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Between Transformation and Preservation: Moroccan High School Teachers' Perceptions of Artificial Intelligence's Impact on English Teaching Quality

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Abstract

The present article explores the evolving role of teachers in English Language Teaching in light of the increasing integration of artificial intelligence technologies in educational settings. The study aims to examine Moroccan high school teachers' perceptions of artificial intelligence as either a collaborative tool that enhances teaching or a replacement that can take over the role of educators. This research is significant as it contributes to the ongoing discourse on the intersection of technology and pedagogy, particularly in quality education. The main research question investigates how teachers perceive the impact of artificial intelligence on their profession and instructional practices. The study employs a quantitative approach, utilizing an online questionnaire to collect data from Moroccan high school teachers. The study analyzed collected responses to identify dominant perspectives on artificial intelligence's benefits, challenges, and implications in English language instruction. The findings reveal that while artificial intelligence offers numerous advantages, it cannot replace the human qualities essential to teaching. Most respondents believe in a partnership in which artificial intelligence complements teachers' efforts and enhances the teaching and learning process.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, collaboration, quality education, Moroccan high schools, replacement, teacher roles, teachers' perceptions

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Introduction

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies has established a new era of innovation across various fields, including education. In English Language Teaching (ELT), AI tools are used to enhance the teaching and learning processes and revolutionize traditional pedagogical practices. However, their implementation faces numerous challenges, particularly in Moroccan high schools where limited resources hinder the adoption of these new technologies. In this regard, this study aims to explore Moroccan high school teachers' perceptions of AI in ELT regarding its potential benefits, challenges, and strategies for effective implementation. Moreover, while some view AI as a possible replacement for teachers because they can take over tasks such as lesson planning, grading, correcting, and many more, others argue that teaching requires human qualities. This debate raises critical questions about the evolving role of teachers in an AI-enhanced classroom, mainly whether AI will act as an ally that complements the role of teachers or pose a threat to their occupation. Before addressing this question, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

1- What types of artificial intelligence can be applied to teaching the English language in Moroccan high schools?
2- What advantages can teachers benefit from with the integration of AI in ELT?
3- What challenges might prevent the successful implementation of AI in Moroccan high school English classrooms?
4- Which strategies will help overcome the obstacles in integrating AI in ELT?
5- Will AI collaborate with teachers or replace them?

These questions test the following hypotheses: 1) It is hypothesized that integrating Artificial Intelligence into English classrooms in Moroccan high schools will enhance student engagement and personalized learning experiences. 2) It is assumed that the implementation of AI will face various challenges in Moroccan high schools. 3) The study anticipates that teachers will perceive AI as a collaborative tool designed to facilitate their tasks while teaching rather than replacing their role in the classroom.

This paper follows the structure of the APA 7th edition. It starts with an introduction, then reviews the relevant literature on AI in education, namely its definition, applications, and the roles of teachers in traditional and AI-powered classrooms. It also examines the benefits and limitations of AI in educational settings. Next, the methodology section presents the research approach, describes participants, and details data collection procedures. It also explains the scale used to assess the reliability of the questionnaire. After this, the results section presents the findings of this study, starting with an exploration of AI tools applicable in Moroccan classrooms, their advantages, the obstacles to their implementation, and recommendations to overcome these challenges. This section ends with examining whether AI is viewed as a collaborative tool for teachers or a potential threat to their roles. The paper concludes with a discussion section that compares the study's findings with existing literature, followed by a conclusion that summarizes the whole work.

Literature Review

Defining Artificial Intelligence: Concepts and Scope

Artificial Intelligence (AI) stands as one of the technologies that transformed the modern era, as it has the potential to reshape how tasks that require human intelligence are approached and executed. Baker and Smith (2019) define AI as "computers which perform cognitive tasks, usually

associated with human minds, particularly learning and problem-solving" (p. 10). It refers to developing systems that enable computers to carry out functions that closely mimic human capabilities. AI has made significant contributions across various domains, and education is no exception. As it continues to reshape all fields, its integration into the educational sphere has opened new venues for enhancing teaching and learning experiences. In other words, AI is redefining traditional educational practices as it paves the way for more innovative, accessible, and efficient learning environments. For instance, AI can enhance both administrative and instructional functions. Starting with administration, AI has the potential to speed up several tasks like grading and providing feedback in addition to identifying students' learning styles and preferences. Moreover, it can analyze the syllabus and course materials to assist in creating more personalized learning experiences and enable instruction beyond the classroom through adaptive technologies. Concerning learning, AI can identify students' shortcomings and offer support for their academic growth. AI can also play a crucial role in assessment by automating exam grading, evaluating students' performance, and facilitating online and remote education. (Chen et al., 2020) In a nutshell, Artificial Intelligence is a powerful tool within various domains, including education.

Redefining Language Teaching with AI: A New Era of Learning

AI is pivotal in reshaping language teaching as it provides innovative tools that enhance learning experiences. This section explores how AI transforms English Language Teaching (ELT) by offering personalized, adaptive, and interactive learning environments. Previous studies emphasized AI's role in enhancing education by optimizing learning methods, meaning that AI adapts to individual needs, and automates tasks, thus making learning more effective. (Syahrin & Akmal, 2024) According to Thimmanna et al., (2024) AI technology enhances learning because it offers personalized experiences that cater to each learner's unique needs. Their study emphasized how algorithms assess students' performance and create tailored content that aligns with learning objectives. It means that AI can identify students' strengths and weaknesses, adjust content and pacing accordingly, and ensure that learning is efficient and effective by analyzing their performance. By analyzing learner progress data, AI can predict potential difficulties and offer timely interventions to support their learning. As Jian (2023) notes, AI algorithms optimize learning by tailoring content sequences to individuals' needs, which enhances understanding and engagement through personalized instructions. According to Joshi (2024), AI adapts learning by adjusting content based on individual performance. To illustrate, it ensures targeted support by focusing on weak areas without overwhelming the learner. To sum up, AI's adaptability to learners' needs not only improves the learning experience but also upgrades its algorithms to meet the diverse challenges learners face in language acquisition.

Teacher Roles: Traditional Classrooms vs. AI-Infused Education

In the transition from traditional classrooms to AI-driven learning environments, the role of the teacher is undergoing a significant transformation. While conventional classrooms have long relied on direct interaction, guidance, and personalized support, integrating AI tools introduce new dynamics to teaching. This section explores how the responsibilities of teachers are changing in both traditional and AI-driven classrooms. Starting with the former, traditional classrooms rely heavily on the teacher's expertise and wisdom. In this setting, the teacher acts as "a language model [and] the course planner coupled with a person responsible for selecting and preparing the material and deciding what and how the learners ought to learn." (Gulnaz et al., 2015, p. 936) Moreover,

students in traditional classrooms often lack the benefit of instant feedback and tailored recommendations due to the rigid structure of the traditional learning methodology. (Gulnaz et al., 2015) These arguments shed light on teachers' roles in traditional classrooms where they are responsible for designing lessons, selecting materials and guiding learning based on their expertise. In a nutshell, traditional classrooms a one-way transmission of knowledge, where the teacher imparts information and students decode it.

Fortunately, with AI-driven classrooms, teachers can address these challenges more effectively. AI-driven classrooms use advanced technologies, like Deep Learning, to help teachers offer more personalized language learning experiences tailored to students' cultural contexts. For instance, AI-based classrooms can provide virtual reality (VR) environments that can create realistic scenarios, enabling learners to develop language skills in an engaging and contextually meaningful context. (Parmaxi, 2020) This statement exhibits that AI has the potential to create immersive learning experiences that enhance engagement and practical application. Moreover, teachers in AI-driven classrooms serve as "a bridge between the AI-provided information and what students need to know." (Fitria, 2023, p. 175) In this way, AI tools complement the teacher's role and enhance the learning experience. Based on this statement, teachers are crucial in connecting AI-generated content with students' learning needs and ensuring successful knowledge transfer. Despite the integration of AI, the teacher's role remains vital. Although AI-driven classrooms offer improved and timely learning experiences, they cannot replace the teacher's critical role in guiding students toward success. Therefore, traditional and AI-driven classrooms continue to value the teacher's role, with the primary distinction being the quality of education and personalized experiences that AI integration can provide.

Empowering Educators and Learners: The Benefits of AI in ELT

Integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) in English Language Teaching (ELT) has become a prominent topic of discussion among educators. While it presents various benefits, it raises concerns about its potential drawbacks. Like any transformative technology, AI's influence on ELT can be seen as a double-edged sword because it offers constructive and deconstructive effects. In this regard, this section will explore the advantages associated with AI's application in language education. First, AI can assist in texts composition, facilitate translations, and aid in critical thinking activities. (Mohamed et al., 2024). One notable example is AI-driven Speech Recognition applications such as Duolingo, which evaluates "students' pronunciation, then provides real-time feedback to help students improve their speaking skills" (Rukiati, 2023, p. 33). These AI systems create an immersive environment where students can practice real-life conversations, ask for help, and navigate social situations. AI can also help students in information search, and summarize scholarly works. Therefore, the integration of AI in English language teaching plays a crucial role in preparing students for the global job market by enhancing their critical thinking and language skills. (Javaid et al., 2023) Besides, teachers can benefit from integrating these technologies into their practices as AI can structure educational administrative tasks, such as making lesson plans, managing students' attendance, reporting learning outcomes, and generating learning materials and resources – all done with remarkable speed and efficiency (Fitria, 2023). Furthermore, AI plays a crucial role in improving students' writing skills, and their confidence as well during the writing process (Aljuaid, 2024). In summary, integrating AI in ELT offers transformative advantages by enhancing personalization, accessibility, and efficiency, thereby revolutionizing the teaching and learning experience.

AI in ELT: Limitations and Concerns

Even though AI offers promising advancements in English Language Teaching (ELT), it raises several concerns. First, students lack the necessary expertise and discernment to interact with AI and interpret its outputs without their teachers' guidance. In other words, AI models sometimes generate innacurate and unreliable information which can undermine the quality of the learning experience. Moreover, the dependence of students on AI tools creates many concerns about academic integrity and work originality. (Yeo, 2023) This statement highlights concerns about the trustworthiness of using AI to create content. To put it differently, the accuracy and reliability of information generated by AI questioned, as AI can generate incorrect or biased responses. These concerns highlight the importance of maintaining a balanced approach to integrating AI in ELT and ensuring that it complements rather than replaces the vital role of teachers in learning. Besides, it lacks the capacity for empathy, emotional understanding, and interpersonal connections, which are integral to human development. As Fitria (2023) emphasizes, "Machines cannot teach empathy, sympathy, and other emotions that are important for our personality development." (p. 142) This quote demonstrates that excessive reliance on AI in education could lead to emotional detachment and hinder development of essential social and emotional skills. AI's potential goes beyond this notion to bypass academic integrity and facilitate plagiarism. As Fitria (2023) observes: "With increasingly sophisticated AI algorithms, this tool can paraphrase the original document, change conjunctions, and so on without changing the meaning. So that this plagiarized writing becomes like the original work" (p. 144). This statement points out a critical concern regarding the misuse of AI in academic writing as it can make copied content appear as if it is original work, thus undermining ethical standards in writing. Moreover, while AI tools, such as chatbots, virtual assistants, and automated systems, can provide convenience and efficiency, they cannot replicate the depth of human interaction necessary for the development of crucial social and emotional skills in addition to the ability to build relationships (Fitria, 2023). In spite of providing numerous benefits in enhancing language learning, AI's limitations in fostering human connection and its negative impact on academic ethics demand careful consideration. However, balancing these concerns enables AI to become a powerful tool that complements and enhances the educational experience in English language teaching. Hence, teachers must continue to serve as the cornerstone of education and ensure that AI's integration enriches the learning process while maintaining its human elements. As a consequence, numerous strategies must be implemented to address these concerns. According to Paul and Paul (2024), teachers should use plagiarism detection software to identify any potential unethical use of AI-generated content. Moreover, policymakers must establish clear guidelines to guarantee an ethical application of AI in education. These strategies, in addition to many others, reflect a need for preventive measures to ensure that AI is used responsibly in education.

Methodology of Research

Research Approach

The present study employs a quantitative approach to explore teachers' perceptions of implementing AI in Moroccan high schools. This approach relies on statistical methods and measurable data, ensuring a systematic and objective examination of participants' views. Researchers opt for an online questionnaire as the only data collection instrument, thanks to its ability to reach a diverse sample population, ensuring accessibility and maintaining consistency in responses. The questionnaire included closed-ended questions, enabling the researchers to

transform respondents' answers into statistical data. It also involved one open-ended question to elicit in-depth insights into teachers' perceptions of whether AI will serve as a collaborative tool or replace educators. ***Participants***

This study involved English language teachers from various regions across Morocco. The study includes 146 participants; 95 male teachers (65.1%) and 51 female teachers (34.9%). Their teaching experience ranged from less than 10 years (N=60), 10 to 20 years (N=47), to over 20 years (N=39). Using probability sampling technique, the participants were randomly selected to ensure unbiased representation of perceptions regarding the integration of AI in teaching English. Several factors lead to the selection of 146 participants namely time constraints, participant availability and access to the target population. This sample size was deemed feasible for conducting the research within the study's limitations.

Research Instruments

Questionnaire

The researchers collected data using the quantitative approach. We distributed an online questionnaire to 146 practitioners through Facebook and WhatsApp groups dedicated to English language teaching professionals to ensure broad accessibility and representation. We divided the data collection procedure into two parts: the first focused on the participants' background information, while the second targeted teachers' perceptions of integrating AI tools in Moroccan high schools. Demographic information, including gender and teaching experience, is requested in part one of the questionnaire. Part 2 consisted of 15 items, mainly dealing with teachers' perceptions of the types of AI that Moroccan high schools can implement, the advantages of using these tools, the challenges that prevent implementing these tools in classrooms, and some strategies to overcome these obstacles. Researchers develop the questionnaire items based on a thorough review of existing literature on AI integration in education, particularly in English Language Teaching. Themes, namely AI benefits, challenges, strategies to overcome these obstacles, and teachers' perceptions, ensure that the questionnaire addressed relevant aspects of the study. Researchers conducted a pilot study to refine the questions before distributing the final version of the questionnaire.

The Scale

Researchers calculated Cronbach's Alpha to assess the reliability of the questionnaire, yielding satisfactory results with scores of .814 and .830, respectively. These values indicate strong consistency among the items. They suggest that the questionnaire items measure the intended concepts and are reliable for drawing meaningful conclusions. These results confirm that researchers can trust the questionnaire for subsequent analysis and interpretations.

Table 1. *Reliability statistics*

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,814	,830	17

Results

Exploring Applicable AI Technologies for Moroccan High Schools

Integrating artificial intelligence (AI) in education becomes crucial because it offers innovative methods and solutions to enhance the teaching and learning experience. The following graph presents the distribution of respondents' opinions on the types of AI that Moroccan high schools can implement.

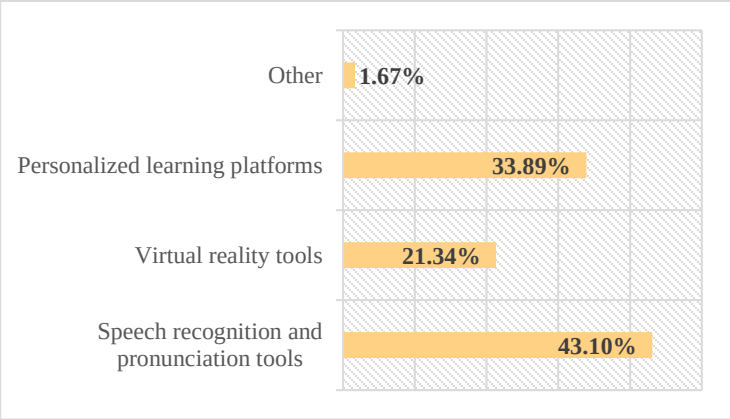


Figure 2. Types of AI used in Moroccan high schools

The findings show that 43.1% of participants selected speech recognition and pronunciation tools as the most preferred AI tool for implementation in Moroccan high schools. Following behind, 33.89% select personalized learning platforms as the second type. Virtual Reality tools rank third with 21.34%, while 1.67% suggested other tools.

Selecting speech recognition and pronunciation apps as the first AI tools Moroccan schools must contain demonstrates their importance in English language teaching. These tools are crucial for numerous tasks, namely analyzing learners' spoken language, identifying mistakes, and providing instant feedback. These performed tasks reflect that teachers are offered virtual assistants in the classroom. Moreover, AI tools help students practice their speaking skills in private without fear of being judged or criticized by peers, especially when they are still learning and making mistakes.

Furthermore, respondents identify personalized learning platforms as another important AI tool for teachers. These tools assist teachers with adapting lessons to each student's needs by recognizing that learners progress at different rates. In other words, these platforms support struggling students and additional challenges for advanced learners.

Moreover, VR tools can bring lessons to life because they offer interactive experiences that make learning more engaging. For instance, VR provides simulations that help students build confidence in using English as it put students in real-world contexts. This experience bridges the gap between theory and practice, thus, enhancing students' speaking skills.

Besides, respondents suggested an additional AI tool that can enhance the teaching and learning process. They identified ChatGPT as a virtual conversational partner that can help students improve various skills as they can engage in dialogues, ask questions, and receive instant responses. It can also assist with writing exercises, structuring essays, or correcting grammar.

In summary, integrating AI tools offers excellent potential to enhance the teaching and learning experience. The following section will explore the advantages of incorporating these tools into educating English.

Advantages of AI Tools in English Language Learning

The following diagrams reflect the respondents' opinions regarding the advantages of using AI tools in teaching English.

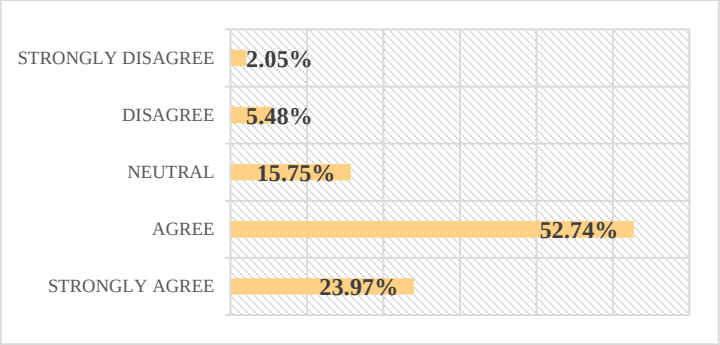


Figure 3. AI provides personalized learning experiences for students

The above graph exhibits the respondents' level of agreement with the idea that AI provides personalized learning experiences for students. The findings indicate that the majority of the respondents agree (52.74% agreeing and 23.97% strongly agreeing). Yet, 5.48% disagree and 2.05% strongly disagree, while 15.75% remain neutral.

The respondents who agree with this statement reveal that AI tools provide personalized learning platforms that allow teachers to focus on each student's level. They contend that these tools are beneficial, particularly in large classes where it is challenging for teachers to provide such individualized attention. Moreover, one of the teachers' tasks is to prepare lessons in advance. However, designing lessons that meet the diverse needs of all students can be time-consuming and challenging. Hence, Teachers can save time and energy by using AI tools for lesson preparation, which saves teachers time and energy, thus, can focus on more meaningful aspects of their work. Besides, AI tools help students correct mistakes and save them from the embarrassment of asking for help in front of their peers. It means that struggling students can receive support without being mocked by their peers.

The minority who disagreed with this statement argue that AI tools lack the human touch necessary to address students' needs. In other words, AI cannot replicate humans' qualities to deal with their students, particularly those who feel marginalized. Those who remain neutral find difficulty in taking a side in the debate.

Along with providing personalized learning experiences for students, AI tools have the potential to enhance learners' engagement through interactive activities. In this respect, the following diagram reflects the distribution of opinions on this matter.

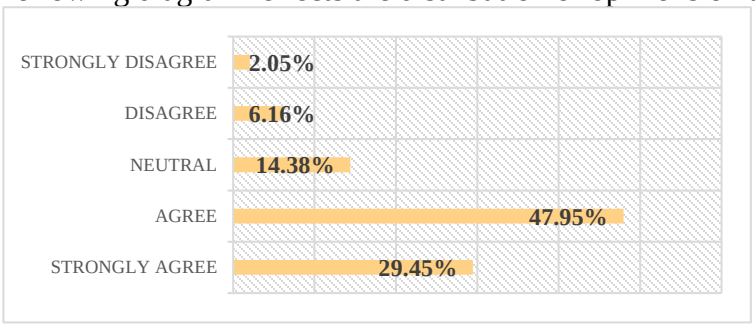


Figure 4. AI tools enhance students' engagement through interactive activities

The statement that designates AI tools as enhancers of students' engagement through many interactive activities received vital support from the respondents. The majority, comprising 47.95% and 29.45%, expressed an optimistic view. In contrast, only a tiny percentage–6.16% disagree and 2.05% strongly disagree– while 14.38% chose to remain neutral.

The respondents who agreed with the above statement indicate that students' engagement and motivation improve when using AI applications, particularly those that feature interactive games. These tools shift the perception of learning from a tedious task to an enjoyable experience since they capture students' attention and encourage active participation. This idea demonstrates that AI can keep the classroom dynamic by providing various activities that would be difficult for teachers to design and manage independently.

The minority who disagreed with the statement argues that though AI tools transform the learning experience into an engaging and motivating process, they prioritize entertainment over education. As a result, students may become more focused on the fun aspects rather than grasping the academic content. Those who remained neutral chose not to express a definitive opinion.

In addition, AI tools help teachers save time because they manage routine tasks, and allow them to focus more on the essential aspects of teaching. In this regard, the following diagram sheds light on the respondents' opinions about this matter.

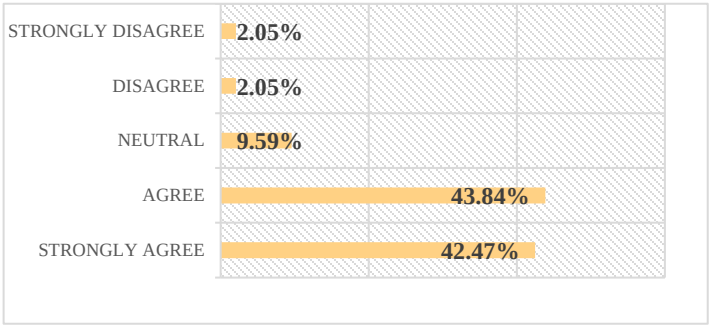


Figure 5. AI helps teachers save time by automating routine tasks

For the statement that AI tools help teachers save time by automating routine tasks, 43.84% of respondents agreed, while 42.47% strongly agreed. On the contrary, 4.1% was split between those who disagreed and strongly disagreed, while 9.59% remained neutral.

Most respondents who agreed with this statement believe that AI can relieve teachers of various time-consuming tasks such as grading papers. They believe this automation helps teachers redirect their efforts toward supporting students and addressing their needs rather than wasting this valuable time on routine tasks. Like grading papers, AI tools can reduce teachers' time spent on various administrative tasks, such as updating record books at the end of each session. To put it differently, AI can update online record books, and enable teachers to access them with just a click instead of manually tracking lesson progress. Furthermore, teachers invest significant time before each session designing and preparing lesson plans to ensure smooth lessons, including managing the time allocated to each activity, which is time-consuming. However, AI tools can automate much of this preparation, allowing them to redirect their efforts toward other essential aspects of teaching.

The minority who disagreed with this statement argue that relying on AI for lesson preparation reduces the human element, which is crucial in the teaching and learning experience. They emphasize that teachers' individual touch and unique approach engage students. Thus, if all

lessons become standardized through AI, students may lose interest due to missing the personal teaching style that each teacher brings to the classroom.

All in all, integrating AI tools in Moroccan classrooms will offer numerous advantages for enhancing English language teaching and improving the overall learning experience. However, it is crucial to consider the challenges of its implementation. The following section will delve into these challenges that hinder the integration of AI tools in Moroccan classrooms.

Barriers to AI Adoption in Moroccan English Classrooms

Integrating AI tools in English language classrooms is of great value, but its implementation is not without challenges. This section, therefore, will explore the challenges that hinder the successful adoption of AI in English language teaching.

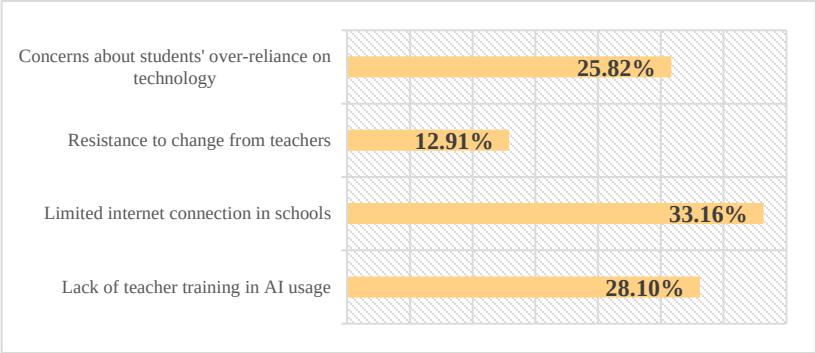


Figure 6. The challenges that prevent the implementation of AI in English classrooms

The findings reveal that the primary challenge that hinders the implementation of AI tools in English classrooms is limited internet connection in Moroccan schools, as 33.16% of the respondents identified it as the top issue. 28.1% of the respondents pointed to a lack of teacher training in using AI as the second obstacle. Following closely, students' over-reliance of students on technology ranked third, with 25.82% of the respondents. Lastly, resistance to change among teachers was the least cited challenge, with only 12.91% of respondents.

Choosing the lack of reliable internet connection as the primary obstacle to implementing AI in Moroccan schools reflects a widespread issue that many teachers face. In this era, AI tools and platforms rely on a stable internet connection to function. However, in many schools, especially in rural areas, the internet connection is unstable. Hence, these tools become ineffective because these unstable connections prevent teachers from using them to enhance the learning experience.

Also, the absence of professional development programs that guide teachers into integrating AI into their teaching practices presents a significant challenge for them. Teachers feel unprepared to use AI tools with their students without proper training, hence, restricting their ability to leverage these technologies to enhance the learning experience.

Moreover, respondents express concerns about students' over-reliance on technology and consider it as a barrier that makes policymakers discouraged from implementing AI in Moroccan classrooms. There is a growing fear that students become too dependent on AI for doing their tasks and learning in their place rather than engaging in critical thinking and problem-solving on their own. This dependence hinders the development of reasoning, analyzing, and decision-making,

skills that are crucial for personal, academic, and professional success. By relying heavily on AI, learners miss valuable opportunities to engage with the world around them.

Furthermore, another obstacle that prevents the implementation of AI tools is teachers' resistance. Their hesitance to adopt these technologies in their teaching practices emanates from these tools' complexity and teachers' unfamiliarity. That is to say, some teachers fear making mistakes when using AI in front of their learners, which undermines their confidence and increases their reluctance to incorporate it into their teaching practices. Moreover, this resistance may stem from policymakers' failure to allocate sufficient resources for AI integration. The successful adoption of AI tools in classrooms requires a reliable infrastructure that supports the advancement of these technologies. Additionally, some teachers resist the implementation of AI because they are confident in the approaches they have developed and skeptical about the need to replace them with AI-generated alternatives.

In sum, integrating AI in Moroccan classrooms faces several challenges that hinder its implementation. That is why addressing these obstacles is crucial to unlock the full potential of AI in education. The following section seeks to explore strategies aimed at overcoming these obstacles and facilitating the adoption of AI tools.

Overcoming Obstacles: Effective Approaches to Implementing AI in Education

After exploring the obstacles that hinder the implementation of AI in Moroccan high schools, the current section investigates various strategies to overcome these obstacles and pave the way for the successful adoption of AI tools. The following graph exhibits the respondents' opinions on the solutions to address these issues.

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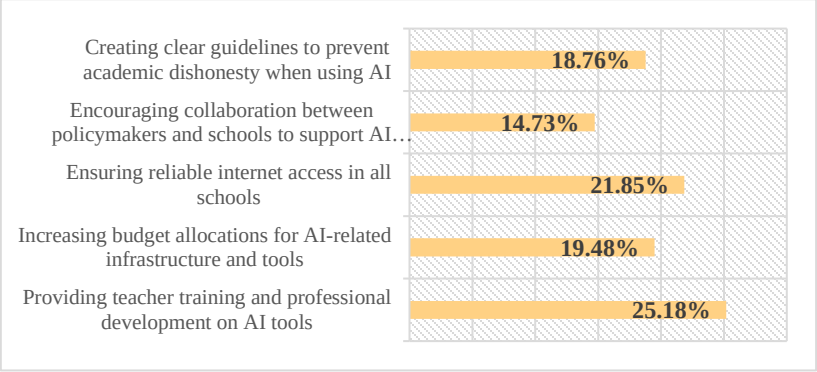


Figure 7. The strategies that help overcome the obstacles of integrating AI in ELT

The findings reveal that 25.18% of respondents identified providing teacher training and professional development on AI tools as the most useful strategy for implementing AI in Moroccan classrooms. Following closely, 21.85% chose reliable internet access in all schools as a necessary measure. Additionally, 19.48% demanded increasing budget allocations for AI-related infrastructure and tools. Meanwhile, 18.76% advocated creating clear guidelines to prevent

academic dishonesty when using AI. Finally, encouraging collaboration between policymakers and schools to support AI integration remains the least prioritized strategy, selected by 14.73% of respondents.

Choosing teacher training on using AI as the most crucial strategy demonstrates its pivotal role in boosting teachers' self-confidence in integrating these technologies into their teaching practices. It means that becoming familiar with AI alleviates teachers' fear of making mistakes in front of their learners and provides them with the practical knowledge to explore new methods for engaging students.

Respondents identified the lack of a reliable internet connection as the primary obstacle to implementing AI in Moroccan high schools. Addressing this issue is essential for successfully integrating these tools. In other words, resolving this challenge is necessary for using AI because its platforms and tools rely heavily on stable internet access. Along with unreliable internet, Moroccan high schools do not have the convenient infrastructure to support the incorporation of AI tools. Many schools, particularly rural ones, lack the equipment for AI implementation, such as reliable computers with updated software, interactive boards, etc. These limitations are aggravated when some schools struggle to provide basic educational resources, like functioning projectors or stable electricity.

Moreover, teachers are reluctant to use AI tools with their students because they are worried that these tools facilitate cheating or other unethical academic practices. To address this issue, teachers demand clear guidelines that teach students the responsible use of AI tools. When addressing this issue, teachers can ensure that students use technology to enhance their learning experience while preserving the integrity of independent thinking and academic work honesty.

Besides, respondents desired the direct involvement of policymakers in creating an environment where AI tools can be genuinely applied in Moroccan classrooms. In other words, policymakers gain insight into the real challenges teachers face in their classrooms when leaving their desks and visiting schools. By doing so, policymakers can craft policies that meet the actual demands of the school, and ensure that these policies go beyond theoretical ideals.

In a nutshell, addressing these challenges is crucial for integrating AI in Moroccan classrooms because it has a significant impact in motivating students and enhancing their learning experience. Having explored the types and advantages of AI tools, the obstacles that prevent their implementation, and the strategies that help overcome them, this article explores the ongoing debate about whether AI will replace teachers or help them enhance education.

AI in Education: A Tool for Collaboration or a Threat to Teachers?

Due to the increased use of AI in education, an ongoing debate arises about its impact on teachers' profession. The findings from this study reflect respondents' division; some believe that AI will facilitate and enhance teaching practices, whereas others expressed concerns that AI will replace teachers. In this respect, this section will explore both perspectives and the reasons behind these opinions.

Most respondents who believe that AI will complement teachers inside the classroom base their opinion on several factors. First and foremost, they argue that teaching cannot rely solely on automated methods because it requires human creativity, intuition, and emotions–qualities that AI lacks. In other words, teachers' role extends beyond content delivery to mentors, motivators and role models who support, guide, and inspire students. Moreover, teachers can benefit from AI, particularly in administrative tasks such as filling in record books, designing quizzes and tests,

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correcting and grading them, and tracking students' attendance. AI can also assist in developing culturally appropriate tasks that align with the curriculum. AI can also introduce a wealth of new and creative ideas to the classroom that help teachers capture students' attention and make their learning more engaging. Moreover, teachers' use of AI in teaching can improve English language acquisition by merging the strengths of both. To simplify, teachers bring valuable expertise in pedagogy and classroom management, while AI offers personalized learning experiences that meet each student's needs.

The minority who visualize that AI can take over teachers' jobs argue that the advanced capabilities of these tools can perform many tasks traditionally carried out by teachers. For instance, AI can create well-structured lessons, answer students' questions instantly, and offer feedback. Furthermore, AI can assist in improving pronunciation, improving students' problem-solving skills, and offering individualized learning experiences. With these capabilities, AI is considered an all-encompassing solution that can guide students through their learning journey without needing teachers. Hence, the role of the teacher will become redundant, and AI will appear as an attractive alternative to traditional teaching.

To conclude, the role of AI in education sparks a debate with contrasting perspectives. While most respondents believe that AI should complement rather than replace teachers because it can't replicate human creativity, emotions, and mentorship, a small group sees AI as a possible replacement due to its advanced capabilities in delivering learning. Hence, the key to successful integration is striking a balance where AI enhances education without alleviating the essential qualities that teachers bring to the classroom.

Discussion

This article explores the types and advantages of AI, some obstacles to its implementation, strategies for overcoming these challenges, and the ongoing debate around whether AI will replace or collaborate with teachers.

In response to RQ1 (What types of artificial intelligence can be applied in teaching English in Moroccan high schools?), the first section of the results chapter introduced the kinds of AI that policymakers can implement in Moroccan high schools. These tools include pronunciation tools, virtual assistants, Chatbots like ChatGPT, and platforms for personalized learning. These findings are consistent with the research of Chen et al. (2020) and Fitria (2021), who revealed the growing integration of AI into education through various computer-based systems.

Regarding RQ2 (What advantages can teachers benefit from with the integration of AI in ELT?), these tools offer numerous advantages, such as providing customized learning experiences, fostering engagement, and saving teachers valuable time by handling routines like lesson planning and grading. The results align with Fitria (2023), and Aljuaid (2024) who explore AI's numerous advantages in education. According to them, AI personalizes learning according to learners' needs, develops language skills, writing, and critical thinking, and streamline teachers' administrative tasks. Moreover, it handles lesson planning, creates tests, and check attendance, thus, reducing teachers' workload.

Concerning RQ3 (What challenges might prevent the implementation of AI in Moroccan high school English classrooms?), the study identified numerous obstacles. The first challenge identified was the lack of reliable internet connection, particularly in rural areas. In other words, AI requires high-speed internet to function, but many schools in Morocco struggle with unreliable internet. This obstacle is further exacerbated by inadequate infrastructure, as many schools lack

the necessary tools to implement AI. Consistent with El Ghazali and Benbrahim (2024), this study demonstrates that many institutions suffer from limited and slow internet connection in rural areas. Moreover, teachers face challenges due to a lack of suitable training. That is why they hesitate to adopt AI in their teaching practices. This study echoes the conclusions of Sharma (2024) whom reveal that teachers feel uncertain and vulnerable when they lack sufficient knowledge to integrate AI tools into their teaching practices.

For RQ4 (which strategies will help overcome the obstacles in integrating AI in ELT?), the respondents proposed several strategies. Providing adequate teacher training emerged as the most vital strategy because it can increase teachers' confidence in using AI, as Sharma (2024), identified. Other strategies included improving the quality of the internet, increasing funding for necessary infrastructure, and establishing clear guidelines to prevent cheating and unethical behavior while using AI. Collaboration between policymakers, schools, and teachers is crucial as it allows policymakers to gain insight into classroom realities and develop policies that address teachers' needs, as mentioned by Sozon (2024).

Concerning RQ5 (will AI collaborate with teachers or replace them?), the last section targets the debate over whether AI will replace teachers or collaborate with them. The majority of respondents argued that AI and teachers complement each other. They contended that AI can perform multiple tasks. However, it cannot replicate the human qualities since teachers are more than content providers; they serve as mentors, motivators, and role models. Despite its impressive capabilities, AI lacks these human elements, which are very important for students' development. On the contrary, a minority of respondents believed that AI can replace teachers in classrooms. Similar to Fitria's (2023) findings, they argued that AI's ability to deliver lessons, answer students' questions, provide feedback, and tailor content to individual needs can make the traditional role of the teacher redundant.

This article has several limitations although it provides valuable data concerning teachers' perceptions of AI in English language teaching. First, the researchers' dependence on the quantitative approach limits the depth of answers and lacks respondents' personal experiences. In addition, the use of online questionnaires may have excluded teachers without reliable internet access or those less familiar with digital tools. These limitations encourage the need for further research to expand on the study's findings.

This study can inspire future researchers to explore the effects of AI integration in Moroccan high schools. Moreover, employing qualitative methods such as interviews or classroom observations could provide deeper insights into the practical challenges and opportunities of AI adoption.

Conclusion

To conclude, AI, with its diverse applications and platforms, can revolutionize education by providing numerous benefits that enhance the quality of teaching and learning. However, integrating AI into Moroccan classrooms is not exempt from obstacles. Thus, overcoming the existing barriers and adopting the power of AI as a complement to teachers in the school is a prerequisite for shaping the future of education in Morocco. This collaborative approach will ensure that AI enhances the educational experience while preserving the humanistic values that teachers bring to their classrooms.

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