



Students' Experiences with Artificial Intelligence Tools in English Language Learning: A Descriptive Study

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Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2026-09-26 Revised: 2026-09-30 Accepted: 2026-10-07 Keywords: <i>Artificial intelligence; English language learning; qualitative study; students' experiences; thematic analysis</i> DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v14i2.12335 Corresponding Author: Ridwan Vienendra Email: vrrdn342@gmail.com Master's Program in English Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Jambi	<i>Research on AI in language education has mostly examined perceptions, acceptance, and effectiveness, leaving students' lived experiences insufficiently understood. This study explores students' experiences in using generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, namely ChatGPT, Claude, and Gemini, which are commonly used to support language learning, in English language learning. Employing a qualitative descriptive design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Five participants, consisting of Master's students in English Language Education, one of whom is also an active English teacher, participated in the study. The data were analysed using the six-phase thematic analysis procedure of Braun and Clarke (2006). The findings reveal that students' experiences with AI can be understood through five interrelated dimensions: cognitive, affective, social, technological, and overall experience. Cognitively, AI supported material comprehension, language-skill development, and academic writing. Affectively, participants reported increased comfort and confidence associated with AI use, alongside persistent anxiety and mistrust toward the accuracy of AI-generated content. Socially, AI both facilitated and reshaped peer and lecturer interaction through additional verification practices, while raising ethical concerns about dependency and academic honesty. Technologically, ease of use was closely tied to digital literacy and prompting skill, and was constrained by internet connectivity and subscription costs. Overall, participants evaluated their experience as positive but conditional, cautioning that overreliance on AI risks shallow understanding and reduced critical thinking. The study contributes a multidimensional understanding of students' experiences with AI and points to practical implications for AI literacy training, ethical AI use, and teacher guidance.</i>

1. Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has undergone significant change as a result of technological advances in education. AI functions as an intelligent facilitator that supports learning analytics, automation, and adaptive learning (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019), and its integration has become an important trend in modern education worldwide. In the Indonesian context, students increasingly use AI applications such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, Duolingo, and QuillBot to support their English learning, offering features such as writing assistance, grammar checking, speaking practice, and vocabulary enhancement (Sari et al., 2024; Mukti et al., 2024).

English language learning is a particularly relevant context for examining AI use. Learning a language depends on repeated production, timely feedback, and sustained practice, and generative AI tools can now take several supporting roles in this process: giving feedback on writing, correcting grammar, explaining and practicing vocabulary, and providing speaking practice (Kohnke et al., 2023; Sari et al., 2024; Mukti et al., 2024; Xiao & Zhi, 2023). Such support may be especially valuable when individual feedback and target-language practice are limited in large classes or outside class hours. The same roles, however, expose language learners to particular risks, since generated text can replace learners' own production and can contain inaccurate information.

Previous studies can be organized into four strands. The first concerns AI as language-learning support: AI tools have been shown to support personalized learning, improve efficiency, and provide immediate feedback (Kasneci et al., 2023; Tlili et al., 2023), and learners find them useful for vocabulary, grammar, and writing (Xiao & Zhi, 2023). The second concerns learner autonomy. Students increasingly rely not only on instructors or textbooks but also on AI applications available online, a shift that brings opportunities for more engaging and needs-oriented learning (Pratiwi et al., 2024); whether this autonomy is productive depends on how learners plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning (Zimmerman, 2000; Panadero, 2017). The third concerns challenges and ethical concerns, including originality, plagiarism, and appropriate technology use (Pratiwi et al., 2024), as well as accuracy and overreliance (Chan & Hu, 2023; Xiao & Zhi, 2023). The fourth concerns students' lived experiences with AI, which have begun to be examined through narrative and activity-theory approaches (Hakim et al., 2025; Woo et al., 2023) but remain far less studied than perceptions, attitudes, and effectiveness.

Four theoretical perspectives inform this study. Constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) views learning as actively constructed through interaction and supportive mediation, which positions AI as a potential scaffold rather than merely an answer provider. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM; Davis, 1989) explains attitudes toward technology through perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, although it has been criticized for underrepresenting emotional dimensions (Bagozzi, 2007; Scherer et al., 2019). Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) theory (Zimmerman, 2000; Panadero, 2017) highlights how learners plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning, which is directly relevant to how students verify AI output. Finally, the AI literacy framework (Long & Magerko, 2020; Ng et al., 2024) refers to the competencies needed to understand, use, and critically evaluate AI. Constructivism, TAM, and SRL serve as the main frameworks for interpreting the findings, while AI literacy is used as a supporting lens.

However, despite this growing body of research, most previous studies have focused on students' perceptions, attitudes, technology acceptance, and measurable effectiveness of AI tools (Golonka et al., 2022), while comparatively little attention has been paid to students' lived experiences with AI from cognitive, emotional, and social perspectives. Lived experiences matter for two reasons. First, they reveal how students negotiate benefits and risks in everyday practice, for example by valuing immediate help while doubting its accuracy. Second, they show the difference between the availability of AI and its meaningful use for learning, since having access to AI tools does not by itself mean that they are used in ways that support understanding. Understanding these dimensions is essential for gaining deeper insight into how AI influences the language-learning process beyond measurable outcomes.

This study therefore aims to explore students' experiences in using AI tools for English language learning. The main research question is: how do students experience the use of AI tools in English language learning? This question is examined through four sub-questions:

- RQ1. How does AI influence students' cognitive learning processes?
- RQ2. How do students emotionally respond to AI use?
- RQ3. How does AI reshape interaction and learning practices?
- RQ4. What challenges do students encounter when using AI?

2. Method

2.1 Research Design and Context

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design to investigate students' experiences with AI in English language learning, as this approach is appropriate for understanding subjective, contextual, and socially constructed experiences in depth (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The research was conducted at a public university in Indonesia within the context of higher education, where AI applications such as grammar checkers, chatbots, and other learning tools are gradually being integrated into the English learning process.

2.2 Participants

Participants comprised five individuals (coded P1–P5) selected through purposive sampling. The inclusion criterion was active use of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, Claude, and Gemini in English learning activities. These tools were relevant because they are widely used for language learning support, and purposive sampling was chosen because the study specifically required participants capable of providing rich, experiential insight into the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Participant characteristics are summarized in Table 1. The participants were all Master's students in English Language Education, and P4 was also an active English teacher.

This profile is consistent with the participant information presented in Table 1 and the abstract. Five participants were considered sufficient for three reasons. First, the study aimed to describe experiences in depth rather than to generalize statistically. Second, the participants were closely matched to the study aim, as all were active AI users in English learning, and semi-structured interviews were expected to yield rich data; both factors increase the information power of a small sample (Malterud et al., 2016). Third, data saturation was not explicitly assessed or reported; instead, the five participants were considered sufficient based on the study's depth-oriented qualitative design and the

information power of the sample. Nevertheless, the small sample limits transferability, as discussed in the limitations.

The participants were grouped on the basis of shared experience rather than academic status: all were active users of AI in English learning, so differences in status, such as being a student or an in-service teacher, were treated as variation in perspective rather than as separate cases. For example, P4's accounts were read as those of both a learner and a teacher who prepares material for students, while the other accounts were read mainly in terms of learning practices. This description matches the analytic procedure reported in the thesis, in which participants were analyzed according to their shared experience of using AI in English learning, with P4's dual role as a learner and an English teacher treated as a variation in perspective.

Table 1. Participant Profile

Code	Status	AI experience	English learning context
P1	Master's student in English Language Education	AI tools used for academic writing and related tasks; duration not specified in the thesis	Academic writing, articles/journals, and academic assignments
P2	Master's student in English Language Education	AI tools used for translation, speaking, and listening; duration not specified in the thesis	English learning support, especially translation, speaking, and listening
P3	Master's student in English Language Education	AI used extensively for consultation and thesis writing; duration not specified in the thesis	Thesis writing, consultation, references, and reading support
P4	In-service English teacher and Master's student	AI used for teaching preparation and material development; duration not specified in the thesis	Lesson preparation, teaching materials, grammar, vocabulary, and classroom activities
P5	Master's student in English Language Education	ChatGPT used for understanding materials and practice; duration not specified in the thesis	Understanding textbook topics, grammar, vocabulary, and language practice

2.3 Data Collection

Data were collected primarily through semi-structured, in-depth interviews, supplemented by document analysis of AI-generated content such as writing drafts, comments, summaries, and other reflective academic materials, allowing for data triangulation (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Bowen, 2009). Each participant was interviewed one time(s), with each session lasting approximately 20 minutes, in English and Bahasa Indonesia. Interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' permission and transcribed verbatim by the researcher and translated into English when interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia. The interview guide covered cognitive, affective, social, technological, and overall experience and future expectations.

In total, one documents were analyzed, consisting of the thesis does not report a total number; the documents included AI-generated learning outputs, writing drafts, comments or summaries, reflective notes, and other relevant academic learning artifacts. The documents were used to corroborate and enrich the interview accounts, for example by for example, learning outputs and reflective artifacts were reviewed alongside interview accounts to provide contextual support for reported AI use.

2.4 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the six-phase thematic analysis procedure of Braun and Clarke (2006): familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. To illustrate how themes were developed, Table 2 shows examples of initial codes and how they were grouped into sub-themes and dimensions. The examples in Table 2 are consistent with the coding matrix and thematic coding presented in the thesis.

Table 2. Illustrative Examples of Coding and Theme Development

Initial code (participant)	Sub-theme	Dimension
Asking AI to explain unfamiliar concepts (P1)	Material-comprehension aid	Cognitive
Shortening the time needed to process long readings (P3)	Material-comprehension aid	Cognitive
Turning to AI instead of asking classmates when feeling shy (P2)	Comfort and enjoyment	Affective
Repeated cross-checking because of AI hallucination (P3)	Anxiety and mistrust toward AI accuracy	Affective
Preparing discussion questions with AI before presentations (P1)	AI as facilitator of interaction	Social
Ease of use depending on prompting skill (P1)	AI-literacy-related barriers and enablers	Technological
Finishing a two-week assignment within hours but feeling understanding becomes shallow (P3)	Positive but conditional evaluation	Overall experience

2.5 Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of the study was established following Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was supported by data triangulation across interviews and documents and by member checking, which was conducted by sharing interview data or interpreted meanings with participants for member verification; the thesis does not specify the timing or report resulting changes. Transferability was supported through thick description of the context, participants, and findings. Dependability was supported by a systematic audit trail covering data collection, interview procedures, coding, and theme formulation, with the process available for scrutiny by an external reviewer or supervisor.

Confirmability was supported through reflexive memo-writing, in which the researcher's assumptions were recorded and examined; researcher bias was managed by keeping an analysis memo during data analysis and using direct participant quotations to keep interpretations grounded in the data.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

Participation was voluntary. Before data collection, participants were informed about the purpose of the study and gave informed consent participants gave consent before interviews were recorded; the thesis also states that study authorization was sought from the relevant body, but it does not report a separate ethics approval number or form of consent. Anonymity was maintained by using codes (P1–P5) instead of names and by removing identifying details from quotations and documents. Participants also gave permission for their AI-related documents, such as drafts and AI-generated outputs, to be analyzed, and the data were used only for research purposes. This paragraph reflects the ethical procedures described in the thesis.

3. Result

Thematic analysis of the interview data, supported by document analysis which were used alongside interview accounts to provide contextual support and triangulation, produced five interrelated dimensions of students' experiences with AI in English language learning: cognitive, affective, social, technological, and overall experience (Table 3). The first four dimensions describe distinct areas of experience, whereas overall experience is an integrative dimension that draws together participants' evaluations across the other four rather than introducing new content. Findings are reported with the number of participants supporting each theme, and participant codes (P1–P5) identify whose accounts are quoted.

Table 3. Dimensions of Students' Experiences with AI in English Language Learning

Dimension	Sub-theme	Participants	Representative evidence
Cognitive	Material-comprehension aid	P1, P3, P4	P1 uses AI "to learn about things I don't understand yet"; P3: AI "reduces the time" needed for long readings; P4 prepares clearer explanations and vocabulary for students
	Language-skill development	P2, P3, P5	Pronunciation verification and grammar correction P2: "when I doubt my pronunciation, I check with AI first"; P3 and P5 also used AI for grammar and language practice
	Academic writing support	P1, P3, P4	Organization of ideas in academic writing P1: AI helped him understand "how the paragraphs can be coherent with one another"; P4 used AI to support lesson preparation
Affective	Comfort and enjoyment	5 participants, including P2 and P4	P4 felt more relaxed due to immediate answers; P2 turned to AI "when I feel shy" to ask classmates directly
	Confidence and validation	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5	Confidence increased through grammar and pronunciation validation
	Anxiety and mistrust toward AI accuracy	5 participants, including P3	P3 experienced AI hallucination frequently, requiring repeated cross-checking

Dimension	Sub-theme	Participants	Representative evidence
Social	Reduced intrinsic motivation	P3	Tasks became too easy
	AI as facilitator of interaction	P1, P2	P1 prepared discussion questions before presentations; P2's lecturer encouraged AI use in group discussions
	Cross-checking and joint validation	P3	Compared AI-generated answers with classmates because AI's answer depends on the user
Technological	Ethical awareness and dependency concerns	All five (P1–P5)	AI use is acceptable only alongside honesty and personal effort
	AI as complement, not replacement	P4, P5	AI should remain a complement to, not a replacement for, human discussion
	Perceived ease of use	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5 participants, including P1	Bilingual prompting and simple interfaces; P1: ease of use depends on prompting skill
	Technical and access barriers	P2, P3, P5	Unstable internet, limited free-tier usage, subscription costs
	AI-literacy-related barriers and enablers	P1, P3, P4, P5	Prompting skill; digital literacy as a condition for effective, critical, integrated use; credibility of AI-suggested references P1, P2, P3
Overall experience	Positive but conditional evaluation	All five (P1–P5)	P5: "very good and very positive"; P3: understanding becomes shallow and critical thinking is reduced
	Expectations for a more integrated and regulated future	P3, P4, P5	Wiser, more regulated use; AI as a supporting tool, not a replacement for teachers and lecturers

3.1 Cognitive Dimension

Participants used AI first as a material-comprehension aid. P1 explained that he uses AI "to learn about things I don't understand yet," and P3 noted that AI "reduces the time" needed to process long reading materials. P4, an in-service teacher, used AI to prepare clearer explanations and vocabulary for her students. Second, participants used AI for language-skill development, particularly pronunciation verification and grammar correction P1, P3, and P4; P1 explained that AI helped him understand "how the paragraphs can be coherent with one another," while P4 used AI to support lesson preparation. Third, AI supported the organization of ideas in academic writing P1, P3, and P4; P1 explained that AI helped him understand "how the paragraphs can be coherent with one another," while P4 used AI to support lesson preparation.

3.2 Affective Dimension

Comfort and enjoyment were reported by 5 of the five participants. P4 felt more relaxed because of immediate answers, and P2 turned to AI particularly "when I feel shy" to ask classmates directly. Confidence increased through grammar and pronunciation validation P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5. At the same time, 5 of the five participants expressed anxiety or distrust toward AI accuracy. P3 described experiencing AI hallucination frequently, which required repeated cross-checking. Only P3 reported a decline in intrinsic motivation, resulting from tasks becoming too easy.

3.3 Social Dimension

AI served as a facilitator of interaction rather than an isolating influence. P1 used it to prepare discussion questions before presentations, and P2's lecturer actively encouraged AI use in group discussions P1 reported that AI helped him prepare questions for group presentations, while P2 explained that her lecturer encouraged AI use in group discussion and P3 described checking AI answers with classmates and her lecturer. P3 described a distinctive cross-checking practice, comparing AI-generated answers with classmates because AI's answer depends on the user. All five participants shared an ethical conviction that AI use is acceptable only alongside honesty and personal effort, and two participants (P4 and P5) emphasized that AI should remain a complement to, not a replacement for, human discussion.

3.4 Technological Dimension

Ease of use. AI tools were generally perceived as easy to use, aided by bilingual prompting and simple interfaces (5 participants), although P1 noted that ease of use is conditional on prompting skill.

Technical and access barriers. Three participants (P2, P3, and P5) reported constraints such as unstable internet connectivity, limited free-tier usage, and subscription costs.

AI-literacy-related issues. Concerns about the credibility of AI-suggested references were also reported P1, P2, and P3, and P1 noted that the quality of results depends on prompting skill. Four participants (P1, P3, P4, and P5) identified digital literacy as a key factor enabling more effective, critical, and integrated use of AI.

3.5 Overall Experience

All five participants characterized their experience with AI as positive; P5 described it as "very good and very positive." This evaluation consistently coexisted with awareness of trade-offs. P3 offered the most explicit account: although AI enabled her to complete a two-week assignment within hours, "our understanding becomes shallow [and] critical thinking is reduced." Three participants (P3, P4, and P5) expected AI to become more advanced and integrated in the future, while stressing the need for wiser, more regulated use and for AI to remain a supporting tool rather than a replacement for teachers and lecturers.

4. Discussion

This section interprets the findings through three main frameworks, namely constructivism, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) theory, with AI literacy as a supporting lens, and compares them with earlier studies. For each dimension, points of agreement, points of difference, and possible reasons for the differences are discussed.

4.1 Cognitive Experience: AI as Scaffold, Feedback, and Metacognitive Support

The finding that participants used AI to clarify concepts, develop writing ideas, and refine language skills is consistent with a constructivist view of technology-assisted learning, in which meaning is actively constructed through interaction with the tool rather than passively transmitted by it (Vygotsky, 1978). Three learning processes appear to underlie this pattern. First, AI acted as a scaffold, that is, responsive and temporary support that helped participants handle tasks they could not yet complete alone (Wood et al., 1976), as when P1 used AI to learn about things he did not yet understand and P4 used it to prepare clearer explanations and vocabulary for her students. Second, AI worked as a feedback mechanism, providing immediate information on grammar and pronunciation that participants used to validate and adjust their language use. Third, the iterative pattern of questioning, receiving an explanation, and re-engaging observed among participants such as P1 and P3 suggests metacognitive support, in which learners monitor the state of their own understanding (Flavell, 1979; Zimmerman, 2000).

These findings agree with Xiao and Zhi's (2023) observation that AI is perceived as useful for vocabulary, grammar, and writing support, and they echo the same study's concern that heavy reliance on AI explanations may foster cognitive dependency. The difference lies in emphasis: whereas studies of perceived usefulness tend to foreground benefits, participants here tied usefulness directly to a cost. P3 completed a two-week assignment within hours yet described shallow understanding and reduced critical thinking, and reported a decline in intrinsic motivation because tasks became too easy. A possible reason is that the features that make AI helpful, namely speed and ready-made answers, also allow learners to bypass the effortful processing on which understanding depends.

Sustaining critical thinking, learner autonomy, and independent reasoning therefore requires deliberate strategies. Learners can attempt a task on their own before consulting AI, treat AI output as a draft to be verified and revised, and be able to explain AI-supported work in their own words. Teachers can support this by designing tasks that require learners to justify their reasoning and to document how AI contributed to their work.

4.2 Affective Experience: Confidence and Anxiety as a Negotiated Process

The prevailing pattern of comfort, enjoyment, and increased confidence aligns with the TAM proposition that perceived usefulness and ease of use shape attitudes toward technology (Davis, 1989). However, consistent with critiques that TAM underrepresents the emotional dimensions of technology use (Bagozzi, 2007; Scherer et al., 2019), participants' affective responses were not uniformly positive. The confidence gained through grammar and pronunciation validation coexisted with anxiety and mistrust toward AI accuracy, particularly in P3's account of frequent AI hallucination.

This contradiction is better understood as a negotiated process than as a simple positive or negative evaluation: participants weighed the immediate benefits of AI, such as quick answers and relief from shyness in asking classmates (P2, P4), against uncertainty about correctness, and adjusted their trust through cross-checking. This supports Chan and Hu's (2023) finding that positive attitudes toward generative AI coexist with persistent concerns about accuracy and overreliance. A possible reason is that confidence and doubt arise from the same interaction, because AI output is fluent and immediate yet not always accurate.

4.3 Social Experience and the Changing Role of Teachers

The finding that AI use both facilitated and complicated social interaction reflects Kohnke et al.'s (2023) observation that AI can support collaboration while risking reduced human interaction. However, participants' accounts suggest a more constructive pattern than isolation: AI use frequently prompted further discussion and verification, as when P1 prepared discussion questions before presentations, P2's lecturer encouraged AI use in group discussions, and P3 compared AI answers with classmates. From an SRL perspective (Zimmerman, 2000), P3's cross-checking can be interpreted as a form of metacognitive monitoring, although P3's acknowledged dependency also illustrates Panadero's (2017) caution regarding insufficient introspection. Differences from studies that stress reduced interaction may reflect the classroom context, in which a lecturer actively encouraged AI use in group work.

These accounts also point to a changing role for teachers. Where lecturers encourage AI use, they act as facilitators who shape how AI enters group work (P2). Because participants' benefits depended on prompting and verification skills, teachers also become AI literacy instructors who teach how to formulate prompts and question outputs, and evaluators of AI-generated information who help students judge accuracy and the credibility of references. The consistent expectation that AI should remain a supporting tool rather than a replacement for teachers (P3, P4, P5) reflects a broader consensus that AI's pedagogical value lies in supporting, rather than substituting for, the human dimensions of teaching and learning (Selwyn, 2019; Sotiriou & Bogner, 2022).

4.4 Technological Experience: Prompting Skill and AI Literacy

The conditional nature of ease of use, dependent on prompting skill and digital literacy, resonates with Ng et al.'s (2024) argument that AI experiences are shaped by users' understanding of the technology, its limitations, and its ethical implications. It extends TAM's original focus on perceived usefulness and ease of use (Davis, 1989) by suggesting that ease of use is itself partly a function of user competence. Prompting skill can be understood as one practical component of AI literacy, that is, the competencies needed to use AI, communicate with it, and critically evaluate its output (Long & Magerko, 2020; Ng et al., 2024): formulating a clear prompt and judging the answer are two sides of the same competence.

The findings also suggest two conceptually different kinds of barriers. Technical and access barriers, namely unstable internet, limited free-tier usage, and subscription costs, echo Selwyn's (2019) observation that access remains a key barrier to effective AI integration in education. AI-literacy barriers, such as limited prompting skill or difficulty judging the credibility of AI-suggested references, concern how well users can work with AI even when access is available. Because the two call for different responses, infrastructure and affordability on the one hand and training on the other, they should not be treated as a single category.

4.5 Overall Experience

Finally, participants' overall positive but conditional evaluation of AI, tempered by awareness of dependency and reduced critical thinking, is broadly consistent with Devi, Santosa, and Kusuma (2025). It extends beyond that usability-focused perspective by surfacing contextual tensions around autonomy, academic integrity, and depth of understanding, as also identified by Woo, Susanto, and Guo (2023) and Hakim, Nurkamto, and Haryanti (2025). Read together, the four dimensions show that the overall experience

is not a separate finding but an integrated judgment: participants' satisfaction rested on cognitive and affective gains, while their conditions for use reflected social norms of honesty, technological competence, and access.

4.6 Practical Implications

For students, the findings suggest developing critical AI literacy and verifying AI outputs before relying on them, for example by cross-checking with peers, lecturers, or reliable sources, as P3 did. For teachers, the findings point to designing AI-integrated activities in which AI supports rather than replaces learners' own reasoning, and to guiding students in prompting, verification, and ethical use. For institutions, the findings support developing clear AI-use guidelines and AI literacy training, and addressing access barriers such as connectivity and subscription costs where possible.

4.7 Limitations

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study involved only five participants, so the findings are not statistically generalizable and should be considered transferable only to comparable contexts. Second, all participants came from a single institutional context, and experiences may differ in institutions with different AI policies, resources, or teaching cultures. Third, the data are largely self-reported and may reflect recall bias or social desirability, although document analysis was used to corroborate interview accounts to some extent. Fourth, AI technologies are changing rapidly, so the tools and practices described here may not remain representative.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that students' experiences with AI in English language learning are multidimensional, encompassing cognitive, affective, social, technological, and overall dimensions that are closely interrelated rather than isolated. Cognitively, AI served as a valuable aid for comprehension, language-skill development, and academic writing. Affectively, participants reported comfort and confidence that consistently coexisted with anxiety and mistrust toward AI accuracy. Socially, AI both facilitated and reshaped interaction with peers and lecturers, prompting cross-checking practices while raising ethical concerns about honesty and dependency. Technologically, AI was perceived as easy to use, though the quality of results depended on prompting skill and digital literacy, and access remained constrained by connectivity and cost.

Taken together, participants' overall experience can be characterized as positive but conditional: AI was consistently regarded as a helpful, time-saving tool whose benefits depend on the user's wisdom, critical thinking, and willingness to verify AI-generated information. Rather than replacing teachers or independent intellectual effort, AI was positioned as a supporting tool that complements human guidance in learning English. These findings suggest that AI literacy training, guidance on ethical AI use, and teacher guidance should accompany the integration of AI in English language learning, and that institutions should formulate clear guidelines for AI use. Given the limitations of this study, future research is encouraged to involve larger and more diverse samples across institutions and to adopt longitudinal designs to examine how students' experiences and dependency patterns evolve as AI tools continue to advance.

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