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## TEACHERS AND LEARNERS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE USE OF GENERATIVE AI IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

**Abstract.** The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence has significantly impacted modern education. The study explores the attitudes of Ukrainian teachers and students towards generative artificial intelligence tools in the context of English language teaching and learning. The topicality of the research stems from the accelerated adoption of online educational tools in Ukraine due to the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's full-scale invasion. The study aims to explore how these circumstances have shaped perceptions of generative artificial intelligence and influenced its use in education.

An online survey conducted in April 2024 collected data from 683 participants, including English language teachers, university students, and senior school learners from several Ukrainian regions. The results of the survey reveal a primarily positive attitude to artificial intelligence among both teachers and students, although students show a significantly higher level of positivity. The learners' familiarity with such technologies and their integration into students' daily lives may contribute to this positive outlook, while the teachers exhibit more caution due to concerns about the impact of artificial intelligence on traditional teaching methods.

The study highlights common concerns about artificial intelligence tools, including generated data reliability issues, the risks of violating academic integrity and undermining critical thinking, Despite these drawbacks, their perceived benefits, such as the ability to generate educational materials quickly and provide instant answers, are valued by both groups. The author emphasises the need for tailored integration strategies that address the specific context of Ukrainian education.

Recommendations based on the survey results include conducting training sessions on the use of artificial intelligence tools for educators, creating clear ethical guidelines on the use of generative artificial intelligence at different educational levels, and developing assignments which are resistant to generative artificial intelligence responses in order to enhance students' critical thinking.

Key words: education, English language teaching and learning, generative artificial intelligence.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

**Statement of the problem.** In recent years, the introduction and quick development of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) has had a great impact on various industries. Capable of generating different kinds of high-quality data, such as texts, images, audios, and even videos, these technologies have significantly transformed traditional approaches to work, study, and interpersonal communication. The area of education has seen one of the biggest effects in Ukraine, where the adoption of online tools for teaching and learning has been significantly accelerated by two major consecutive crises: the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing Russia's invasion. These events have led to a shift towards distance learning, making teachers and students adapt quickly to digital platforms and innovative technologies. The need for effective remote education solutions has highlighted the potential of GenAI tools in bridging gaps in traditional instructional methods. Teachers have had to navigate rapidly changing educational settings, while learners have had to get used to new modes of interaction and study.

In the context of English language teaching and learning (ELT/L), AI technologies also present numerous opportunities. Such tools as AI-driven chatbots, automated essay scoring systems, and language translation applications can provide learners with immediate, tailored feedback, fostering an environment of continuous improvement. These tools can simulate conversations with native speakers, offering learners the chance to practise language skills in a safe and controlled setting. Moreover, GenAI can analyse a learner's performance over time, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and offering personalised recommendations. Such capabilities not only support autonomous learning but also allow teachers to focus on more complex instructional tasks, enriching the overall educational experience.

Despite the benefits, the integration of GenAI in ELT/L also has some challenges. Data privacy, the quality and biases of AI-generated content, and the potential reduction in human interaction are significant considerations. In Ukraine, like in many other countries, these challenges are accompanied by infrastructural limitations and varying levels of digital literacy among teachers and learners. Another concern surrounding the use of GenAI tools in language education is the potential for academic dishonesty. With the help of GenAI, one can easily generate essays, translations, responses to different activities, etc. Thus, some students may misuse such tools to complete their assignments. This risk is increased in institutions where there is a lenient attitude towards cheating and where regulations regarding the ethical use of AI in education are underdeveloped.

By examining the experiences of those actively involved in the educational process, the research contributes to academic discussions on the use of GenAI in ELT/L. As we explore the intersection of technology and education, it is crucial to consider the diverse voices and experiences that influence this evolving field.

**Analysis of recent studies and publications.** The integration of AI in education and in ELT/L is a growing area of interest among educators and researchers. A comprehensive understanding of the potential benefits, challenges, and implications of AI tools, particularly GenAI, is essential for adapting language education to modern technological advancements.

Kniaz and Chukhno [1] emphasise the importance of soft skills, including the effective use of modern information technology, in English trainee teachers' education. This statement aligns with the findings of Moorhouse and Kohnke [2], who explore the impact of generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, on initial language teacher education. They highlight that while AI tools can significantly influence the curriculum, instruction, and assessment, there is a noticeable lack of confidence and competence among teachers to address these implications effectively.

Teachers and learners' experience of using AI and their attitudes to such technologies is presented in a number of other studies [3; 4; 5; 6; 7]. The readiness of higher education English language instructors to integrate GenAI is examined by Kohnke, Moorhouse, and Zou [3]. Their study identifies the digital competencies and pedagogical knowledge required for effective AI integration and provides practical implications for designing professional development programs.

These findings are crucial for developing language instructors' digital competencies and fostering positive attitudes towards AI tools. The interplay between students' attitudes towards AI and their willingness to communicate is explored by Zhi and Wang [4]. Their research indicates that positive teacher-student rapport and teachers' immediacy can enhance students' willingness to communicate in the context of AI integration in ELT/L. This highlights the importance of interpersonal communication alongside technological advancements in fostering effective language learning environments. Alhalangy and AbdAlgane [5] explore the impact of AI on EFL instruction in Saudi universities, concluding that AI can enhance language skills and classroom interaction. However, they stress the need for better integration of AI in educational settings and improved training for educators to effectively incorporate AI technology into their lessons. Irwin [6] investigates the adoption and perception of GenAI among university students in Japan. The scholar reveals high awareness but varied adoption rates, with concerns about accuracy and ethical implications being significant factors influencing non-use. Mabuan [7] investigates the perceptions of English language teachers regarding ChatGPT in ELT Metro Manila, Philippines. The study reveals positive attitudes towards its potential to enhance personalized learning and language instruction but also identifies concerns about authenticity, accuracy, and ethical implications.

Multiple studies outline the benefits, drawbacks, and the affordances of AI tools, including ChatGPT, in education in general and in ELT/L in particular [8; 9; 10; 11]. Gocen and Aydemir [8] provide a balanced perspective on AI in education, acknowledging both its benefits and limitations. They argue that while AI can enhance educational outcomes, it is crucial to consider legal, ethical, pedagogical, psychological, and sociological implications. Crompton, Edmett, and Ichaporia [9] provide a systematic review of AI in ELT/L, highlighting its advantages in developing speaking, writing, and reading skills. The researchers also identify challenges, such as technological limitations, learner fears, and potential biases in language use. They call for more research on AI's impact on receptive skills, specific tools, and long-term learning outcomes. Altares-López et al. [10] highlight the effectiveness of AI in motivating collaboration among students, particularly in STEMrelated areas. They advocate for integrating AI technologies in educational settings to enhance student participation and technological collaboration, while also addressing ethical considerations. Hockly [11] discusses the current and future implications of AI in ELT, emphasizing the ethical issues surrounding learner data, privacy, and the need for digital literacy. The author also highlights the potential of AI-driven technologies, such as chatbots and intelligent tutoring systems, to provide personalised learning experiences and support language development.

The potential of ChatGPT as one of GenAI tools draws a large amount of interest nowadays. Kohnke, Moorhouse, and Zou [12] argue that both teachers and students need to develop specific digital competencies to use ChatGPT effectively and ethically. This involves understanding the limitations and risks of AI, constructing effective prompts, and planning pedagogically sound tasks that capitalise on AI's affordances. Rasul [13] examines the role of ChatGPT in higher education, identifying its benefits, such as personalised feedback and innovative assessments, alongside challenges like academic integrity concerns and reliability issues. The study advocates for responsible and ethical use of ChatGPT, proposing various strategies to address its limitations and maximise its educational potential. Ahn, Lee, and Son [14] explore the potential of ChatGPT as an instructional tool in ELT/L, highlighting its ability to generate input materials and create individualised practice opportunities for students. They also note the importance of addressing the limitations and risks associated with using ChatGPT in the classroom.

Despite the extensive body of research on AI technology in education, including ELT/L, it is imperative to investigate the perspectives of Ukrainian teachers and learners on the use of GenAI. The unique context in Ukraine, where students and teachers have relied extensively on online tools for many years not only due to COVID-19 but also the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, suggests that their attitudes towards AI may differ significantly from those in other countries. Understanding their experiences and viewpoints could provide valuable data for developing effective, contextually relevant educational strategies. Consequently, examining the specific needs and challenges faced by

Ukrainian educators and learners will ensure that AI applications are tailored to enhance their educational experience.

**The aim of the research.** The study aims to explore the attitude of Ukrainian teachers and students to the use of GenAI tools in the context of ELT/L.

#### 2. RESEARCH METHODS

To achieve the goal of the research, in April 2024, we conducted an online survey which involved 683 English language teachers as well as senior school and university students in different oblasts (Kharkivska, Kyivska, Mykolaivska, Rivnenska, and Sumska) in Ukraine. The survey comprised multiple-choice questions aimed at assessing participants' attitudes towards AI tools and the underlying causes for these attitudes. The respondents were allowed to select multiple options for the questions related to the causes. They also had an opportunity to provide their own responses. This research method was chosen for its ability to gather extensive datasets while minimising time and financial investments, facilitating automated data organisation, and reducing potential biases in data analysis. The survey was administered via Google Forms, with no collection of participants' email addresses or names to increase response rates and data reliability. Basic statistical tools were applied for data analysis.

## **3. FINDINGS**

The results of the survey are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

English Language Teachers' and Learners' Experience of Using AT in Ukraine			
Attitude towards AI		Teachers	Students
		(110 in total)	( <b>573 in total</b> )
٠	positive	76 (69.1%)	488 (85.2%)
•	negative	20 (18.2%)	37 (6.4%)
•	hard to answer	14 (12.7%)	48 (8.4%)
	Causes of negative perceptions towards AI	Teachers	Students
		(20 in total)	(37 in total)
•	it does not develop thinking	9 (45%)	24 (64.9%)
•	AI-generated content is unreliable	7 (35%)	23 (62.2%)
•	its use leads to academic dishonesty	4 (20%)	15 (40.5%)
•	additional reason(s)	2 (10%)	1 (2.7%)
	Descens for positive repeations towards AI	Teachers	Students
	Reasons for positive perceptions towards Af	(76 in total)	( <b>488 in total</b> )
•	it produces teaching and learning materials fast	43 (56.6%)	306 (62.7%)
٠	it provides answers to any questions quickly	40 (52.6%)	321 (65.8%)
٠	it generates new ideas immediately	29 (38.2%)	220 (45.1%)
•	additional reason(s)	2 (2.6%)	4 (0.8%)

English Language Teachers' and Learners' Experience of Using AI in Ukraine

As we can see in Table 1, the results indicate a predominantly positive attitude towards AI among both teachers and students, although the levels of positivity differ significantly between the two groups. Among the 110 teachers surveyed, 69.1% expressed a positive attitude towards AI, while 18.2% held a negative view, and 12.7% were undecided. In contrast, a much larger proportion of students (85.2% out of 573) reported a positive attitude, with only 6.4% expressing negativity and 8.4% being unsure.

The disparity in the answers provided by teachers and students can be partially interpreted by considering the age of the participants and its potential influence on their perceptions of AI. Younger individuals, such as students, are generally more accustomed to rapid technological advancements and the integration of digital tools into their daily lives, which may contribute to their overwhelmingly positive attitude towards AI. Growing up in a digital era, students may be more inclined to use new technologies and appreciate the efficiency and immediacy that AI offers in

learning. On the other hand, the teachers, who may span a broader age range, including many who did not grow up with the same level of technological immersion, show a lower level of positivity towards AI. Their concerns could stem from less familiarity and comfort with AI technologies, leading to apprehensions about their integration into the classroom. Teachers might also perceive AI tools as a disruptive force rather than an enhancement to their teaching methods.

The data regarding the reasons behind negative attitudes towards AI, as presented in Table 1, provides insight into the specific concerns held by teachers and students. Among teachers who expressed negativity towards AI, 45% believe that AI does not enhance thinking skills. This concern likely stems from a traditional educational perspective that values critical thinking and problem-solving, skills that teachers might feel are not sufficiently fostered by AI. Teachers also express concerns about the reliability of AI-generated information (35%) and the potential for AI to violate academic integrity regulations (20%). These apprehensions reflect a mistrust in the quality and ethical implications of using AI in education. Additionally, 10% of teachers cite other reasons, including job security fears ("AI may leave teachers without jobs") and a desire to maintain professional boundaries ("I don't want to be like my students"), suggesting a deeper anxiety about the broader implications of AI on the teaching profession and their role within it.

Similarly, students' primary concerns about AI reflect a scepticism about its educational value. A significant 64.9% of students worry that AI does not enhance thinking skills, which may indicate that they recognise the importance of developing cognitive abilities through traditional learning methods. The unreliability of AI-generated information is a concern for 62.2% of students, showing a shared mistrust with teachers about the accuracy and dependability of AI outputs. Additionally, 40.5% of students are concerned about academic integrity, likely reflecting worries about the fairness and authenticity of AI-generated work. One student mentions two additional reasons, including the time spent on verifying AI-generated information and the risk of learners accepting incorrect information due to their ignorance. These points emphasise the practical challenges and potential misinformation risks associated with AI use.

These findings suggest a need for addressing both groups' concerns through better integration of AI that supports critical thinking, reliable information, and academic integrity. Additionally, providing clear guidelines and support for the effective use of AI in educational settings can help deal with these concerns and foster a more positive attitude towards AI among both teachers and students.

Conversely, the reasons behind the positive attitudes towards AI (see Table 1) highlight its perceived benefits in educational settings. Both teachers and students highly value AI's ability to generate educational materials quickly. Specifically, 56.6% of teachers and 62.7% of students appreciate this affordance. This appreciation likely stems from the significant time-saving advantages AI offers, allowing educators to focus more on teaching and students to generate relevant materials promptly for self-study. The ability of AI-tools to produce educational content swiftly can enhance the overall learning experience by ensuring that resources are readily available when needed.

Similarly, the capability of AI to provide instant answers is another major factor contributing to positive attitudes. With 52.6% of teachers and 65.8% of learners acknowledging this benefit, it is clear that the immediacy of AI responses is highly valued. For teachers, AI can serve as a quick reference tool, assisting them in delivering accurate information during lessons. For students, the ability to obtain answers instantly can facilitate independent learning and reduce the time spent on seeking information, making the learning process more efficient.

AI's potential to generate new ideas is also recognised as a significant advantage, with 38.2% of teachers and 45.1% of students highlighting this aspect. This capability can foster creativity and innovation in both teaching and learning. Teachers can use AI to develop new instructional strategies and materials, while students can use AI to explore different perspectives and enhance their critical thinking skills.

Thus, the positive attitudes towards AI among teachers and students are largely driven by its ability to generate educational materials quickly, provide instant answers, and generate new ideas. These benefits align with the needs for efficiency and immediacy in educational environments, thereby enhancing the teaching and learning experience. To further enhance these positive attitudes, educational institutions should focus on integrating AI tools that emphasise these strengths, ensuring that both educators and learners can maximize the potential of AI in their educational activities.

A small number of the respondents provided additional reasons for their positive attitudes towards AI. Among teachers, one participant noted that AI allows for a better understanding of how students think, and another mentioned that AI assists in finding topics. These points suggest that AI can also play a role in providing insights into student learning patterns and aiding in curriculum development. Among students, individual reasons included AI's ability to generate music and images, its capacity to teach the material not covered by teachers, its utility in completing homework assignments, and its ability to quickly explain material. These responses reflect a recognition of AI's versatility and its potential to support diverse aspects of the learning process.

As we can see, the results of the survey predominantly align with the previous studies conducted in other countries [5; 6; 7]. However, the research also reveals some unique aspects of the use and perception of AI in Ukraine's educational context. Ukrainian students, growing up in a digitally immersive environment due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing war, are more likely to embrace new technologies faster than learners in other countries, who may have had less exposure to such rapid changes. Hence, the learners in Ukraine appear to be almost unanimous in expressing their positive attitude towards AI. However, Ukrainian teachers may have encountered more cases of academic integrity violation caused by dishonest use of GenAI, which leads to their feeling more negative. Ukrainian students have also highlighted a broad range of applications for AI, including generating music and images, teaching content not covered by teachers, and completing homework assignments. This versatility in AI's perceived role in education may reflect an adaptive mechanism to take advantage of technology in response to the challenges posed by the current socio-political environment.

Based on the results of the research, we suggest organizing training sessions for teachers on the ways of integrating GenAI in ELT/L (e.g. on developing assignments which are more resistant to AI-generated responses in order to enhance students' thinking skills), establishing clear policies for the ethical use of AI at every educational level, and regularly gathering students' and teachers' feedback on the use of AI to understand their needs and concerns better.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In conclusion, the integration of GenAI into foreign language education in Ukraine reveals a spectrum of attitudes among teachers and students, reflecting both enthusiasm and scepticism. The overwhelmingly positive response from students contrasts with the more cautious perspective of teachers, highlighting the different experiences and expectations of each target group of the respondents. While GenAI tools are praised for their efficiency in generating educational materials, providing instant answers, and sparking creativity, concerns about the potential for reduced critical thinking, academic dishonesty, and the unreliability of AI-generated content remain prominent.

To address these concerns and take advantage of the benefits of GenAI, it is essential for educational institutions to develop and implement clear guidelines on the use of AI tools. These should focus on ensuring the quality and ethical use of AI, fostering a balanced approach that integrates AI while preserving the core values of education. Educators will benefit from professional development opportunities to enhance their comfort and competence with AI technologies, while students will need guidance on using these tools responsibly. As Ukraine continues to experience rapid changes in educational technology, the results of this research will contribute to shaping effective and ethical practices for integrating AI in foreign language education and beyond.

Future research in the field may focus on developing and implementing different frameworks for blending traditional teaching methods with GenAI techniques to ensure a balanced approach ELT/L. This may be followed by exploring long-term impact of GenAI on students' achievements, their language proficiency, and the retention of knowledge and skills over extended periods of time.

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## ПОГЛЯД УЧИТЕЛІВ ТА УЧНІВ НА ВИКОРИСТАННЯ ГЕНЕРАТИВНОГО ШІ В ІНШОМОВНІЙ ОСВІТІ

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Анотація. Швидкий розвиток штучного інтелекту значно вплинув на сучасну освіту. У статті досліджено ставлення українських вчителів і студентів до інструментів генеративних штучного інтелекту в контексті навчання й вивчення англійської мови. Актуальність дослідження зумовлена прискореним впровадженням в Україні освітніх онлайн-технологій через пандемію COVID-19 і повномасштабне вторгнення Росії. Метою розвідки є визначення того, як ці обставини сформували сприйняття штучного інтелекту та вплинули на його використання в освіті.

В онлайн-опитуванні, проведеному у квітні 2024 року, було зібрано дані від 683 учасників, серед яких викладачі й учителі англійської мови, студенти університетів та учні старшої школи з декількох областей України. Результати опитування показують переважно позитивне ставлення до штучного інтелекту як серед викладачів і вчителів, так і серед тих, хто вивчає англійську мову, хоча останні демонструють більшу прихильність. Знайомство учнів з такими технологіями та їх інтеграція в їхнє повсякденне життя може сприяти цьому позитивному ставленню, у той час як вчителі й викладачі проявляють більшу обережність через занепокоєння щодо впливу штучного інтелекту на традиційні методи навчання.

У дослідженні висвітлюються загальні занепокоєння щодо використання інструментів штучного інтелекту, включаючи проблему надійності згенерованих даних, а також ризики порушення академічної доброчесності й затримки розвитку критичного мислення. Незважаючи на ці недоліки, їхні переваги, такі як здатність швидко генерувати навчальні матеріали та надавати миттєві відповіді, цінуються двома групами. При цьому підкреслюється необхідність укладання адаптованих стратегій інтеграції штучного інтелекту в контексті української освіти. Рекомендації, що враховують результати опитування, включають проведення тренінгів із використання інструментів штучного інтелекту у навчанні англійської мови для викладачів і вчителів, створення чітких вказівок щодо етики використання генеративного штучного інтелекту на різних рівнях освіти й укладання завдань, які не можливо виконати виключно за допомогою генеративного штучного інтелекту, з метою розвитку критичного мислення учнів і студентів.

Ключові слова: освіта, навчання й вивчення англійської мови, генеративний штучний інтелект.

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