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Investigating Teachers' Stand about AI Application in Teaching: Are there any other Moderating Factors?

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ABSTRACT

Considering the modern digital world and the rapid developments, artificial intelligence is gaining greater attention, especially concerning teaching and learning English. Therefore, the present quantitative research investigated the attitudes of 191 EFL instructors about integrating Artificial Intelligence into educational practices in Iran and the extent to which they find applying AI tools in their teaching beneficial or challenging. The researcher selected the participants through stratified random sampling. This study used descriptive statistics to outline teachers' attitudes toward the benefits and challenges associated with AI applications. Moreover, it used ANOVA to examine the potential disparities in teachers' attitudes based on their gender, age, and teaching experience and determine whether they may moderate such implementations and perspectives. Analysis of the results obtained through the applied questionnaire revealed that teachers believed AI applications have a medium level of benefit in their teaching, considering different dimensions. Additionally, the study's findings demonstrated that technical obstacles, such as a lack of internet connectivity, are the most challenging issues. Moreover, the findings indicated that instructors' age, gender, and teaching experience impacted their perceptions of AI applications as beneficial or challenging. As the final point, this research discussed the implications of the study regarding teacher educators and curriculum designers.

Introduction

In the high-tech world, technology plays a significant role in education, particularly in learning English as a second or foreign language (Sitopu et al., 2024; Afni et al., 2024; Antika et al., 2024; Guna et al., 2024). Moreover, technology tools for information and communication should be added to teaching and learning processes (Leahy et al., 2019). The influence of technology on teaching and learning the English language is noteworthy in terms of what teachers need in classrooms. Resulting in more advanced language development, the teacher and technology can improve learning outcomes for EFL students (Sharma, 2009).

As Artificial Intelligence (AI) is spreading rapidly, its impact on the teaching system has become increasingly significant. Artificial Intelligence (AI), a kind of computer-based creativity, has gathered interest in improving technologies (Cheng and Day, 2014). It produces 'intelligent'

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systems that work and react like our brain, including computer platforms and automated devices (Karsenti, 2019). In language learning, combining multimedia and AI systems can improve students' language proficiency. These technologies permit learners to develop contextually relevant language skills (Wang et al., 2023). Furthermore, they propose new opportunities for improving pedagogy and enhancing language education (Hollands & Escueta, 2019). EFL instructors are increasingly studying how AI applications can enrich teaching and learning experiences (Hwang et al., 2020).

Generally, integrating AI applications into EFL teaching practices can enhance student learning and language skills in the classroom. EFL instructors should have a plan for using AI applications and use these tools to support learning. Moreover, AI can develop language learning, engage students, and enlighten their decision-making and prediction capabilities (Godwin-Jones, 2019). Researchers have been investigating the effect of AI on education, mainly in terms of its overall accessibility (Firdaus & Nawaz, 2024). While incorporating artificial intelligence (AI) in education raises considerable concerns, several studies have principally analyzed students' understandings and experiences with AI applications (Choi et al., 2023). However, there is a lack of research that investigates the perspective of EFL teachers regarding these technologies. As AI becomes more prevalent, viewing teachers' strategies and promoting effective integration is demanded for enhancing the learning experience (Firdaus & Nawaz, 2024). Moreover, the insufficient investigation on teachers' perspectives fails to consider the impact of demographic aspects on their approaches toward AI incorporation.

The current research examined EFL teachers' insights towards AI application in teaching, examining how gender, age, and teaching experience moderated these perspectives. Considering the gap in other research, the present study aimed to provide an understanding of teachers' dispositions in employing AI technologies in their classrooms. Ultimately, this investigation delivers a more comprehensive understanding of effective AI in language teaching, improving teaching practices and student learning outcomes. Consequently, the present study answered the following research questions:

1. What perspectives do Iranian EFL teachers have on the benefits of using AI applications in EFL classrooms in Iran?
2. What are the attitudes of Iranian EFL teachers regarding the challenges associated with implementing AI technology in EFL classrooms in Iran?
3. Are there any significant differences in the Iranian EFL teachers' attitudes toward the benefits and challenges of using AI applications in EFL classrooms due to teaching experience?
4. Are there any significant differences in the Iranian EFL teachers' attitudes toward the benefits and challenges of using AI applications in EFL classrooms due to gender?
5. Are there any significant differences in the Iranian EFL teachers' attitudes toward the benefits and challenges of using AI applications in EFL classrooms due to age?

Literature Review

AI Technology and Classroom Applications

Offering creative tools that enhance the learning experience, integrating AI technology into educational environments has transformed traditional language learning methods. Applications,

including Rosetta, Duolingo, Babbel, Stone, and Memrise, reveal the effectiveness of AI in language acquisition. They suggest personalized learning pathways, adaptive activities, and interactive landscapes that involve learners. These platforms impact machine learning algorithms, investigate user performance, and adjust content to individual needs. Therefore, they develop a more influential and satisfying learning environment (Godwin-Jones, 2018). Instructors progressively integrate these technologies into classroom pedagogy and study their impact on language learning results and student engagement.

Duolingo

Duolingo is a platform that contains a language-learning website and application offering textual lessons and dictation. It helps more advanced users improve through speech practice and a vocabulary section where they may practice learning words (Hernadijaya, 2020). People can download it on mobile phones as a multipurpose social platform designed for language learning. Since it is based on games and casual conversations, learning a language becomes fun. Empowering students to interact with native English speakers is one of its key uses (Alfuhaid, 2024).

Rosetta Stone

The second AI-powered language learning tool is Rosetta Stone (http://www.rosettastone.com). This tool raises the experience with its AI-enhanced approach. Rosetta Stone, highlighting proper pronunciation and practical conversation skills, was established to prepare students for real-life communication in English. This application adapts the lessons to the learners' needs. True Accent, as a unique speech recognition technology, is one noteworthy characteristic of Rosetta Stone. It helps improve your pronunciation by examining and comparing your speech with native speakers, offering immediate feedback (Lord, 2016).

Babbel

The next application, which focuses on conversational skills, is Babbel. Babbel adjusts its lessons to match individual learning styles, presenting a highly personalized learning experience. It emphasizes real-life conversations for those looking for practical language skills. One of Babbel's important features is its collaborative conversation. These conversations are for speaking and listening (Bajorek, 2017).

Memrise

Memrise, the final tool here, but not the last one, uses AI to simulate natural language learning and has real-life language practices. It is a significant option for those interested in mastering English tones, such as idiomatic expressions and slang. One of its special features is showing videos with native speakers, which indicate language usage in various real-life conditions, helping learners use English in everyday life. It is vital for creating a clear sense of the language and acquiring spoken proficiency (Esmaeili & Shahrokhi, 2020).

Review of the Related Studies

Pan and Wang (2025) studied intra-individual differences in AI literacy and examined its relations with age and experience of teachers. Multinomial logistic regression analyses showed significant relationships between teacher AI literacy and age and years of teaching experience. However, this

study mainly concentrates on demographic variables, leaving unexplored the pedagogical implications of diverse AI literacy levels.

In a quantitative study, Hazaymeh et al. (2024) investigated the views of EFL teachers from various universities in the UAE on the effectiveness of AI applications in the EFL classroom. They collected data from 46 EFL teachers. The results revealed that teachers relied on AI applications to simplify learning, suggested data-driven approaches to develop instructional methods, and tailored the learning process to each learner. The conclusion revealed that the teaching experience influenced the EFL instructors' insights concerning the benefits of implementing AI apps in EFL classrooms. While their research indicated the positive perspectives on AI tools, it lacks a more profound investigation into how these attitudes convert into real classroom practices and consequences.

Koka et al. (2024) investigated gender differences in the adoption of AI tools in the EFL context. The outcomes showed that the perceptions of male and female senior speakers towards AI technologies in foreign classrooms differ. Male senior speakers revealed more positive views. Additionally, there are disparities in the level of proficiency in using AI technologies across genders. It focuses on a significant dimension of teacher perspectives; however, it questions the fundamental reasons for these dissimilarities and their potential influence on AI implementation in various educational contexts.

Moreover, Zulkarnain and Yunus (2023) explored teachers' viewpoints regarding the effectiveness, convenience, motivation, and challenges of integrating AI technology. Regarding its dynamic characteristics and effectiveness, teachers typically conclude that integrating AI is positive. However, there were also some disadvantages to its use. While their results showed a positive attitude toward active features of AI, they recognize drawbacks that have not been investigated deeply.

The study by Xie (2022) examined students' ability to write in English and assessed the effectiveness of English instruction using AI. It declared that implementing computer-assisted technology by teachers led to a decrease in the level of errors in English composition. Additionally, the overall English scores improved from 58.6% to 69.6%. Although this research revealed the potential benefits of AI tools, it did not consider long-term influences on student engagement.

In a review study, Xuan and Yunus (2023) examined teachers' attitudes toward using AI-based English language learning, considering automated grading systems, learning situations, and the functions of teachers in AI-based settings. The results indicated that teachers have a pleasant view of using AI-based English language learning, which enhances their efficiency, generates an engaging setting, offers supplementary support to students, and modifies teachers' roles as facilitators in the classroom. Nevertheless, their study did not satisfactorily explore how these approaches impact teaching practices or the probable challenges teachers encounter in adjusting to new roles as facilitators.

Songsiengchai et al. (2023) explored the potential of AI models to enable English language learning among Thai learners in a mixed-methods research. The findings indicated that AI tools, such as ChatGPT, led to practical language learning in academic settings. The analysis demonstrated that students who interacted with AI improved their language mastery. Similarly, Li (2021) noted that leveraging artificial intelligence technology could help teachers with tasks. He examined students' low self-efficacy in writing and planned to enhance their self-awareness of

English writing and lifelong learning. The findings revealed several benefits of using AI in ELT: personalized learning experiences, instant feedback, and increased learner commitment. Yet, inadequate infrastructure, privacy matters, and poor teacher training decrease operational application. However, further research can investigate the contextual features that influence the effectiveness of such tools in different educational environments.

The study by Delgado et al. (2020) examined the field of AI applied to Education, concentrating on the ELT. They outlined views and applications of AI and evaluated the functionalities of adaptive tools, bringing evaluative feedback on their use by American school teachers. The results showed that the tools are effective media choices to match teaching, specifically adaptive learning. They offered students more comprehensive chances for maximizing learning by adapting instruction to see students 'needs and assisting students in becoming more responsible for their schooling. However, this study lacks a detailed analysis of how different demographic characteristics may impact the effectiveness of AI in educational environments.

Teimourtash (2024) investigated the role of AI-integrated applications in enhancing Iranian EFL learners' academic writing skills. The researcher divided sixty intermediate undergraduates into a control group and two experimental groups using Synthetic and Analytic AI tools. Results showed that both AI-supported groups outperformed the control group, with the Synthetic AI group showing the better results. Findings suggest that AI tools can significantly improve writing skill achievement and offer practical suggestions for teachers, curriculum designers, and stakeholders. However, the study did not investigate the qualitative characteristics, such as student perceptions.

Talebi (2025) explored the effect of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) on EFL learners' reading skills. Fifty learners were divided randomly into experimental and control groups. They had CALL-based training before and after old-style teaching. Results from pre- and post-tests showed significant improvement in the experimental group, and questionnaire responses indicated positive views of learners about CALL. The findings showed CALL's effectiveness in improving reading skills and its potential for larger classroom integration. However, there is an inadequate examination of potential obstacles to its application in various classroom settings.

While previous studies offer the practical usefulness of AI in language learning, they display several gaps. There is a limited investigation of contextual aspects that influence tool efficacy, qualitative user experiences, and long-term consequences of these interventions. The current study aimed to fill these gaps by investigating the quantitative effects of AI tools on language skills and the qualitative experiences of students and teachers within various educational contexts.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

This section demonstrates both the historical developments in AI and the current educational theories. 'I, Robot' (Asimov, 1942) has influenced the insight of human-robot interactions and AI ethics as a text for discussions on intelligent devices (Haenlein & Kaplan, 2019). While this work emphasized the notion of artificial intelligence, the research by McCulloch and Pitts (1943) made a prominent step toward the functional application of AI (Piccinini, 2004). Considering Alan Turing's (1973) ideas on computation, this study revealed how interconnected uncomplicated components in a neural network could provide notable computational competencies. Afterward, Donald Hebb presented 'Hebbian Learning' in 1949, a framework for tuning neuron connections that was instrumental in the development of neural networks (Song et al., 2000).

AI development continued with the considerable effects of Minsky and Edmonds (1950), generating SNARC, the first analog neural network machine that effectively piloted a network using artificial neurons (Bernstein, 2021). Similarly, this period revealed the AI presence during the Dartmouth Conference (1956). Several influential figures studied automata theory and cognitive science. McCarthy described AI as the understanding and engineering of developing intelligent devices, underscoring the current improvement of computing and AI (Russell & Norvig, 2021).

Subsequently, Newell and Simon presented the General Problem Solver (GPS), which was devised to reproduce human problem-solving processes (Newell et al., 1959). Similarly, Arthur Samuel's (1956) study on a checker-playing program explained learning support, where an AI mechanism learns to guide its surroundings through a reward-based method (Bleakley, 2020). In 1958, McCarthy presented an AI-specific programming language named LISP (Toosi et al., 2021). Afterward, Weizenbaum (1966) devised ELIZA, the first chatbot in AI history, used as a virtual therapist (Salecha, 2021).

On the other hand, Tarisayi (2024) identified five theories regarding the integration of artificial intelligence in education:

- Technology Organization Environment (TOE) clarifies how the adoption and implementation of new technologies are influenced by elements related to the technology itself, its organization, and the external environment of the organization.
- The Technology Acceptance Model, developed by Davis (1986), represents the issues that impact individuals' decisions to accept or reject new technologies.
- Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge demonstrates how teachers can effectively incorporate technology into their teaching practices.
- Socio-technical System Theory underscores the interaction between social and technical aspects in shaping organizational structures and processes.
- Diffusion of Innovation theory, developed by Rogers (1962), describes how new ideas, products, or technologies spread through a social system.

Method

Design of the Study

The current quantitative research examined the Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions regarding the benefits and challenges of using AI applications in the EFL context, focusing on mediating variables, such as age, gender, and experience. The independent variables are teaching age, gender, and experience. The dependent variables are teachers' perceptions about the benefits of AI applications and their challenges. The researchers of the present study employed a stratified random sampling procedure to select 191 EFL teachers from the Islamic Azad University of Mashhad. The researcher stratified the participants based on three demographic factors, including age, gender, and years of teaching experience. According to Dörnyei (2007), the researcher divided the population into groups and selected a random sample of a proportional size in stratified

random sampling. Since the researchers of this study sought to ensure representation across various demographics, stratified sampling could be operative.

Setting and Participants

This study involved 191 Iranian EFL instructors (147 females and 44 males) from Islamic Azad University of Mashhad. Most were TEFL or English Literature students who also taught at private institutes. Their ages ranged from 18 to 38. Non-English majors were excluded due to insufficient proficiency and teaching experience. Before participating in this research, each participant filled out a consent form. This form confirmed that individuals were informed about the study's purposes and accepted their voluntary involvement in this study. Table 1 illustrates the demographic characteristics of participants.

Table 1

Demographic Information of Participants (n=191)

Demographic Information	Variable	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	44	23
	Female	147	77
Age	18 to 22	149	78
	23 to 27	34	17.9
	28 to 32	4	2.1
	33 to 38	2	1
	More than 38	2	1
City	Mashhad	190	99.5
	Kermanshah	1	0.5
Field of Study	TEFL	131	68.6
	English Literature	60	31.4
Experience (Year)	Below 1	104	54.5
	1 to 5	83	43.5
	6 to 10	3	1.5
	11 to 15	1	0.5
Academic Level	B.A.	182	95.3
	Associate	9	4.7

Instrument of the Study

The researchers of the current study used the questionnaire "EFL Instructors' Perspective on Using AI Applications" developed by Hazaymeh et al. (2024). This questionnaire has 28 items with three sections: The first section is demographic variables, including EFL teachers' gender and teaching experience. The second section focuses on EFL teachers' perceptions regarding the benefits of using AI applications in the classrooms. It included 23 items divided into three domains:

"Personalized Feedback, Practice, and Adaptive Learning" (6 items), "Improve English Language Acquisition" (8 items), and "Increase Engagement, Motivation, and Teaching Efficiency) (9 items). The third section encompasses the views of EFL teachers on the challenges of using AI tools in classrooms, including five items. The researchers used a five-point Likert scale to evaluate the 28 items, with the response options from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

The researchers investigated the face validity of the scale to measure the validity of the items. Consequently, they kept the items with an agreement rate of 81%, changed those that needed corrections, and eliminated those that did not match the required agreement rate. Moreover, the researchers examined the reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha equation. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the entire questionnaire was 0.92, indicating high overall reliability. In addition, the reliability coefficients for the individual constructs ranged from 0.72 to 0.76, which, according to Hair et al. (2010), indicates acceptable internal consistency for all dimensions. These results confirmed that the questionnaire was suitable for further data collection and analysis.

Data Collection Procedure

To collect the data, the researchers used the "EFL Instructors' Perspective on Using AI Applications" questionnaire developed by Hazaymeh et al. (2024). 191 EFL teachers across several language institutes in Iran who studied at Islamic Azad University of Mashhad participated in this study and responded to this questionnaire. Using stratified random sampling, the researchers demonstrated different representations of gender, age, and experience. The scale comprised items that estimated the perceived advantages and problems of employing AI applications in EFL contexts. Moreover, it contained demographic questions to enable investigation concerning moderating aspects.

Data Analysis

To analyze the responses and examine the data, the researchers used descriptive and inferential statistical procedures. This study used descriptive statistics, such as mean scores for each domain, to outline the teachers' perceptions of AI benefits and challenges. Furthermore, the researchers employed ANOVA to examine potential disparities in perceptions due to teaching gender, age, and experience.

Results

Preliminary Assumptions for ANOVA

Homogeneity of Variances

The variances of the groups should be nearly equal. To check this assumption, the researchers used Levene's test. The output from Levene's test displayed that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met for the AI Application Questionnaire across the diverse groups considering teaching experience, age, and gender. The p-values for all tests were greater than the conventional alpha level of 0.05. The outcomes showed no significant differences in variances among the groups, permitting the researchers to continue with ANOVA without concern for violating this assumption. Table 2 shows the results of this section.

Table 2

Homogeneity of Variances Using Levene's Test

		Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances[a,b]			
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
AI Application Questionnaire	Based on Mean	.495	8	169	.858
	Based on Median	.416	8	169	.910
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.416	8	134.583	.910
	Based on trimmed mean	.502	8	169	.854

Checks the null hypothesis that the dependent variable's error variance is alike across groups.
a. Dependent variable: AI Application Questionnaire
b. Design: Intercept + Teaching Experience + Age + Gender + Teaching Experience * Age + Teaching Experience * Gender + Age * Gender + Teaching Experience * Age * Gender

Outliers

To ensure data quality, the researchers examined potential outliers for each construct using boxplots. Observations with values extending more than 1.5 times the interquartile range (IQR) above the third quartile or below the first quartile were outliers. Following common practice (Hair et al., 2010), the researcher reviewed these cases and removed them only when they were extreme and not representative of the overall distribution.

Specifically, one outlier was removed from the "Personalized Feedback, Practice, and Adaptive Learning" construct, three from "Increasing Engagement, Motivation, and Teaching Efficacy," one from "Improving Language Acquisition," and three from "Challenges of Using AI Applications." This adjustment reduced the sample from 191 to 184 cases. After removal, the researcher rechecked the distributions to ensure no notable changes in central tendency or spread. The median values of constructs differed by less than 0.05 points, suggesting that the outlier exclusion did not materially affect the results or the interpretation of variance across constructs.

Results of Question One

In the first research question, the researchers evaluated the insights of Iranian EFL instructors on the advantages of employing AI applications in EFL contexts across different domains, as illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3

The Attitude of EFL Instructors on the Benefits of AI Applications in the EFL Context

Domains	Mean	SD	Level	Rank
The First Domain	3.42	0.88	Medium	2
The Second Domain	3.40	0.85	Medium	3

The Third Domain	3.45	0.80	Medium	1
Overall Score	3.44	0.77	Medium	

The findings identified that all areas had a medium advantage level, with mean scores ranging from 3.40 to 3.45 on a 1-5 Likert scale. The total score across all domains was 3.44 (SD = 0.77), indicating that the teachers' understanding of AI benefits was at a medium level. Table 3 illustrates these findings. It proposes that while Iranian EFL teachers understand the profits of AI applications in enhancing language acquisition, engagement, and personalized learning, they realize these profits as moderate in their classrooms.

To determine whether the differences among the three benefit domains were statistically significant, the researchers of the present study conducted a repeated-measures one-way ANOVA. Mauchly's test of sphericity indicated that the assumption of sphericity was not violated, $\chi^2(2) = 0.05$, $p = .97$. Therefore, the researchers retained the sphericity assumption and reported the results of it. The repeated measures ANOVA showed no significant differences among the three domains, $F(2, 366) = 0.27$, $p = .76$, partial $\eta^2 = .001$. These findings suggest that teachers' attitudes toward the benefits of AI applications did not significantly vary across the domains of Personalized Feedback and Adaptive Learning, Increasing Engagement and Motivation, and Improving Language Acquisition. In other words, teachers viewed the advantages of AI in these areas as relatively similar, all at a moderate level. Table 4 illustrates the results of this section.

Table 4

One-Way Repeated-Measures ANOVA of Perceived Benefits of AI Applications

Source	SS	df	Mean Square	F	p	Partial η^2
Domain (Within-Subjects)	.220	2	.11	.27	.76	.001
Error (Within-Subjects)	147.447	366	.40			

Note: Domain refers to Personalized Feedback and Adaptive Learning, Increasing Engagement and Motivation, and Improving Language Acquisition.

Results of Question Two

In response to the second research question, Table 5 explains Iranian EFL instructors' understandings of the challenges due to the implementation of AI applications in the EFL context. The educators understand that technical difficulties, including poor internet connectivity and restrictions on student interaction through AI applications, are the most influential challenges, which acquired high ratings (mean = 3.52, SD = 1.22). Other concerns were rated medium (means ranging from 3.12 to 3.32). Furthermore, teachers are concerned about a lack of cultural awareness of AI applications, which could affect the authenticity of language learning experiences (mean =

3.29, SD = 1.12). The general score of 3.36 (SD = 0.93) revealed that while instructors realize the potential of AI applications, they consider several challenges that could limit their supportive use in classrooms.

Table 5

The Attitude of EFL Instructors about the Challenges of Using AI Applications in the EFL Context

Statement	Mean	SD	Level	Rank
• Technical difficulties, such as absence of internet connectivity, can impede the operative use of AI applications in the EFL context.	3.52	1.22	High	1
• Schools may not have the incomes to buy and preserve the required technology in the classroom because they are expensive.	3.32	1.16	Medium	2
• AI applications may not meet the requirements of all students.	3.12	1.20	Medium	4
• AI applications can limit face-to-face communication and students' interaction in language learning.	3.52	1.20	High	1
• Lack of cultural awareness in AI applications can influence the validity of language learning experiences.	3.29	1.12	Medium	3
Overall Score	3.36	0.93	Medium	

To examine whether the attitude of these challenges varied across demographic variables, the researchers of the current study conducted a two-way ANOVA with gender and age as independent variables (Table 6). The results revealed a significant main effect of gender, $F(1, N) = 5.63$, $p = .02$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$, indicating that male instructors ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 0.95$) reported a higher attitude of challenges than female instructors ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 0.93$). The main effect of age was not significant, $F(4, N) = 1.06$, $p = .38$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$, and the interaction between gender and age was also not significant, $F(3, N) = 3.57$, $p = .12$, partial $\eta^2 = .06$. These findings suggest that gender influences instructors' attitudes of AI-related challenges. However, these attitudes do not differ significantly across age groups, nor does age moderate the effect of gender.

Table 6

Effects of Gender, Age, and Their Interaction on Perceived Challenges of Using AI in EFL Classrooms

Factor	Df	F	p	Partial η^2	Mean (SD) by group
Gender	1	5.63	.02	.03	Male: 3.94 (.95); Female: 3.34 (.93)
Age	4	1.06	.38	.02	-
Gender * Age	3	3.57	.12	.06	-

Results of Question Three

To answer the third research question, the researchers ran ANOVA analysis to examine the differences in Iranian EFL teachers' attitudes toward the benefits and challenges of using AI applications based on teaching experience (Table 7). The study demonstrated significant differences in several dimensions of the attitude toward benefits and challenges. The F-statistic values for the attitude toward benefits indicate critical differences for personalized feedback, practice, and adaptive learning ($F = 4.25$, $p = 0.04$, partial $\eta^2 = .07$) and enhancing the language acquisition domain ($F = 2.37$, $p = 0.02$, partial $\eta^2 = .04$). However, the results showed no significant differences in increasing engagement, motivation, and teaching efficiency ($F = 0.16$, $p = 0.93$, partial $\eta^2 = .002$). Regarding the insight into challenges, the F-statistic value of 2.06 with a p-value of 0.03 and a partial η^2 of 0.03 reveals significant differences in teaching experience. These findings recommend that teaching experience influences EFL teachers' attitudes about the benefits and challenges of using AI applications in the classroom.

Table 7

ANOVA Results for Differences in EFL Teachers' attitudes of AI Applications Based on Teaching Experience

Variable	Dimensions	F-Statistic	df	p-value	partial η^2	Result
Attitude of Benefits	First Domain	4.25	3	0.04	.07	Significant differences
	Second Domain	0.16	3	0.93	.002	No significant differences
	Third Domain	2.37	3	0.02	.04	Significant differences
Attitude of Challenges	-	2.06	3	0.03	.03	Significant differences

Results of Question Four

To address the fourth research question, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine gender-based differences in EFL teachers' attitudes toward AI applications. The results, presented in Table 8, revealed significant differences between the attitudes of male and female Iranian EFL teachers toward the benefits of AI applications in specific dimensions. In particular, female teachers reported higher mean scores in *Personalized Feedback, Practice, and Adaptive Learning* ($t(182) = 2.05$, $p = .04$) and *Improving Language Acquisition* ($t(182) = 2.18$, $p = .03$). Conversely, male teachers scored higher in *Increasing Engagement, Motivation, and Teaching Efficiency* ($t(182) = -2.36$, $p = .02$). The results showed no significant gender differences in the attitude toward challenges ($t(182) = 0.77$, $p = .44$). These findings suggest that gender plays a role in shaping teachers' attitudes towards the benefits of AI applications but not in their attitudes towards the challenges.

Table 8

T-Test Results for Differences in EFL Teachers' Attitudes towards AI Applications Concerning Gender

Variable	Dimensions	t-Statistic	df	p-value	Result	Mean (SD) by group

Attitude toward Benefits	Personalized Feedback, Practice, and Adaptive Learning	2.05	182	0.04	Significant differences	Male: 3.89(.79); Female: 3.39(.90)
	Increasing Engagement, Motivation, Teaching Efficiency	-2.36	182	0.02	Significant differences	Male: 3.25(.83); 3.76(.85)
	Improving Language Acquisition Domain	2.18	182	0.03	Significant differences	Male: 3.94(.83); Female: 3.41(.79)
Attitude toward Challenges	-	0.77	182	0.44	No significant differences	-

Results of Question Five

The fifth research question examined whether there were meaningful differences in Iranian EFL teachers' attitudes toward the benefits and challenges of using AI applications in EFL classrooms based on age. Table 9 indicates the ANOVA results for both variables: benefits and challenges. The results indicate significant differences in some dimensions of the attitude toward benefits and challenges across different age groups. Significant differences were found in personalized feedback, practice, and adaptive learning ($F = 1.005$, $p = 0.02$) and enriching engagement, motivation, and teaching efficiency ($F = 0.72$, $p = 0.03$) for the benefit. Conversely, the domain of improving language acquisition demonstrated no significant differences ($F = 0.20$, $p = 0.94$). Furthermore, the research suggested meaningful differences across age groups ($F = 1.21$, $p = 0.02$) regarding the attitude toward challenges. These findings propose that age influences certain features of EFL teachers' attitudes towards the benefits and challenges of using AI applications in the classroom.

Table 9

ANOVA Results for Differences in EFL Teachers' Attitudes towards AI Applications Based on Age

Variable	Dimensions	F-Statistic	df	p-value	Result
Attitudes toward Benefits	Personalized Feedback, Practice, and Adaptive Learning	1.005	4	0.02	Significant differences
	Increasing Engagement, Motivation, Teaching Efficiency	0.72	4	0.03	Significant differences
	Improving Language Acquisition Domain	0.20	4	0.94	No significant differences
Attitudes toward Challenges	-	1.21	4	0.02	Significant differences

Discussion

The results of this study indicated that English teachers in Iran were pleased with AI tools in their classrooms. Moreover, the findings demonstrated that AI tools could help improve English learning in EFL programs. Additionally, the findings provide a range of appreciated attitudes towards the application of AI in EFL teaching environments. The present research's results support the findings of Taylor et al. 's (2021) investigation. They indicated that personalized and adaptive learning suggested great opportunities to enhance student learning. However, it delivered some challenges that teachers and institutions need to address for an adaptive learning application to be practical. Moreover, the present investigation supports the study findings by Ma and Chen (2024). They estimated the effect of AI-empowered applications on affective, cognitive, and behavioral engagement among EFL learners. Concerning the cognitive and affective factors of engagement, their research revealed an understanding of improving EFL teaching through AI-driven instruments while considering academic procrastination challenges. The results showed that the experimental group, who received AI-empowered applications, showed significantly higher levels of cognitive, affective, and behavioral engagement than the control group.

In addition, Chen (2024) presented a thorough review of integrating AI into language learning. This research focused on how AI technologies improved the usefulness of language acquisition and transformed traditional approaches in this field. The study's outcomes discussed that instructors used AI as an instrument for producing educational content and a facilitator for innovation, resulting in more operative and comprehensive language learning skills.

However, the findings of the present research contrast with the results of the study by Güneyli et al. (2024). They studied teachers' awareness of employing AI, realizing whether this awareness changes based on socio-demographic aspects, contact with technology, and definite information and views about AI. The results of their study indicated no meaningful influence of teacher demographics on AI awareness.

Furthermore, the results support the findings of research by Uygun (2024), which is a comprehensive study involving 74 teachers who used the Opinion Scale on Artificial Intelligence in Education to gain valuable insights. This study, like the present one, revealed teachers' generally satisfactory view of AI in education, although it also included significant concerns about ethical and privacy-related issues.

Moreover, the outcome of the research is in line with the results of the study carried out by Amber and Shahid (2024). They emphasized that the majority of teachers view artificial intelligence as appropriate and advantageous for application in ELT. However, many challenges exist in applying this recent technology. The research indicates that teachers have positive views on the use of artificial intelligence, yet the benefits of implementing this technology in English teaching can be improved by considering the challenges faced by both teachers and students during its application.

Also, the study of Watted (2025) has supported the final findings of the present study as well. The researchers found that the general view on AI integration was satisfactory, with the top score noted for behavioral purposes, including a significant willingness among teachers to use AI tools in their teaching practice.

Conclusion

The present research investigated the views of Iranian EFL teachers regarding AI applications in classrooms, their benefits and challenges, and moderating aspects such as teaching experience, gender, and age. The findings highlighted that while Iranian EFL teachers distinguish a moderate benefit from AI applications, significant differences exist regarding demographic variables.

First, the outcomes indicated that teachers appreciate the ability of AI to enhance language learning through personalized feedback and adaptive learning. The high mean score for the "Improving Language Acquisition Domain" emphasizes that AI is crucial in adapting academic experiences to individual learner conditions. Nevertheless, acknowledging challenges, such as technological issues and constraints in student interaction, exhibited the need for powerful organization and resources to create effective AI incorporation.

Furthermore, the research revealed significant differences in insights due to teaching experience. More experienced teachers showed greater preference for personalized feedback and adaptive learning features. In addition, technology awareness might influence teachers' views on AI applications. Gender differences were evident, specifically in the perceptions of benefits. It indicated that male and female teachers might approach AI integration with various anticipations and experiences. Finally, age-related distinctions in beliefs underscore the necessity to regard demographic aspects when using AI technologies in academic contexts.

Therefore, while Iranian EFL educators became aware of the benefits of AI in language learning, they faced significant challenges that they had to address to improve their practical performance. The findings emphasized the importance of providing teachers with adequate preparation and resources. As academic institutions employ AI technologies, teachers should consider these dynamics to highlight their advantages and resolve challenges.

The findings of the present study propose significant pedagogical implications for AI applications in EFL contexts in Iran. It emphasizes the understanding of the different viewpoints of EFL teachers regarding AI benefits and challenges. It can offer active techniques for undertaking, curriculum design, and professional development. Devising professional development curricula is crucial, considering the needs of teachers regarding their age, gender, and experience. Moreover, providing infrastructure, including consistent internet connectivity, is essential for using AI tools effectively and supplying continuing technical support to instructors.

Moreover, the results suggested that EFL programs incorporate AI devices that provide personalized feedback and adaptive learning, catering to the various needs of students. Teachers acknowledge the AI's ability to increase student engagement, fostering pedagogical approaches that provide an interactive learning environment. The relationship between educators and technology designers reveals that AI applications are produced with suitable content related to curricular purposes. Providing collaborative learning exercises can also help address constraints in learner interaction. Typically, continuous studies and feedback tools enrich the impact of AI on language learning outcomes, increasing the efficiency of AI applications in education.

Regarding several limitations, the researchers should analyze the results diligently. First, the research sample consisted of Iranian EFL teachers. It limits the generalizability of the outcomes to other contexts or countries. Similarly, depending on self-reported data could create bias because

instructors may have over evaluated their views of AI benefits or challenges. Moreover, this quantitative study may not capture teachers' experiences and insights on using AI in language teaching. Considering some demographic information, including teaching gender, age, and experience, may ignore other significant topics, such as educational background, technological expertise, or institutional support.

Future studies should use a mixed-methods design, combining quantitative and qualitative data to identify EFL teachers' experiences with AI applications. Strengthening the research to contain diverse educators from several cultural and educational backgrounds would increase the generalizability of its findings. Moreover, longitudinal research could provide valuable data on how perspectives develop over time as educators gain more experience with AI technologies. Examining the effect of particular AI tools on the teaching process and learner outcomes would also be advantageous. Finally, exploring the role of professional development and institutional support in enabling operational AI could propose practical perspectives for enhancing EFL teaching practices in various settings.

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