИИ наиболее эффективен при использовании в рамках сбалансированного подхода, который сочетает технологии и традиционные методы обучения. Подчеркивается необходимость развития ИИ-грамотности и этического сознания как у студентов, так и у преподавателей для обеспечения устойчивого и эффективного изучения языка в высшем образовании.

**Introduction.** AI has been transforming the way the English language is taught and it has already shown a great influence on its development across the world. AI offers a range of opportunities such as personalised tools, instant feedback, which mainly concentrates on English skills like productive: speaking and writing, receptive: listening and reading. Especially for students in higher education pursuing degrees in non-native English environments, like Uzbekistan and other EFL contexts, AI comes for help leading to proficiency level. Starting from chat-bots to different algorithms grading

essays, AI is capable of addressing mistakes in English proficiency, whether it be vocabulary gaps or speaking anxiety. However, there are a couple of questions that may arise at this point. Does AI really result in proficiency or is just a path which leads to dependency on it?

**Main body.** Positive impacts. AI significantly improves English skills in higher education by offering personalized learning and greater access. Tools like adaptive platforms, such as Duolingo Max and ELSA Speak, customize lessons to address individual weaknesses, including grammar and pronunciation. They provide real-time exercises that work better than traditional methods. A study by the British Council found that students using these apps increased their speaking scores by 25%.

This makes practice more effective for large EFL classes commonly found in higher education. In resource-limited areas like universities in Uzbekistan, Grammarly's instant feedback on writing can reduce essay errors by up to 40%. This allows instructors to focus on more advanced discussions. Overall, these innovations help build confidence and fluency, changing how non-native speakers learn English.

Another important benefit of AI in English language learning is its ability to boost student motivation and engagement through gamification. Many AI-powered platforms use game-like elements such as badges, streaks, levels, and achievement rewards. These features encourage learners to stay consistent and actively participate in their studies. They turn learning from a boring academic task into an interactive and goal-focused experience. For example, students are more likely to practice English daily when they want to maintain a streak or unlock new levels. This encourages regular exposure to the language. Additionally, gamification lowers the pressure often linked to traditional assessments. It allows learners to concentrate on progress instead of worrying about making mistakes. As a result, AI-driven gamified learning environments not only improve engagement but also help with long-term language retention and learner independence.

**Challenges.** However, AI's benefits come with significant challenges that could limit deep learning. Over-reliance on tools like chat-bots risks skill decline, as students may skip critical thinking in favor of quick answers. Recent UNESCO reports raised concerns about increasing AI-generated plagiarism in universities. Biases in AI models, often trained on Western data, can mislead non-native speakers regarding cultural nuances or local English variations, resulting in incorrect feedback. Additionally, equity issues persist: not all higher education students in places like Uzbekistan have reliable internet or devices, which widens gaps and causes screen fatigue that demotivates learners.

Real-world case studies show AI's mixed effects in higher education. At the National University of Singapore, using Grammarly Enterprise with custom chat-bots increased IELTS-equivalent scores by 35% for international students, incorporating technology with human support. The University of Edinburgh's use of Duolingo analytics in EFL programs reduced dropout rates by 20% through personalized tracking. Similarly, a pilot at Cairo University with voice-analysis tools improved pronunciation by 28%, demonstrating that AI can enhance results when used thoughtfully.

Another major challenge of AI in higher education is its misuse and inaccuracy in grading and assessment. While AI evaluation tools aim to provide objective and efficient feedback, they do not always grasp the complexity of human language, creativity, and context. As a result, students' work may be unfairly graded due to the limits of natural

language processing algorithms. For example, essays that contain cultural references, nuanced arguments, or unconventional but valid structures may be incorrectly marked as weak or irrelevant. Additionally, some students may try to manipulate AI systems by generating content with AI tools themselves, leading to serious concerns about academic integrity and plagiarism. This situation shifts the focus of assessment from genuine language ability to finding ways to work around or cheat the system. Therefore, while AI can help with grading at scale, it still needs careful human oversight to ensure fairness, accuracy, and educational validity.

**Conclusion.** To maximize gains, educators should adopt balanced strategies moving forward. Blend AI for homework drills with in-class discussions to build real skills. Offer faculty training on ethical use to prevent misuse. Holistic assessments, which combine AI metrics with oral exams, ensure depth over surface fixes. In Uzbekistan's context, subsidizing access and piloting hybrid models could fairly improve English proficiency for global careers. Ongoing research and student feedback will refine AI applications, making sure they evolve with learner needs in higher education. Collaborating with local language centers like Registan could test scalable pilots. Monitoring long-term outcomes, such as job placement rates, will validate success. Integrating AI literacy into curricula, which teaches critical evaluation of outputs, prepares students for ethical use in professional settings.

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