



## Exploring EFL learners' attitudes towards artificial intelligence: Benefits, risks and use in language learning

### *Yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenenlerin yapay zekaya yönelik tutumları: Dil öğreniminde faydaları, riskleri ve kullanımı*

Hacer KAÇAR<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Çukurova University, Adana, Türkiye

**Abstract:** Educational landscapes are continuously evolving due to artificial intelligence (AI), offering new opportunities for both teachers and students. This study aims to explore the attitudes of English as a foreign language (EFL) learners at the School of Foreign Languages towards artificial intelligence. Adopting an exploratory sequential mixed-methods design, the study collected data through a structured survey and semi-structured interviews to provide an extensive overview of the students' views regarding AI. Convenient sampling was adopted to select participants (N = 134). According to the quantitative findings, students mostly had positive views on agreeing or strongly agreeing with the possible benefits of AI, as well as being open to using its features in innovative and educational settings. Meanwhile, a significant number of participants expressed their concerns about risks arising from AI, including reduced human contact and AI taking over human roles. These contradictory attitudes revealed a complex perspective, showing that students were enthusiastic about using AI, but also hesitant about the consequences. These multidimensional and sometimes conflicting views were also supported by qualitative research that revealed both willingness towards potential applications of AI and hesitation due to ethical and psychological concerns such as addiction. These findings highlight the importance of careful consideration of artificial intelligence tools in language learning processes. In order to ensure that students use artificial intelligence effectively and ethically while learning foreign languages, it would be beneficial for educators and teachers to encourage the use of digital applications while also developing a critical perspective among students.

**Keywords:** Artificial intelligence, EFL learners, attitudes, mixed-methods design

**Özet:** Yapay zekâ (AI) nedeniyle eğitim ortamları sürekli olarak gelişmekte ve hem öğretmenler hem de öğrenciler için yeni fırsatlar sunmaktadır. Bu çalışma, Yabancı Diller Okulu'ndaki yabancı dil olarak İngilizce (EFL) öğrenenlerin yapay zekâya karşı tutumlarını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Keşifsel sıralı karma yöntem tasarımı benimseyen çalışma, öğrencilerin yapay zekâ hakkındaki görüşlerine kapsamlı bir genel bakış sağlamak için yapılandırılmış bir anket ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yoluyla veri toplamıştır. Katılımcıların seçimi için uygun örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır (N = 134). Nicel bulgulara göre, öğrenciler çoğunlukla yapay zekânın olası faydalarını kabul eden veya güçlü bir şekilde kabul eden olumlu görüşlere sahipti ve yapay zekânın özelliklerini yenilikçi ve eğitim ortamlarında kullanmaya açıktı. Öte yandan, önemli sayıda katılımcı, insanlarla iletişimin azalması ve yapay zekânın insan rollerini üstlenmesi gibi yapay zekâdan kaynaklanan riskler konusunda endişelerini dile getirmiştir. Bu çelişkili tutumlar, öğrencilerin yapay zekâ kullanımına hevesli olduklarını, ancak sonuçları konusunda tereddütlü olduklarını gösteren karmaşık bir bakış açısını ortaya koymuştur. Bu çok boyutlu ve bazen çelişkili görüşler, yapay zekânın potansiyel uygulamalarına yönelik istekliliği ve bağımlılık gibi etik ve psikolojik endişelerden kaynaklanan tereddütleri ortaya koyan nitel araştırmalarla da desteklenmiştir. Bu bulgular, dil öğrenme süreçlerinde yapay zekâ araçlarının dikkatli bir şekilde değerlendirilmesinin önemini vurgulamaktadır. Öğrencilerin yabancı dil öğrenirken yapay zekâyı etkili ve etik bir şekilde kullanmalarını sağlamak için, eğitimcilerin ve öğretmenlerin dijital uygulamaların kullanımını teşvik ederken aynı zamanda öğrenciler arasında eleştirel bir bakış açısı geliştirmeleri faydalı olacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yapay zeka, İngilizce öğrenenler, tutumlar, karma yöntem araştırması

## 1. Introduction

The degree of information about artificial intelligence (AI) and language learning is increasing significantly. Grassini (2023) asserts that AI might improve the efficiency of the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language (EFL) by modifying learning settings. As a result, professionals, educators, and researchers started paying closer attention to the

possible uses of AI in education. In language education, AI technology is being investigated as a way to automate processes and promote learning, creativity, and personalization (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). However, when it applies to learning a language, AI-powered tools like grammar checkers, individualized learning platforms, and automated feedback systems can benefit and hinder EFL students. Therefore, opinions about AI technology greatly influence how language learners embrace and regularly use it.

The frequency of AI use is influenced by students' attitudes and views about technology. For example, research shows that students' regular usage of technology has a major impact on their views and language learning achievements (Suh & Ahn, 2022). Furthermore, Yılmaz et al. (2023) discovered that learners actively engaged in and demonstrated interest in the learning processes during their study on their opinions toward AI, despite the difficulties and lack of appropriate AI tools. Furthermore, it has been noted that students' perspectives on AI may vary; some may be highly grateful for AI-supported educational resources, while others may be concerned about potential negative effects (Grassini, 2023; Hockly, 2023). Yılmaz Virlan and Tomak (2025) expressed similar concerns, pointing out that an over reliance on technology might lead to problems like plagiarism, a decline in originality, and ethical quandaries.

Furthermore, not enough investigations have examined the perspectives of EFL learners in the Turkish setting, despite the growing body of research on AI in university settings. The great majority of recent research ignores the varied viewpoints of students in surroundings with different cultures and languages in favour of concentrating on the broad adoption of technology or on particular artificial intelligence technologies. Openly, it can be said that the perceptions of EFL learners who use AI tools in their lessons have not been sufficiently explored in the existing literature. Recognizing how students perceive AI, including its benefits, risks, and possible applications in education, is essential to generate educationally appropriate and ethically acceptable AI-assisted language learning experiences. While there has been a rapid increase in research on AI in education worldwide, most of this research is largely concentrated in East Asia or Western countries. The specific characteristics of the Turkish EFL context include centralized curriculum design, lack of AI integration at the preparatory level, and varying levels of digital literacy among students. Studies in this area could be enhanced by addressing this national context, which offers a culturally grounded perspective on students' readiness and critical understanding of AI. Consequently, the main objective of this research is to discover Turkish EFL students' attitudes towards AI in an existing learning environment. With an exploratory sequential mixed-methods approach, it searches out both the positive and negative aspects of learners' views. The preceding research questions serve as a guide for the study:

1. What are the attitudes of EFL learners regarding the benefits, risks, and use of AI during language learning?
2. What apprehensions or expectations do EFL learners indicate regarding the role of AI for language learning?

Gaining an insight into learners' attitudes and views towards language learning and the use of AI tools can contribute to establish an appropriate language learning process that encourages the adoption of more technology-based teaching methodologies and the use of digital applications for language teaching and learning. The rising popularity of AI in educational contexts has led to a growing body of research looking at students' attitudes, opinions, and capability to use AI technologies. In the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), a number of researchers have started to examine the pedagogical implications of AI incorporation and its uptake among language learners (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). There are several factors that influence attitudes about learning English as a foreign language and the use of technology in the classroom. According to Masgoret and Gardner (2003), these factors involve affective aspects which include

expressing and assessing feelings that emerge regarding cognitive elements; behavioural components which include specific ways of learning used by the learners; and cognitive components which entail thoughts with regard to instances related to attitudes. Consequently, an extensive link among all three of these factors is essential to the successful application for language learning along with the use of technology, particularly AI.

Prior research demonstrated that students' adoption and use of newly developed information technologies are significantly influenced by computers and the internet. Literature reviews, questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and observations are the primary data sources used to examine EFL learners' attitudes towards technology (Suh & Ahn, 2022; Tafazoli et al., 2019; Yilmaz et al., 2023). Therefore, language learners' acceptance of AI depends on their attitudes towards technology, as they tend to accept technological developments positively (Sindermann et al., 2021). Researchers are currently working on projects to identify the advantages and disadvantages of AI in learning new languages. These research shed light on when AI use may be dangerous as well as how it can be applied successfully to language learning. It is also crucial to remember that opinions toward learning a foreign language in higher education differ based on background, context, and time. Thus, it is crucial to look at students' viewpoints in different settings (Phan, 2023; Wang et al., 2023; Yeh et al., 2021). However, the vast majority of published research does not sufficiently address any potential problems or concerns that students might have and instead encourages the use of AI in learning languages. These views may also be influenced by institutional settings, social circumstances, and cultural norms. Furthermore, inadequate investigation has been done to determine whether integrating AI could cause reliance or ethical quandaries for language learners. In summary, a comprehensive and neutral comprehension of AI attitudes requires research that addresses these constraints.

In fact, numerous findings have emerged from studies on the attitudes of EFL students. First, students believe that the speed, flexibility, and engagement of AI-supported tools are advantageous. For instance, Fathali and Okada (2017) discovered that language learning apps enable students to acquire languages more rapidly and substantively, increasing their level of independence. Additionally, some platforms facilitate the development of diverse abilities by offering individualized feedback and adaptable learning approaches (Chiu et al., 2023). However, there are concerns that an over reliance on digital platforms may dehumanize education and hinder critical thinking skills (Holmes et al., 2022). Indeed, these concerns have a negative impact on students' perceptions. The vast majority of prior research, however, emphasizes the benefits of these technologies without adequately addressing the cognitive or emotional risks. Additionally, there aren't many research that examine the perceptions of these tools across students in different linguistic and cultural situations. To put it another way, the viewpoints of people who are less tech-savvy or more distrustful have not been given enough thought. Consequently, a more detailed study is needed to understand students' changing views on the use of AI in language learning.

Integrated Model of Technology Acceptance (IMTA), modified from the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989) can play some roles during language learning. From this perspective, attitudes and readiness levels towards the use of AI technologies in parallel with TAM have also been investigated (Zou et al., 2020). In the domain of AI in learning a language, TAM specifically increases our understanding of the various factors impacting learners' viewpoints and choices for using these tools (Lin et al., 2022). Furthermore, recent studies have demonstrated a connection between the increasing usage of AI in language acquisition and views of its accessibility and utility, which in turn generate favourable attitudes (Liu & Ma, 2023). There is theoretical support for both TAM and IMTA, but little study has been conducted concerning how to implement these concepts to EFL learners in Turkey. This situation thus emphasizes the

necessity for local research that examines students' experiences along with AI through the technological and cultural standpoint. It is necessary to establish a link between students' general opinions, perceived benefits, risks, and preferences towards utilizing AI through case-specific study. By concentrating on the varied perspectives of English language learners in a Turkish preparatory school, this study seeks to close this gap.

## 2. Methodology

In order to better understand how EFL students view AI, this study combined quantitative and qualitative data using an exploratory sequential mixed-methods approach. It goes without saying that the mixed-methods research approach employed here is beneficial since it seeks to generalize findings using quantitative data and expand interpretation with qualitative insights (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). In other words, although the quantitative results provided a general overview of participants' ideas, the qualitative responses examined their views more deeply on the benefits, risks, and real-world applications of AI in language learning.

The Artificial Intelligence Attitude Scale (AIAS) by Aktay et al. (2024) was applied to collect quantitative data. This scale was essentially developed to assess how language learners view AI in three domains: perceived risks, perceived benefits, and practical applications. To strengthen the numerical findings, a particular participant group also participated in semi-structured interviews. It is crucial to remember that the researcher created the open-ended questions utilized in these interviews with the assistance of specialists. Stated differently, the purpose of the questionnaires was to gather detailed information about students' concerns as well as experiences regarding employing AI tools for learning languages. In summary, a variety of techniques made it possible to gather thorough data. Ultimately, in order to understand students' attitudes regarding AI technologies, a setting that combined traditional and technology-assisted language learning approaches was required.

As mentioned above, this study was conducted at the School of Foreign Languages at a state university in Turkey. Participants were selected through convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling method that is frequently used for its accessibility and effectiveness (Etikan et al., 2016). In this particular study, a total of 134 students with different levels of proficiency voluntarily completed the survey. Of these participants, 64 (47.8%) were female and 70 (52.2%) were male students. In addition, 21 (15.7%) participants were 18, 42 (31.3%) were 19, 44 (32.8%) were 20, 14 (10.4%) were 21, 8 (6%) were 22, and 5 (3.7%) were 23 years of age or older. Qualitative data were collected from 18 volunteer students who were selected among the students who answered the questionnaire.

Another important point is that ethical approval procedures were completed by the Ethics Committee of the university before the data collection process began. In this regard, participants were informed about the purpose of the study and their rights. In addition, participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study anytime. In particular, in accordance with ethical guidelines, no personal information was collected to ensure the confidentiality of participants' information, and all data was anonymised (British Educational Research Association [BERA], 2018).

Quantitative analysis was conducted for the data gathered by The Artificial Intelligence Attitude Scale. Frequencies and percentages were used in summarizing the students' general attitudes on artificial intelligence. The analysis revealed general patterns along with degrees of agreement among the three main factors: benefits, risks, and the use of AI regarding language learning. Thematic analysis was applied to the qualitative data in accordance with the steps described by Braun and Clarke (2006), consisting of data familiarization, coding, theme formulation, and theme review. The transcripts of the interviews were inductively coded, which allowed key themes to emerge naturally from the

participants' responses. This two-directional approach to analysis enabled the researcher to triangulate the findings and gain a more nuanced insight into the students' attitudes.

### 3. Results

The findings obtained as a result of the analysis of the data are presented under three sub-headings according to the factors in the survey. These factors include perceived benefits, perceived risks, and actual use of AI. First of all, the data obtained from the Artificial Intelligence Attitude Scale were examined and frequencies and percentages were presented about the first factor in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Perceived Benefits of AI*

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	Number Percent%	Number Percent%	Number Percent%	Number Percent%	Number Percent%
1. I think AI is an important development	6 4.5%	1 0.7%	11 8.2%	49 36.6%	67 50%
2. I think AI is making people's lives easier	5 3.7%	3 2.2%	11 8.2%	56 41.8%	59 44%
3. I believe that AI will make significant contributions to humanity	6 4.5%	2 1.5%	24 17.9%	60 44.8%	42 31.3%
Total					134 100

Table 1 indicates the participants' views about the benefits of AI. The results reveal that EFL students have an overall positive perception of AI. The fact that a large percentage of participants (n = 67) strongly agreed with the statement, "I think AI is an important development," and that 36.6% of participants (n = 49) agreed, indicates that AI is a significant advancement. Likewise, 44% (n = 59) of the students strongly agreed and 41.8% (n = 56) agreed with the statement "I think artificial intelligence makes people's lives easier". There was only a small percentage of students who disagreed or strongly disagreed with this item. As regards the item "I believe that AI will make significant contributions to humanity", the overall responses were also positive, with 44.8% (n = 60) agreeing and 31.3% (n = 42) strongly agreeing. Although 17.9% (n = 24) of the students were neutral according to this statement, the general trend shows that students perceive AI as largely beneficial. The second factor included the perceived risks of AI and Table 2 shows the findings.

**Table 2**

*Perceived Risks of AI*

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	Number Percent%	Number Percent%	Number Percent%	Number Percent%	Number Percent%
4. I see AI as a threat	8 6%	22 16.4%	48 35.8%	40 29.9%	16 11.9%
5. I think AI is reducing communication among people	8 6%	14 10.4%	36 26.9%	55 41%	25 15.7%
6. I worry that AI will replace human labour	8 6%	17 12.7%	30 22.4%	50 37.3%	29 21.6%
7. I think AI is destroying creativity	4 3%	14 10.4%	33 24.6%	45 33.6%	38 28.4%
Total					134 100

With regard to the second factor of the scale, Table 2 displays the participants' responses regarding the potential risks of AI. In contrast to the perceived benefits, the responses under this factor reflected some more cautious and somewhat conflicted attitudes. As for the item "I see AI as a threat", 29.9% (n = 40) agreed and 11.9% (n = 16) strongly agreed, indicating that a significant proportion of students were sceptical of AI. Notably, 35.8% (n = 48) remained neutral, indicating a degree of uncertainty. A parallel tendency can be observed for concerns about the social impact of AI, with 41% (n = 55) agreeing and 15.7% (n = 25) strongly agreeing with the statement "I think AI reduces communication between people". With regard to employment, 37.3% (n = 50) agreed and 21.6% (n = 29) strongly agreed with the statement "I worry that AI will replace human labour", indicating that occupational safety is a major source of concern. Finally, 33.6% (n = 45) agreed that "AI destroys creativity", while 28.4% (n = 38) strongly agreed. Overall, these results reveal that although students recognized the advantages of AI, they simultaneously had some significant concerns, specifically about its effects on communication, recruitment, and individual creativity. The last factor was about the actual use of AI and the findings regarding this last category was presented in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*Actual Use of AI*

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
	Percent%	Percent%	Percent%	Percent%	Percent%
8. I love using AI to generate textual content	5 3.7%	9 6.7%	31 23.1%	53 39.6%	36 26.9%
9. I like to follow developments about AI	2 1.5%	20 14.9%	26 19.4%	52 38.8%	34 25.4%
10. I like to talk about topics related to AI	4 3%	11 8.2%	39 29.1%	50 37.3%	30 22.4%
11. I would like to chat with AI	7 5.2%	18 13.4%	23 17.2%	53 39.6%	33 24.6%
12. I love creating creative visual products with AI	9 6.7%	5 3.7%	26 19.4%	60 44.8%	34 25.4%
13. I would like to use AI tools for entertainment purposes	3 2.2%	10 7.5%	28 20.9%	60 44.8%	33 24.6%
Total					134 100

The results of the third part of the scale, which relates to the actual use of AI technologies by EFL learners, are shown in Table 3. The responses reveal largely favourable opinions regarding the incorporation of AI into daily and instructional procedures. 66.5% of the participants (n = 89) reported that they were interested in using AI to generate textual content, and similarly 63.4% (n = 85) stated that they enjoyed learning about developments on AI. Furthermore, 59.7% of the participants (n = 80) expressed that they found it enjoyable to discuss about topics related to AI. Additionally, 58% (n = 78) showed a great enthusiasm for having conversations with AI applications. Remarkably, 70.1% (n = 94) of the students agreed that they liked to create creative visual representations using AI. On a similar basis, 69.4% (n = 93) indicated an interest in using AI tools for recreational purposes. The findings highlight that EFL learners not only hold positive perceptions of AI, but also have high levels of actual engagement with it in both academic as well as non-academic settings.

After the quantitative analysis of the data in the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the volunteer participants and the themes, codes and sample student excerpts that were obtained as a result of the thematic analysis are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4**

*Thematic Analysis of the Qualitative Data*

Themes	Codes	Sample Student Statements
Benefits of AI	Time saving for any topic	"AI gives me ideas I wouldn't have thought of and helps me write faster."
	Continuous support	"It provides more fun and efficient vocabulary learning and thus contributes to more long-lasting learning."
	Innovation in learning	
	Positive outcomes	
Risks of AI	Over dependence on AI	"I have concerns that if we give too much credit to AI, we might lose our critical thinking skills."
	Reduced real interaction	
	Worries about finding jobs	"Having a conversation with an AI is not the equivalent of having a real conversation with a real human being."
	Reduced human creativity	
Use of AI	Getting feedback for writing	"I use AI to proofread my essays, get feedback on where I'm doing mistakes, and practice writing better."
	Getting help for visual content	
	Getting advice for problems	"I like to use AI software to design visual projects for my own presentations."
	Learning current applications	

As a result of the analysis of the qualitative data obtained from semi-structured interviews, participant statements were grouped under three main themes named as benefits, risks and use of AI. Under the theme of benefits, students highlighted the time-saving effect of AI, ongoing support, offering innovation in their learning, and positive impacts. Regarding the theme of risks, students mentioned their concerns that over-dependence on AI could weaken critical thinking, reduce human interaction, create anxiety about finding a job, and negatively influence creativity. Under the last theme, students indicated that they actively use AI especially for receiving feedback in written texts, preparing visual materials, and having conversations about any topic. These themes, in line with the survey data, reveal that students are aware of both the benefits they derive from AI and the potential risks it brings.

## 4. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to discover the way EFL learners perceive AI in relation to its benefits and potential risks, as well as its actual practices in language learning environments. First, the results suggest that students' opinions of AI are usually positive because of its novel and useful aspects. Students, however, are just as concerned about AI. In other words, these results show that although students' perceptions of AI are generally positive, they nevertheless maintain some concerns. Because of this, most students believe AI to be a useful teaching tool and a noteworthy invention. Current research also supports this conclusion, demonstrating learners value AI's ability to increase independence, involvement, and personalisation in language learning (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019; Fathali & Okada, 2017). It also needs to be added that students' perception of AI as a helpful tool has been confirmed by qualitative data. Similarly, earlier studies have shown that AI-powered tools like recommendation systems, chatbots, and writing checkers can offer some opportunities for more interactive and engaging learning environments (Chiu et al., 2023; Liu and Ma, 2023). Ultimately, these results support the TAM principles in terms of how students' positive perceptions are influenced by perceived usefulness. Similarly, the IMTA model provides a tool for better understanding how behavioural, emotional, and contextual elements affect and shape students' acceptance of AI. Admittedly, placing these models in the analysis phase can strengthen the theoretical framework of the research and place the results into an accepted structure related to technology adoption.

To continue, this study has revealed some concerns about the potential risks of AI. The vast majority of students expressed concerns that AI would weaken human relationships, reduce creativity, and create risks in the process of finding a job. At this point, the results are consistent with previous studies on the excessive use of AI in learning

environments (Holmes et al., 2022; Hockly, 2023). Similar to this, Suh and Ahn (2022) evaluated the alignment of technology use in education with human values. Consequently, concerns that AI may replace humans or lead to superficial communication were also highlighted in this study. It is important to emphasize that although students interact with AI, they are aware of its limitations and ethical considerations. For example, more than a third of students view AI as a potential threat. This is particularly important in EFL environments, where critical thinking and communication are essential for language learning. In this respect, these aspects highlight the factor of 'perceived risk' that is often not considered in traditional TAM approaches and clearly demonstrate the need for more comprehensive model approaches. The IMTA model provides a better comprehension of similar hesitant attitudes by addressing behavioural, contextual and emotional components. Consequently, students' positive and sceptical attitudes can be expressed through these theoretical paradigms.

When it comes to actual practice, students expressed a high level of engagement with AI tools for both academic and non-academic purposes. These include using AI for writing text, constructing visual content, and using AI for both problem solving and fun activities. Latest studies suggest that EFL learners who are especially digital natives are more likely to use AI for informal, self-directed learning activities in support of this new trend (Liu & Ma, 2023; Phan, 2023). The fact that students in this study indicated the use of AI to improve their oral presentations, receive feedback, and investigate about interesting topics implies that AI is not only well recognized, but also actively incorporated into students' daily learning processes. That is, the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989) and its modifications (e.g., Lin et al., 2022) offer a useful insight, showing that students' acceptance of AI technology is greatly influenced by perceived utility and usability.

The study is strengthened by the alignment of quantitative and qualitative responses. The real world experiences and insightful reflections of the students persistently supported their positive view of the instructional value of AI. Along with this, the ongoing concerns about ethical, creative and human social interaction highlight the need for a well-balanced, human-oriented focus on the integration of AI in language teaching. As Holmes et al. (2022) argue, AI in education needs to be used as a complementary tool to foster further student learning, not as a substitute for peer or teacher interaction.

There are two implications of these results. To improve learning without negatively impacting creativity or human contact, educationalists need to first carefully evaluate how to include AI technology in a way which is both pedagogically and ethically sound. In the second place, syllabus designers and policy makers need to ensure that they provide instruction and materials which support learners to use AI critically and productively. For language learners to be prepared for both academic achievement as well as responsible individuals in an AI-driven future, it is necessary to comprehend both the opportunities and risks of AI.

## **5. Conclusions and Recommendations**

This study investigated how EFL learners viewed AI across language learning settings in three main categories: perceived benefits, perceived risks, and actual application of AI. The findings demonstrated that the majority of students had a favourable attitude of AI, especially when considering its practical advantages such as enhancing learning, fostering innovative thinking, and saving time. In fact, a large number of students regarded AI having many advantages to offer the learning processes, which is consistent with current developments in the digital transformation in language learning and instruction. Despite this overly positive perspective, the findings of the study also showed that students have

significant concerns about the risks of AI. Numerous students expressed concerns about the ability of AI to reduce human interaction and repress creativity. These concerns have been echoed in more general ethical and pedagogical debates in the current studies as well. These apparent contradictory views illustrate how students are both accepting and sceptical about the use of AI. Additionally, or the majority of students, they use AI technologies not only for academic tasks such as writing and content creation, but also for their leisure activities. As long as appropriate pedagogical and ethical frameworks are in place, these findings suggest that learners are ready for AI-enhanced language instruction as they already integrate AI into their daily lives and learning routines.

Based on these findings, several practical recommendations can be made. At first, language teachers need to be encouraged to incorporate AI tools into their language instruction to foster learner engagement without replacing human interaction. There is also a need to determine the right ways to use AI-guided feedback mechanisms, language chatbots or content creation technologies to enable students to get the highest benefit of AI. Secondly, AI literacy training needs to be incorporated into language education programs to help learners critically assess and use AI tools. AI-related activities can be integrated into communicative and collaborative tasks that maintain the human element in education. As for the third point, the educational institutions need to consider investing in professional development programs to equip teachers with the skills to use AI tools in a purposeful and appropriate way. Furthermore, they need to ensure that students are informed about both the potentials and risks of AI through digital citizenship and ethical awareness. Finally, future research might examine the long-term effects of sustained use of AI technologies on learner autonomy, language proficiency and digital well-being. This area could be further developed through comparative research conducted in a variety of cultural and educational situations.

Despite the significant findings, this study has a number of limitations. Firstly, it involved a sample of 134 EFL students from only one Turkish state institution, which limits the applicability of the findings to other educational settings. Although practical, convenience sampling may have created participant bias, as students who volunteered may already be more accepting or critical of AI. In addition, as the survey is cross-sectional in nature, it reflects only a snapshot of students' views. Indeed, opinions may change if exposure to AI increases or technologies become more advanced. Furthermore, the study did not differentiate between specific AI tools or platforms, which may influence students' assessments based on familiarity or usefulness. In addition, the qualitative sample size ( $n = 18$ ) is relatively small and may not fully reflect the diversity of student experiences, despite the inclusion of semi-structured interviews. Students' views may not be applicable to students in other regions as they are shaped by cultural factors specific to the educational context in Turkey. Furthermore, this study did not examine how teacher assistance or classroom practices influence students' perceptions of AI, which could be an interesting area for future research. To extend these findings, future research requires longitudinal methods, larger and more diverse populations, and cross-cultural comparisons. Examining students' actual performance outcomes when using AI tools could also contribute to understanding of how attitudes might influence language learning outcomes.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

## Declaration of Generative AI Use

During the writing process of this study, the generative artificial intelligence tool ChatGPT was used only to a limited extent for linguistic editing (grammar checking). The scientific content, argumentation, data analysis and conclusions were created entirely by the author. Any ethical and scientific responsibility arising from the use of generative artificial intelligence lies solely with the author.

## Ethical Statement

Ethical review and approval for this study were obtained from Çukurova University committee on scientific research and publication ethics in the field of social and humanities (decision no: 9/E.1293342; 30.04.2025).

## Author Contributions

The author conceptualized the study, designed the methodology, collected and analyzed the data, and wrote the manuscript. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

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