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# Artificial Intelligence in English Language Learning: Reliability, Limitations, and Risks of Free AI Tools

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## Abstract

The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) has significantly influenced educational practices, including English language learning. Free AI tools such as chatbots, grammar checkers, and text generators are increasingly used by learners to support various language learning activities, including writing, vocabulary development, and grammar correction. These tools offer several advantages, including easy accessibility, immediate feedback, and opportunities for autonomous learning outside the classroom. However, concerns have emerged regarding the reliability, limitations, and potential risks associated with AI-generated content.

This paper reviews existing literature on the use of free AI tools in English language learning, with a particular focus on the accuracy and reliability of the information they provide. The review examines how AI-generated content can sometimes contain inaccurate explanations, inconsistent responses, or fabricated information due to the probabilistic nature of large language models. In addition, the paper discusses the pedagogical and technical limitations of free AI tools and the potential risks of misinformation for language learners.

The findings of the review suggest that although free AI tools can serve as useful supplementary resources for English language learners, their outputs should be approached critically. Learners and educators should be aware of the potential inaccuracies of AI-generated content and verify information using reliable academic sources. The paper also highlights the importance of promoting AI literacy and responsible use of AI technologies in language education. Finally, several research gaps are identified, including the need for further studies on the accuracy of AI-generated linguistic information and the pedagogical integration of AI tools in English language learning contexts.

**Keywords:** artificial intelligence, AI tools, English language learning, AI-generated content, reliability, misinformation.

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, AI has become an increasingly influential technology in the field of education, particularly in language learning. AI-powered tools such as Chatbots, automated writing assistants, grammar correction systems, and text generators are widely used by students to support their learning process. These tools are easily accessible online, and many of them are available free of charge, making them especially attractive to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners who seek quick assistance with grammar, vocabulary, writing, and translation. As a result, free AI tools have rapidly become part of the learning practices of many students around the world.

The integration of AI into English language learning offers several potential benefits. Learners can receive immediate feedback, generate example sentences, obtain explanations of grammatical rules, and practice writing with the support of AI-generated suggestions. Such tools may also promote learner autonomy by allowing students to practice English outside the classroom environment. Due to these advantages, AI-based applications are increasingly being adopted by students as supplementary learning resources.

Despite these benefits, concerns have emerged regarding the reliability and accuracy of information generated by free AI tools. AI systems rely on large datasets and probabilistic language models to generate responses, which means that the information they provide may sometimes be incomplete, inaccurate, or misleading. In some cases, AI-generated explanations of linguistic concepts may lack pedagogical clarity, while examples and references produced by these tools may not always be reliable. For language learners who rely heavily on these tools without critical evaluation, such limitations may lead to misunderstandings or the acquisition of incorrect linguistic knowledge.

Moreover, free AI tools often operate with certain technical and functional limitations compared to paid or specialized educational platforms. These limitations may affect the depth, consistency, and contextual appropriateness of the information provided. As a result, the increasing reliance on free AI tools raises important questions about their role in supporting effective English language learning and the potential risks associated with their use.

Given the growing popularity of AI-assisted learning, it is important to examine the reliability, limitations, and potential risks of free AI tools in the context of English language education. This paper reviews existing literature on the use of free AI tools in English language learning, with particular attention to issues related to the accuracy of AI-generated content, the limitations of these technologies, and the implications of misinformation for language learners. By synthesizing previous research, the study aims to provide a clearer understanding of the benefits and challenges associated with the use of free AI tools in English language learning.

## 2. Artificial Intelligence in Language Learning

AI has become an important technological innovation in modern education, particularly in the field of language learning. AI refers to computer systems that are designed to simulate human intelligence, including abilities such as learning, reasoning, problem-solving, and language processing. In recent years, the integration of AI technologies into educational environments has significantly transformed the ways in which students learn and interact with language learning resources. AI-driven applications are increasingly used in EFL and English as a Second Language (ESL) contexts to support language acquisition and enhance learning experiences.

The development of AI-based tools in language education is closely connected to advances in natural language processing (NLP), machine learning, and large language models. These technologies enable AI systems to analyze linguistic input, generate human-like responses, and provide automated feedback to learners (Torres & Kahveci, 2025). AI-powered platforms can perform a wide range of educational functions, including grammar correction, vocabulary suggestions, pronunciation assessment, automated writing evaluation, and interactive conversation practice. As a result, AI tools can support learners in developing different language skills such as writing, speaking, reading, and vocabulary acquisition.

One of the major advantages of AI in language learning is its ability to provide personalized learning experiences. AI systems can analyze learners' performance and adapt instructional content according to their individual needs, learning pace, and proficiency level (Chang & Sun, 2024). This adaptive capability allows learners to receive targeted feedback and customized learning materials, which can improve engagement and learning outcomes. Studies have shown that AI-enhanced learning environments can promote learner autonomy and self-regulated learning by enabling students to practice language skills independently outside the traditional classroom setting.

In addition, AI technologies have introduced interactive learning environments through the use of chatbots and virtual tutors. AI chatbots are designed to simulate human conversation and allow learners to practice communication in real-time (Li et al., 2025). These systems provide opportunities for learners to engage in dialogue-based activities, which can improve speaking fluency and reduce communication anxiety. Chatbot-based language learning environments also allow learners to receive immediate responses and corrections, which can enhance the learning process.

Furthermore, recent research indicates that AI technologies are increasingly integrated into various digital learning platforms to support language education. These platforms combine AI with other emerging technologies to create interactive and immersive learning environments (Yan, Li, & Lowell, 2025). Such innovations have the potential to transform traditional language learning by providing more flexible, accessible, and engaging educational experiences for students worldwide.

Despite the growing adoption of AI in language learning, scholars emphasize that these technologies should be used as supportive tools rather than replacements for human teachers. While AI systems can provide automated feedback and continuous practice opportunities, effective language learning still requires pedagogical guidance and critical evaluation of AI-generated information. Therefore, understanding the capabilities and limitations of AI technologies is essential for their responsible integration into language education.

**3. Cognitive Perspectives on Language Production in AI-Assisted Learning**

Understanding how language is produced in the human mind is essential for evaluating the effectiveness of AI-generated language in educational contexts. Psycholinguistic theories explain the cognitive processes involved in transforming thoughts into spoken or written language. One of the most influential models in this area is Levelt's model of speech production, which describes language production as a multi-stage process involving conceptualization, formulation, and articulation.

Recent scholarship has revisited this theoretical framework to better understand how language generation occurs in both human and computational systems. For instance, Klella (2025) provided a critical review of Levelt's model of speech production and its applications in contemporary linguistic research. The study highlights how cognitive processes guide the transformation of ideas into linguistic structures, emphasizing the role of mental planning and lexical retrieval in speech production. Such theoretical insights are valuable for understanding how AI language systems generate text and how learners interact with AI-generated language during learning activities.

From an educational perspective, examining cognitive models of language production can help researchers and educators evaluate the similarities and differences between human language generation and AI-generated language. This perspective contributes to a deeper understanding of how AI tools may support or influence learners' language production processes.

## 4. Free AI Tools in English Language Learning

Free artificial intelligence tools have become widely available and increasingly popular among English language learners. These tools are accessible through websites, mobile applications, and browser extensions, allowing students to receive instant assistance with grammar, vocabulary, translation, and writing tasks. Because many of these platforms offer basic services without cost, they are particularly attractive to learners who seek flexible and independent ways to practice English outside the classroom environment.

Free AI tools used in English language learning include several categories such as grammar checkers, AI chatbots, writing assistants, and interactive language learning applications. Grammar-checking tools, for example, LanguageTool (2024) help learners identify and correct spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors in written texts. Some open-source systems such as LanguageTool provide automated feedback on grammar and writing style, enabling learners to revise and improve their written work more efficiently

In addition to grammar correction systems, many learners use AI-powered writing assistants that can generate or edit text automatically. These tools assist students in composing essays, paraphrasing sentences, and improving the clarity of their writing (Mekheimer, 2025). AI-assisted writing tools can enhance learners' engagement in writing tasks and support revision practices by providing immediate feedback on language use and organization. Another important category of free AI tools includes conversational chatbots and virtual language tutors. AI chatbots simulate human conversation and allow learners to practice language skills interactively (Gayed et al., 2022). These systems provide opportunities for students to engage in dialogues, ask questions, and receive explanations about grammar or vocabulary.

Furthermore, AI-based language learning platforms and applications are increasingly designed to offer conversation practice and personalized learning experiences (Talkpal AI, 2025). Platforms such as Talkpal AI provide text-based and voice-based interaction with an AI tutor, allowing learners to practice real-life communication scenarios and receive instant responses. In addition to AI tutoring tools, some free language learning platforms rely on collaborative or community-based resources that integrate AI functions (Tatoeba, 2026). For instance, sentence databases such as Tatoeba provide thousands of example sentences translated into multiple languages, helping learners observe how vocabulary and grammatical structures are used in context.

Overall, free AI tools offer several advantages for English language learners, including accessibility, immediate feedback, and opportunities for autonomous practice. These technologies allow learners to receive instant explanations and corrections without needing direct teacher assistance. However, while such tools provide valuable support for language learning, researchers emphasize that they should be used as supplementary learning resources rather than as complete replacements for traditional instruction and teacher guidance.

## 5. Accessibility and Inclusivity in AI-Supported Language Learning

Accessibility and inclusivity have become important considerations in the integration of digital technologies into language education. The availability of free and online learning tools has created new opportunities for students who may have limited access to traditional educational resources. AI-powered platforms and digital language learning tools allow learners to access educational materials anytime and from different geographical locations, which can help reduce barriers to language learning.

Digital technologies have the potential to promote more inclusive learning environments by supporting learners with diverse educational needs, linguistic backgrounds, and learning abilities. For example, AI-based applications can provide personalized feedback, adaptive learning materials, and flexible learning pathways that allow students to learn at their own pace. Such features can be particularly beneficial for students in developing regions where access to formal language learning resources may be limited.

Research has emphasized the importance of ensuring that digital learning environments remain accessible and inclusive for all learners. In this context, Klella (2024) highlighted that digital language education can enhance accessibility by expanding learning opportunities through online platforms and technological tools. However, the study also stresses that effective implementation requires attention to issues such as digital literacy, technological infrastructure, and equitable access to digital resources.

Furthermore, inclusive digital language education should consider the diverse needs of learners by integrating technologies that support different learning styles and abilities. While AI technologies can contribute to expanding access to language learning opportunities, educators and institutions must also ensure that these technologies are used in ways that promote equitable and inclusive educational experiences.

**6. Reliability of AI-Generated Content**

The reliability of AI-generated content has become an important issue in recent research on artificial intelligence in education, particularly in the context of English language learning. AI-powered tools are increasingly used by learners to obtain explanations of grammar rules, generate written texts, and provide examples of vocabulary usage (Dwivedi et al., 2023). Although these systems are capable of producing human-like responses, concerns have been raised regarding the accuracy, consistency, and trustworthiness of the information they generate. Scholars argue that while AI technologies offer valuable support for learners, their outputs should be carefully evaluated due to potential inaccuracies and limitations.

One aspect of reliability relates to the accuracy of linguistic information generated by AI systems. Many AI tools rely on large language models trained on extensive datasets collected from various online sources. These models generate responses based on statistical patterns rather than verified knowledge, which means that the information they produce may sometimes be incomplete or incorrect (Kasneci et al., 2023). In language learning contexts, inaccurate explanations of grammar rules or inappropriate vocabulary examples can lead to misunderstandings among learners who rely heavily on AI-generated feedback.

Another issue concerns the consistency of AI-generated responses. Because AI systems generate answers probabilistically, the same question may sometimes produce different responses depending on how the query is phrased or the context in which it is asked (Gilson et al., 2023). This variability can create confusion for language learners who expect clear and consistent explanations of linguistic concepts. Research on generative AI tools indicates that although these systems often provide useful assistance, their responses may vary in quality and reliability across different tasks and prompts.

Furthermore, AI systems may occasionally produce fabricated or misleading information, a phenomenon often referred to as “AI hallucination” (Bang et al., 2023 and Alkarkhi & Hmouma, 2025). In such cases, AI tools generate content that appears plausible but is not factually correct. In language learning contexts, this may include invented references, incorrect grammatical explanations, or examples that do not

accurately reflect standard language use. Scholars highlight that this limitation poses potential risks for students who may accept AI-generated content without critically verifying its accuracy.

Despite these challenges, studies also indicate that AI-generated content can still be valuable when used appropriately. When combined with teacher guidance and critical evaluation, AI tools can support language learners by providing immediate feedback, generating practice materials, and encouraging independent learning. However, ensuring the reliability of AI-generated information remains a key concern for educators and researchers who seek to integrate AI technologies responsibly into language learning environments.

**7. Limitations of Free AI Tools**

Despite the growing popularity of free AI tools in English language learning, researchers have highlighted several limitations associated with their use. While these tools offer convenient and immediate assistance for learners, they are not always designed specifically for pedagogical purposes. As a result, the quality, depth, and reliability of the information provided may vary significantly (Kasneci et al., 2023). Understanding these limitations is important in order to ensure that AI tools are used effectively and responsibly in language learning contexts.

One major limitation of free AI tools is their limited contextual understanding of language. Although AI systems can generate grammatically correct sentences and explanations, they may struggle to fully interpret complex linguistic contexts or subtle differences in meaning (Dwivedi et al., 2023 and Hmouma & Benarose, 2026). AI-generated responses may provide generalized explanations of grammar rules without considering the specific learning needs or proficiency level of the learner. This lack of contextual sensitivity can sometimes lead to oversimplified or incomplete explanations of language structures.

Another important limitation relates to the pedagogical design of many free AI tools. Most AI applications are developed primarily as general-purpose language models rather than specialized educational systems. Consequently, the feedback they provide may not follow established language teaching methodologies or curriculum standards (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). In some cases, AI tools may offer corrections without explaining the underlying rules, which may limit learners' deeper understanding of linguistic concepts.

In addition, free AI tools may have technical and functional restrictions compared to paid or premium versions. These limitations may include restricted access to advanced features, shorter response lengths, limited interaction capabilities, or reduced accuracy in complex tasks (Huang, Hew & Fryer, 2022). Such restrictions may affect the overall effectiveness of the tool in supporting language learning activities, particularly for advanced learners who require detailed explanations and extensive feedback.

Another concern involves the potential overreliance of learners on AI-generated assistance. When students depend excessively on AI tools to complete writing tasks, translate texts, or generate ideas, they may reduce their own cognitive engagement with the learning process (Godwin-Jones, 2018). This overdependence may negatively affect the development of critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and independent language production skills.

Finally, free AI tools may also be limited by the quality and scope of the data on which they were trained. Because these systems learn from large datasets collected from various sources, they may reproduce biases, outdated information, or inconsistent language usage. As a result, learners may sometimes receive responses that are not fully aligned with standard academic or pedagogical expectations.

Overall, while free AI tools offer valuable support for English language learners, their limitations highlight the importance of using them cautiously. Educators and learners should approach these technologies as supplementary learning resources rather than as primary sources of linguistic knowledge.

**8. Risks and Misinformation in AI-Generated Content**

The increasing use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in education has raised important concerns regarding the risks associated with misinformation in AI-generated content. Although AI systems can produce fluent and human-like responses, they do not always guarantee factual accuracy. AI models generate information based on patterns learned from large datasets rather than verified knowledge sources (Dwivedi et al., 2023). As a result, the responses produced by these systems may sometimes include incorrect, incomplete, or misleading information, which can create challenges for learners who rely on AI tools for academic support.

One of the primary risks associated with AI-generated content is the possibility of factual inaccuracies. Large language models generate responses probabilistically, meaning that they predict likely word sequences rather than retrieving confirmed facts. Consequently, AI systems may produce statements that appear convincing but are not accurate (Kasneci et al., 2023). In language learning contexts, this may involve incorrect explanations of grammar rules, inappropriate examples of vocabulary usage, or inaccurate translations. Such misinformation may negatively affect learners' understanding of linguistic concepts if it is accepted without verification.

Another significant concern is the phenomenon known as "AI hallucination." This occurs when AI systems generate fabricated information that appears plausible but lacks factual basis. For example, AI tools may create nonexistent academic references, incorrect linguistic explanations, or invented examples of language use (Bang et al., 2023). Because the responses produced by AI often appear coherent and confident, learners may find it difficult to distinguish between accurate and fabricated information.

Research related to digital technologies in language learning also emphasizes the importance of understanding how technological tools influence cognitive processes and learner interaction with information. Klella and Mrghem (2024) examined the relationship between artificial intelligence prompts and human cognition, highlighting how AI-generated responses can shape learners' reasoning processes and influence how they interpret and construct knowledge when interacting with AI systems

Similarly, Klella (2024) emphasized that digital tools, including mobile and AI-based learning systems, provide significant opportunities for autonomous learning but may also present challenges related to technological limitations, digital literacy gaps, and the reliability of digital learning resources.

Furthermore, excessive reliance on AI-generated content can pose educational risks. When learners depend heavily on AI tools to generate ideas, correct writing, or provide explanations, they may reduce their own critical engagement with the learning process. Overdependence on AI assistance may limit the development of independent thinking, problem-solving abilities, and language production skills (Huang, Hew, & Fryer, 2022). learners should be encouraged to critically evaluate AI-generated information and cross-check it with reliable academic sources.

Overall, while AI technologies offer valuable support for English language learning, the risks associated with misinformation highlight the need for cautious and informed use. Educators and learners must develop awareness of the limitations of AI-generated content and adopt strategies to verify the accuracy of information obtained from these tools.

## 9. Implications for English Language Learners and Educators

The increasing use of AI tools in English language learning has significant implications for both learners and educators. While AI technologies provide accessible and flexible learning opportunities, their effective use requires awareness of their capabilities and limitations. As AI-generated content becomes more integrated into educational practices, learners and teachers must develop strategies to use these tools responsibly and critically (Kasneci et al., 2023). For English language learners, one important implication is the need to develop critical evaluation skills when using AI tools. Although AI systems can provide quick explanations and examples, learners should not assume that all generated information is accurate (Dwivedi et al., 2023). Instead, students should learn to verify AI-generated content by consulting reliable academic resources such as textbooks, dictionaries, and scholarly sources. Developing this critical awareness can help learners avoid misunderstandings and reduce the risk of acquiring incorrect linguistic knowledge.

Another implication for learners involves the development of autonomous learning skills. AI tools allow students to practice language skills independently outside the classroom environment by providing instant feedback on writing, grammar, and vocabulary usage (Godwin-Jones, 2018). When used appropriately, these tools can encourage learners to engage in self-directed learning and continuous practice. However, it is important for learners to balance the use of AI assistance with their own cognitive effort in order to maintain active engagement in the learning process.

For educators, the growing presence of AI technologies highlights the importance of guiding students in the responsible use of these tools. Teachers can play an essential role in helping learners understand both the benefits and limitations of AI-generated content (Huang, Hew, & Fryer, 2022). This includes teaching students how to critically evaluate AI responses, identify potential inaccuracies, and use AI tools as supplementary resources rather than as primary sources of information.In addition, educators may consider integrating AI tools into language instruction in a controlled and pedagogically meaningful way (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). AI applications can be used for brainstorming ideas, generating practice exercises, or providing preliminary feedback on writing tasks. When combined with teacher guidance and classroom instruction, AI technologies can complement traditional teaching methods and enhance students' learning experiences.

Furthermore, the integration of AI in language education emphasizes the need to promote digital literacy and AI literacy among both students and teachers. Understanding how AI systems generate information, as well as recognizing their potential biases and limitations, can help users make more informed decisions about how to utilize these technologies effectively in educational contexts.

Overall, the increasing availability of AI tools presents both opportunities and challenges for English language learning. By developing critical awareness, promoting responsible use, and combining AI support with traditional pedagogical approaches, learners and educators can benefit from AI technologies while minimizing the risks associated with inaccurate or misleading information.

## 10. Research Gaps in the Literature

Although the use of AI tools in language learning has attracted increasing scholarly attention, several research gaps remain in the existing literature. Most studies have focused primarily on the potential benefits of AI technologies in supporting language learning, such as improving writing skills, enhancing learner engagement, and facilitating personalized learning experiences. However, relatively fewer studies

have critically examined the reliability, limitations, and potential risks associated with the use of free AI tools in English language learning contexts (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). One major gap concerns the limited number of empirical studies investigating the accuracy of AI-generated linguistic information. While researchers acknowledge that AI tools may sometimes produce incorrect or misleading responses, systematic investigations into the frequency and nature of these inaccuracies remain scarce (Kasneci et al., 2023). More research is needed to evaluate how often AI systems provide unreliable grammar explanations, vocabulary usage, or writing suggestions, and how such inaccuracies may influence learners' language development.

Another important research gap relates to the specific impact of free AI tools on EFL learners. Much of the existing research on AI in education has been conducted in general educational contexts or in technologically advanced learning environments (Dwivedi et al., 2023). Consequently, there is limited research focusing on the experiences of EFL learners in developing countries, where free AI tools may serve as the primary digital learning resources due to limited access to paid educational technologies.

In addition, there is a lack of research examining how learners critically evaluate AI-generated content. Although scholars emphasize the importance of AI literacy and critical thinking when using AI tools, few studies have explored how students actually assess the accuracy of AI responses or verify the information provided by these systems (Huang, Hew, & Fryer, 2022). Investigating learners' strategies for evaluating AI-generated information could contribute to a better understanding of how AI tools influence learning practices and academic decision-making.

Furthermore, limited attention has been given to the pedagogical integration of free AI tools in language classrooms. While some studies discuss the potential benefits of AI-assisted learning, fewer studies have explored how teachers can effectively incorporate these tools into instructional practices while minimizing their limitations and risks (Godwin-Jones, 2018). Research examining practical strategies for integrating AI tools within language teaching methodologies could help educators make more informed decisions about their use in educational settings.

Overall, the existing literature highlights the growing role of AI technologies in language learning, but several areas remain underexplored. Future research should focus on evaluating the reliability of AI-generated content, examining the impact of AI tools on learners' language development, and identifying effective strategies for integrating AI technologies into English language education.

## 11. Conclusion

The rapid development of AI technologies has significantly influenced the field of English language learning. Free AI tools have become widely accessible and are increasingly used by learners to support various language learning activities, including writing, grammar checking, translation, and vocabulary development. These tools offer several advantages, such as immediate feedback, flexible learning opportunities, and support for autonomous learning outside the classroom environment. As a result, AI technologies are gradually becoming an important component of modern language learning practices.

However, the literature also highlights several important concerns regarding the reliability, limitations, and potential risks associated with free AI tools. Although AI systems can generate fluent and informative responses, their outputs are not always accurate or pedagogically appropriate. AI-generated content may sometimes contain incorrect explanations, incomplete information, or misleading examples. In addition, the probabilistic nature of large language models may lead to inconsistent responses and the generation of

fabricated information, which can create challenges for learners who rely heavily on AI-generated assistance.

Furthermore, free AI tools often have technical and functional limitations compared to more advanced educational technologies. These limitations may affect the depth, consistency, and contextual appropriateness of the information provided to learners. Excessive dependence on AI tools may also reduce learners' critical engagement with the learning process and limit the development of independent language skills. Therefore, it is important for learners to approach AI-generated content with critical awareness and to verify information using reliable academic sources.

For educators, the increasing presence of AI technologies in education highlights the need to guide students in the responsible and effective use of these tools. Teachers can play a key role in promoting AI literacy, encouraging critical evaluation of AI-generated information, and integrating AI tools into language instruction in ways that complement traditional teaching methods. When used appropriately, AI technologies can serve as valuable supplementary resources that enhance learning experiences rather than replace human instruction.

Overall, while free AI tools provide promising opportunities for supporting English language learning, their use must be accompanied by careful evaluation and responsible application. Future research should continue to explore the reliability of AI-generated content, the educational impact of AI technologies, and effective strategies for integrating AI tools into language learning environments. By addressing these issues, educators and researchers can better understand how to maximize the benefits of AI while minimizing its potential risks in language education.

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