

Research Paper



Exploring efl students' perspectives on the use of ai chatbots in language education

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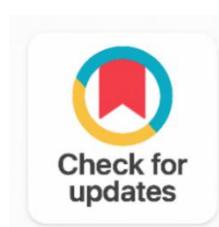
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ABSTRACT

AI-based chatbots have become integrated tools in our personal, professional, and academic lives. Within this context, this study examines how Bangladeshi EFL students perceive and experience the use of chatbots such as ChatGPT, DeepSeek, Co-pilot, Gemini, Google Bard, etc., in English language teaching and learning. A total of 120 students from the Department of English at a private university in Bangladesh participated in this research. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected through a structured survey questionnaire containing 25 items, divided in three categories. The questionnaire aimed to collect students' attitudes toward the usage of chatbots in language education, chatbots' effectiveness in English Language Teaching (ELT), and their concerns toward chatbot usage in general. Responses were analyzed with descriptive statistics using SPSS software. The findings show that students generally have a positive view of integrating chatbots into English language education. Most EFL students find chatbots' benefits in improving language learning, especially in vocabulary building, grammar, essay writing, and personalized learning. However, many students were uncertain about chatbots' ability to enhance other language skills like listening and speaking skills. Interestingly, these students also show concerns about ethical issues such as plagiarism, over-dependence, and the accuracy of content generated by chatbots. The paper concludes with several recommendations on how to include chatbots effectively and ethically into English language teaching and learning practices.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In this modern age, AI is increasingly influencing the way education is provided and experienced. Among these technologies, AI-based chatbots have become influential tools across various educational contexts. These chatbots include platforms like ChatGPT, Google Bard, Microsoft Copilot, etc., which are designed to imitate human conversation through advanced natural language processing. The practical applications of these chatbots include students' immediate feedback, discussion of complex concepts, and refinement of language proficiency. Particularly, these interactive tools are now embedded in students' everyday academic routines to provide them support that is not only fast and open but also custom-made to individual learning preferences [1]. In the field of ELT, chatbots have huge potential as supplementary tools, especially for EFL learners in higher education. Chatbots can generate learning materials that can develop learners' key language skills like speaking, reading, listening, and writing by supporting flexible, need-based, and self-directed language practices [2]. The convenience of chatbots is mainly relevant in the context of Bangladesh, where large class sizes, limited teacher-student interaction, and resource limitations often hamper effective language education. In these settings, chatbots can help bridge gaps and support students' independent learning outside traditional classroom boundaries.

On the other hand, the extensive and forced integration of chatbots in educational settings has several disadvantages. Some students benefit from the support of these tools, but educators and researchers have raised important concerns about their potential long-term negative impact. There is a real possibility that over-reliance on chatbots can destabilize students' critical thinking, repress their creativity, and reduce their opportunities for authentic human interaction [3]. Moreover, ethical issues are also at play where plagiarism, misinformation, and academic dishonesty have all been associated with unregulated usage of chatbots. Additionally, issues regarding the reliability, accuracy, and contextual suitability of the language produced by AI chatbots persist [4].

Nowadays, the educational environment is rapidly changing, and it is increasingly important to examine how students engage with chatbots and how they consider their educational value. Hence, this study aims to explore the potential of chatbots as tools for English language teaching and learning by focusing on the opinions of Bangladeshi EFL students. Therefore, the paper tries to address the following research questions (RQs):

RQ 1 - How do students perceive the usage of chatbots in language education?

RQ 2 - What are students' perspectives toward chatbots' effectiveness in English language learning?

RQ 3 - What are the students' concerns about chatbot usage in education?

The results of this study can shed light on the impact of chatbots in English language teaching, pedagogical effects, and ethical challenges. It will eventually influence the creation of effective strategies and policies for its application in language education.

2. RELATED WORK

2.1. AI and Chatbots in Different Fields

The integration of artificial intelligence into chatbot technology has undeniably reshaped how humans interact with computers, leading to notable improvements in both user engagement and operational efficiency across multiple fields. Chatbots are computer programs designed to simulate human conversation by using natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning to generate responses that are not only personalized but also contextually relevant to the learners. It significantly enhances the overall user experience and supports digital communication [5], [6].

Nowadays, AI chatbots are widely used across various sectors to improve user engagement, make people feel welcomed, and offer cost-effective solutions for e-learning, customer care assistance, and multilingual content creation [7]. For instance, in digital marketplaces, AI chatbots play a noteworthy role in enhancing customer engagement and simplifying purchasing processes. AI chatbots provide continuous support, fundamentally changing user interactions and strengthening business relationships with customers [8]. Furthermore, AI chatbots are making important developments in psychotherapy by

increasing convenience, protecting patient privacy, and allowing a more personalized approach to mental health care. In this case, chatbots help address persistent issues such as shortages of professionals and the stigma associated with seeking help, thereby contributing to better patient outcomes. Nonetheless, they do face critical limitations, particularly regarding emotional intelligence and accountability, when compared to human therapists [9].

AI chatbots enhance customer service in the tourism industry by providing quick, accurate responses, processing bookings, and offering personalized recommendations. They improve operational efficiency, reduce costs, foster customer engagement, accelerate business growth and competitiveness [10]. Even in computer science education, AI-powered chatbots feature roles like Instructor-Bot and Peer-Bot. These chatbots enhance learner engagement and motivation by addressing psychological needs and promoting inquiry-based learning through advanced natural language processing techniques [11].

2.2. Usages of Chatbot as an English Language Teaching and Learning Tool

Chatbots serve as practical tools in English language teaching by facilitating autonomous learning, providing instant feedback, and enhancing student engagement. They support interactive communication, easy access to learn, and reduced anxiety in language practices, which make learning enjoyable and effective [2]. Chatbots are also effective tools in English language teaching and learning as they provide speedy responses, increased accessibility, and offer individualized support [12]. Students' willingness to use chatbots like ChatGPT for learning English depends not just on how easy it is to use, but also on how chatbots make students feel. Emotions like joy, boredom, focus, and control, influence them to keep using chatbots for different fields [13].

Chatbots in English language teaching and learning offer conversational practice, adaptive responses, writing support, vocabulary development, and personalized recommendations. They provide interactive activities, instant feedback on grammar, and opportunities to build language skills in meaningful ways. Studies also shared certain limitations of chatbots and suggested their thoughtful integration into the curriculum to ensure effectiveness [14]. In addition to voice recognition and flexible access to resources, chatbots support learners in applying English knowledge to real-life contexts and developing both writing and reading skills [15]. They are proven as valuable tools in task-based learning by offering engaging, personalized experiences that cater to learners from different educational and cultural backgrounds, thereby enhancing motivation and enriching EFL environments [16].

Recent research confirms that AI chatbots improve English language skills through user-friendly communication, consistent feedback, and developed learning experiences. These qualities make them suitable for both independent practice and classroom support, increasing student engagement and enabling effective language acquisition [17]. Furthermore, their 24/7 availability offers learners the flexibility to practice at their own pace and convenience [12]. To maximize these benefits, studies recommend integrating chatbots into existing educational frameworks to promote broader accessibility for different types of learners [2].

2.3. Advantages and Challenges with Chatbots in ELT

The integration of chatbots into ELT provides impactful advantages. Students benefit from immediate feedback, which removes the typical waiting period for instructor responses and facilitates more efficient learning. The personalized nature of chatbot interactions creates a supportive environment similar to having a dedicated partner in practicing language and doing research by maintaining motivation and engagement [18]. Similarly, chatbots can reduce learner anxiety and promote a sense of autonomy where learners can work at their own pace and revisit concepts as needed. Additionally, chatbots inspire the development of metacognitive skills by encouraging students to be active in their own learning processes [19].

Chatbots offer personalized feedback and interactive engagement and a low-stress environment where learners can practice freely, without the anxiety of being judged by other people, which increases learners' motivation and interest in language acquisition [20]. Furthermore, chatbot supports emotional well-being, partly by helping learners regulate their emotions during the learning process [21]. Beyond

cognitive gains, AI chatbots positively impact non-cognitive factors, such as motivation, confidence, and attitude. These are essential for emotional and social development among English language learners [22].

The integration of chatbots into ELT has some primary disadvantages. At first, students may become excessively dependent on technological tools, which could diminish their ability to think independently or engage in meaningful, face-to-face interactions [3]. It will put learners at risk of superficial learning, as learners might depend on chatbots to complete their tasks, deeper cognitive thinking, and reasoning [23]. Academic integrity can also be compromised if students get attracted to using chatbots for dishonest activities [3]. Moreover, combining chatbots into established educational systems and assessment criteria can significantly challenge and complicate maintaining effective instructional practices [23]. Furthermore, chatbots often hamper effective language acquisition and personalized learning experiences for different reasons, such as a lack of human interaction, limited contextual understanding, and challenges in addressing various learner needs [24].

3. METHODOLOGY

The study has employed a quantitative descriptive research design. This research design systematically describes a phenomenon on the basis of collected numerical data. It involves collecting data through various ways, such as surveys or observations. Afterward, the data is analyzed statistically to summarize characteristics. This type of research does not manipulate variables but rather provides an idea to identify patterns and relationships within the data [25].

This study included 120 tertiary-level EFL students from the Department of English of a private university in Bangladesh who are currently using different chatbots to learn English. These students were selected through a random sampling technique to achieve various perceptions regarding chatbots' overall effectiveness in English language education.

A survey questionnaire was designed that includes 25 items (S1-S25) to collect quantitative data from 120 participants. Each question of the questionnaire is designed with a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). EFL students responded to questions across three segments: their perspectives on chatbot usage in language education, its impact on ELT, and concerns with chatbots. These segments try to address the three research questions of this paper. The responses were analyzed using SPSS software with descriptive statistics to visualize the data. Results are presented in three tables, with mean scores interpreted through specific criteria Table 1.

Table 1. The Criteria for the Interpretation of Mean Score

Range	Interpretation
4.21-5.00	Strongly agree
3.41-4.20	Agree
2.61-3.40	Neutral
1.81-2.60	Disagree
1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Students' Attitude Toward the Usage of Chatbots in Language Education

Table 2 tries to answer RQ1 by analyzing ELT students' perceptions toward chatbots as tools in English language teaching and learning. They gave their opinion on 10 (S1-S10) statements which convey how they use, trust, and perceive chatbots as tools in language education.

Table 2. Students' Attitude toward Chatbots as Tools in English Language Teaching and Learning

Sr	Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
S1	I know about chatbots (ChatGPT, DeepSeek, Co-pilot, Gemini, Google Bard, etc.).	4.14	1.01	Agree

S2	I frequently use chatbots to guide me with language learning (writing, grammar rules, vocabulary, etc.).	3.65	1.06	Agree
S3	Chatbots are an effective tool to teach and learn the English language.	3.66	1.21	Agree
S4	Chatbots can replace English language teachers/educators.	2.38	1.23	Disagree
S5	Chatbots can replace traditional language Teaching methods and approaches	2.46	1.23	Disagree
S6	Chatbots can damage enthusiasm and motivation to learn the English language.	2.53	1.24	Disagree
S7	Chatbots help me learn English without stress.	3.67	1.03	Agree
S8	Chatbots can harm and reduce English language practices.	2.33	1.13	Disagree
S9	Chatbots are flexible and provide specific needs of learners in English language teaching and learning.	3.51	1.15	Agree
S10	Institutions, teachers, and students should embrace chatbots for English language education.	3.90	0.96	Agree

The findings from this segment indicate a generally affirmative stance among EFL students regarding the role of chatbots in English language teaching (ELT), reflecting openness to integrating AI tools within modern educational contexts. Students are widely aware of and acknowledge different chatbots like ChatGPT, DeepSeek, Co-pilot, Gemini, Google Bard, etc. (S1). This acceptance shows how AI tools are increasingly recognized not merely as tools but also as day-to-day assistance. In that case, the students responded that they depend on them regularly to get help with various linguistic tasks, such as drafting assignments, clarifying grammar rules, and enhancing vocabulary (S2).

Students found chatbots to be effective tools for both teaching and learning the English language (S3). This is likely due to chatbots' ability to provide instant feedback, generate learning materials, answer questions fast, and simulate language practice, especially in writing and reading domains. Their perceived benefits are clearly rooted in the personalized and non-judgmental support by creating an interactive and dynamic learning ecosystem, which contrasts traditional classroom's rigidness.

Interestingly, students denied that chatbots could replace human educators (S4). They seemed to understand the irreplaceable value of human instruction in ELT, particularly the roles of teachers in offering emotional support, motivation, and personalized pedagogical strategies. This realization implies a critical distinction in students' minds: chatbots are tools, not teachers. Chatbots may be fast and enhance language skills, but they fall short in replacing the empathy, creativity, and adaptive skills of real educators.

Furthermore, students disagreed with the idea that chatbots have the ability to replace traditional language teaching methods (S5). They acknowledged that AI tools might influence and modernize our existing classroom practices, but they did not think these changes could completely diminish conventional language pedagogies. The result can be interpreted in a way that AI chatbots can be a suitable preference for a blended learning approach, where technology complements the traditional instructional frameworks rather than replacing them entirely. Students also rejected the assumption that chatbot use leads to demotivation in language learning (S6). On the contrary, many students responded that chatbots actually helped them learn English in a stress-free environment, which likely contributes to maintaining or even increasing their motivation (S7). This stress reduction proves that chatbots allow learners to engage with content at their own pace, without the fear of judgment and failure.

Moreover, students denied that chatbots can reduce and harm language practice; rather, they recognized and appreciated chatbots for their adaptive nature and flexibility in providing individual learners' needs, including grammar clarification, writing support, or content generation (S8). This ability to provide flexible and personalized assistance supports the claim for integrating AI into learner-centered

pedagogy (S9). Finally, students expressed support and suggested academic institutions and teachers adopt chatbots in English language education (10). Their beliefs imply that a collaborative embrace of such tools by teachers, learners, and educational institutions may have potential when assimilated thoughtfully into the curriculum with proper guidance and framework.

4.2. Students' Perspective Toward Chatbots' Effectiveness in English Language Learning

Table 3 tries to answer RQ 2 by analyzing students' perceptions toward chatbots' role in their English language learning journey. They were asked to give opinions on 10 (S11-S20) statements. The result discusses how Chatbots help students in various areas of English language acquisition, from vocabulary to personalized English language learning experiences.

Table 3. Chatbots' Effectiveness in English Language Learning

SR.	Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
S11	Chatbots assist in vocabulary learning	3.69	1.08	Agree
S12	Chatbots help in improving writing skills	3.54	1.04	Agree
S13	Chatbots teach English essay and report writing	3.79	1.04	Agree
S14	Chatbots help in developing English grammar proficiency	3.70	1.01	Agree
S15	Chatbots assist in error correction and feedback	3.60	1.03	Agree
S16	Chatbots help in developing reading comprehension skills	3.57	0.99	Agree
S17	Chatbots teach English dialects and culturally oriented expressions.	3.42	1.09	Agree
S18	Chatbots can develop listening skills	3.29	1.06	Neutral
S19	Chatbots help with speaking practices	3.16	1.00	Neutral
S20	Chatbots can be used in the personalized learning experience	3.67	1.06	Agree

The data from Table 3 reveals that students generally view chatbots as valuable tools for supporting various aspects of English language learning. They affirmed that chatbots assist in expanding vocabulary, likely due to the exposure to rich and varied language during chatbot interactions (S11). This passive vocabulary acquisition is often reinforced by contextual usage, making it easier for learners to internalize new words.

Moreover, the use of chatbots in improving writing skills was seen as particularly effective (S12). Chatbots support sentence construction, grammar checking, rephrasing, and editing written content in real-time. EFL students also stated that chatbots were helpful in mastering essay and report writing skills, which are essential for academic success (S13). It implies that chatbots are being used not just for casual interaction but also for formal composition tasks.

Grammar learning is another area where students find chatbots serve huge benefits as grammar teaching tools (S14). The instant responses with syntactic structure, as well as the explanation of rules through natural language, give learners meaningful and practical grammar support. Students valued chatbots' immediate feedback that identified errors, and they learned from their mistakes independently (S15). When it comes to reading comprehension, students also indicated positive experiences with chatbots as contributing to deeper reading comprehension (S16).

This is because chatbots can simplify texts, answer follow-up questions, explain vocabulary in context, and guide learners. Moreover, students found chatbots moderately useful in understanding English dialects and culturally specific expressions (S17). This suggests that chatbots can introduce learners to culturally rich language, but there may still be limitations in conveying the full contextual idea.

Interestingly, students were neutral regarding the effectiveness of chatbots in developing listening and speaking skills (S18, S19). AI chatbot technology has a critical limitation, as it heavily relies on text-based responses and offers limited or no support for real-time audio conversations or pronunciation feedback. Without verbal communication, the development of fluency, accent, and intonation remains underdeveloped. Even though there are several limitations, students mostly use and value chatbots for the flexibility in personalized learning (S20).

It indicates the capacity of chatbots to satisfy learners' individual pace, preferences, and areas of weakness. As well as chatbots also give autonomy in their learning journey, as it allows them to experiment with language use, ask specific questions, and receive explanations without time pressure or embarrassment.

4.3. Students' Concerns Toward Chatbot Usage in Education

Table 4 tries to answer RQ 3 by exploring students' concerns toward chatbot usage and its implications in education. The survey asked students to give their opinions on 5 (S20-S25) statements.

Table 4. Students' Concerns toward Chatbots' Usage and Its Implications in Education

SR	Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
S21	I am concerned about privacy with chatbots.	3.78	1.12	Agree
S22	I find myself overly dependent on Chatbots to complete academic-task (assignments, notes, study, etc.)	3.17	1.11	Neutral
S23	Using chatbots can negatively affect my critical thinking skills.	3.53	1.22	Agree
S24	I am aware of the ethical concerns (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) surrounding the use of chatbots in education.	3.70	0.94	Agree
S25	I am concerned about the accuracy of the information provided by chatbots.	3.73	0.95	Agree

The findings show that most students are concerned that AI technologies, such as chatbots, have the potential to violate users' privacy by using their personal information illegally (S21). Students' perceptions of dependency on chatbots were more mixed (S22). Some students admitted that they use these tools frequently for academic tasks like assignments, note-taking, or studying, while others were more restrained.

These different responses indicate that usage of chatbots is not so similar across the students due to different factors such as individual learning styles, digital literacy, or even institutional encouragement. In this case, a significant number of the students agreed that depending too much on chatbots for day-to-day work may negatively affect their critical thinking skills (S23).

Hence, the students are not blindly dependent on technology. They know that chatbots' immediate solutions and time-saving expertise may limit students' engagement in deeper cognitive processes such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis.

Another important issue is ethical concerns with chatbots. EFL Students are aware that such AI chatbots can induce them to unethical behaviors, such as plagiarism or shortcut learning (S24). But this ethical awareness is positive, as it reflects students' responsible engagement with AI chatbots. The responses ultimately recommend that institutions establish clear guidelines and focus on integrity in digital learning environments.

Another concern raised by students is chatbots' reliability in the academic field. Despite the usefulness of these tools, many students remained doubtful about the accuracy and factual correctness of chatbot-generated responses (S25). It is a positive indicator that students critically judge chatbots' authenticity rather than accepting them unquestioningly.

5. CONCLUSION

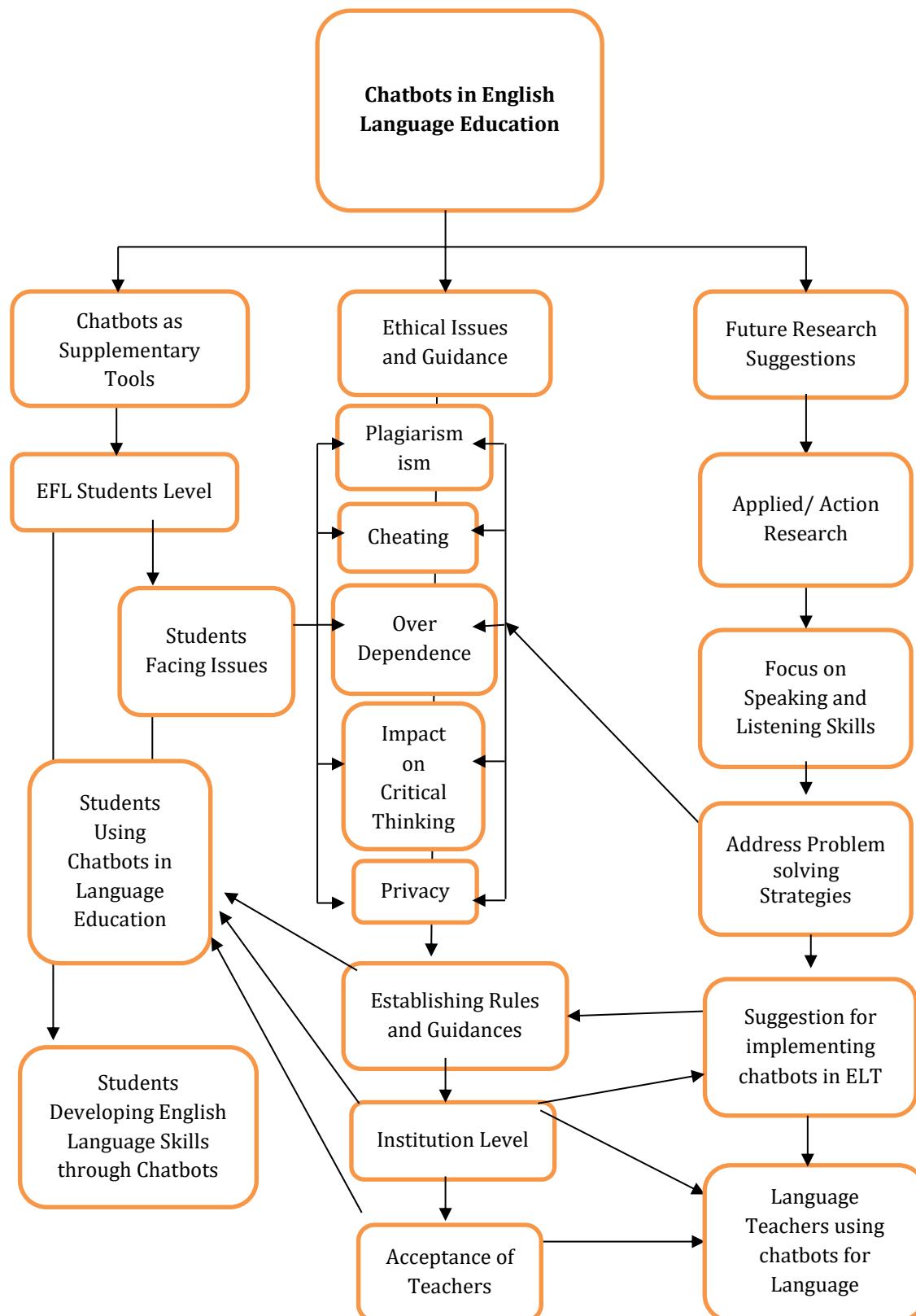


Figure 1. Chatbots in English Language Education

Figure 1 Artificial Intelligence (AI) was once considered a fictional technology, but now it is a real and essential part of our daily life. In this case, this paper has explored how Bangladeshi tertiary-level EFL

students perceive the integration of chatbots like DeepSeek, ChatGPT, Gemini, Co-Pilot, Google Bard, etc. in English language teaching and learning. The result of the paper successfully answers the three fundamental research questions. Firstly, the paper shows that chatbots like ChatGPT, Gemini, and others are powerful tools for language learning. They provide flexible, low-stress support, which makes language learning more accessible and efficient. Chatbots also increase motivation and are a complement to traditional language learning.

Secondly, the EFL students find chatbots impactful in enhancing vocabulary, grammar proficiency, and writing skills such as essays and reports. They also help with reading comprehension, personalized feedback, and error correction. Additionally, chatbots can teach English dialects and culturally relevant expressions. However, speaking practice and listening skill development through chatbots are not yet as effective as other skills. It proves chatbots do not offer a holistic replacement for traditional instruction or teacher-oriented learning. Thirdly, EFL students have concerns about privacy and the accuracy of information when they use chatbots. Not all, but some of them agreed that they are heavily dependent on chatbots for academic tasks, which may have a negative impact on their critical thinking. Moreover, they are aware of the ethical issues, such as cheating and plagiarism that can arise from the use of chatbots in education.

The paper suggests using chatbots as supplementary tools in English language education, but their use must be guided by thoughtful pedagogical strategies. Educators and institutions are advised to establish ethical usage guidelines, encourage critical engagement with content generated by chatbots, and integrate them in ways that complement traditional ELT practices rather than replace or weaken them.

For future research, mixed-method or quasi-experimental research could be conducted to gain deeper insights into students' learning development, behaviors, and challenges with chatbots. Moreover, chatbots usages in making study materials and research tools by language educators can be an interesting quest. Comparative studies involving different institutions, student, and teachers' perspectives could provide a more comprehensive understanding regarding developing English skills and solving ethical issues with chatbots. Besides, skill-specific investigations, particularly on speaking and listening, are extremely needed to evaluate the full pedagogical potential of chatbots in ELT settings.

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Author Contributions Statement

Name of Author	C	M	So	Va	Fo	I	R	D	O	E	Vi	Su	P	Fu
Arafat Shahriar	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

C : Conceptualization

I : Investigation

Vi : Visualization

M : Methodology

R : Resources

Su : Supervision

So : Software

D : Data Curation

P : Project administration

Va : Validation

O : Writing - Original Draft

Fu : Funding acquisition

Fo : Formal analysis

E : Writing - Review & Editing

Conflict of Interest Statement

The researcher declares no conflict of interest with any individual or institution.

Informed Consent

The participants have consented to the use of their opinions, as long as their identities remain confidential.

Ethical Approval

Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the relevant review board. The research adhered to established ethical standards; participation was entirely voluntary involved minimal risk to participants.

Data Availability

Due to confidentiality agreements and to protect the identities of the participants, the raw data are not publicly available. However, the data have been shared with the journal while maintaining participant privacy.

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