

ИИ В ОБУЧЕНИИ ИНОСТРАННОМУ ЯЗЫКУ: ФОРМИРОВАНИЕ БЛАГОПРИЯТНОЙ ПСИХОЛОГИЧЕСКОЙ СРЕДЫ

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Аннотация. Данная статья направлена на исследование применения работающих на основе ИИ инструментов в рамках формирования благоприятной психологической среды при обучении иностранному языку. Проводя оценку эффективности различных средств программного обеспечения, автор использует смешанный подход, состоящий из теоретических и практических компонентов. Статья включает анализ научных работ и результаты практического исследования – опроса.

Ключевые слова: приложения на базе ИИ, большая языковая модель, психологическая среда, современные технологии, обучение иностранному языку

AI IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING: FORMING THE HEALTHY PSYCHOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract. This study is dedicated to investigating the use of AI-powered toolkits in the formation of a well-balanced psychological environment within the context of FL teaching. Attempting to evaluate the effectiveness of several software tools the author invokes a mixed-method approach consisting of theoretical and empirical components. The paper comprises analysis of scientific papers and practical data embedded in the results of a survey on the AI-powered applications in the FL teaching practices.

Keywords: AI-powered apps, Large Language Models (further – LLMs) psychological environment, advanced technologies, foreign language teaching (further – FLT)

In the modern world AI has literally overhauled the entire world impacting equally all sectors of social life. Concerning education and FLT in particular these shifts were not met unequivocally bringing about a long lasting debate about methodological self-efficacy and benefits of the AI-powered software. Definitely, FLT is characterized by several particularities associated with training language specific skills, forming linguistic and metalinguistic cognitive strategies which foster native-like speech recognition and reproduction mechanisms. The aforesaid features have a complex, blended psychological nature connected with hindrances, anxiety and barriers appearing while commencing a conversation in a foreign language. Hence, the author of the current paper aims to reveal how the cutting-edge AI-driven apps assist in dismantling language barriers and combatting speaking anxiety of learners trained with this modern toolkit.

Unlike teaching and learning other disciplines of the curriculum, the process of FLT is characterized by high dynamics of motivational patterns exhibited by learners. This is elucidated by the complex interdisciplinary process of adopting a new identity in a foreign culture.

Reflecting on the adoption of a new cultural identity, Bon casts light upon the way students' motivation changes depending on the quality of teaching materials. Naturally, today most of the captivating tasks and hand-outs are reinforced via the innovative digital toolkits, comprising AI-powered apps. AI is completely applicable for generating textual, audio and video files of quality approaching generic materials of the native speakers. Blurring the frames of conventional teaching AI-driven apps accompany learners on the stages of setting goals, developing strategic thinking. In the long run they are even conducive in elaborating auto-evaluation and self-correction habits common for native-like autonomous learners [2, P. 2602-2885].

It is noteworthy that AI implementation in education has been repeatedly addressed in the articles of academicians and practitioners. Consequently, a concise literature review would be absolutely necessary for laying out the advantageous points of AI apps. Evidently, AI-powered LLMs, chat-GPTs offer FL teachers a myriad of methodological opportunities within the field of creating a healthy, learner-friendly working space. Paratore, for example, pinpoints that AI-driven LLMs enable the teachers to implement naturalistic, personalized methods. One of the most fabulous examples of embodying personalized naturalistic methods is offered by the functional repertoire of virtual intelligence. Partly, simulated foreign city excursions open the window of endless creativity providing students with a unique chance to feel themselves affiliated to the native-speaking community [5, P. 73-79].

The benefits of personalized learning space are harnessed when every student gets a unique chance to design his or her own learning trajectory. Another researcher, David, insists that AI models serve as a methodological bridge between textbooks or other conventional methodological elaborations and students' ambitions or expectations, individual psychological traits. Each of psychological components influence goal setting, shaping intercultural learner's identity [3, P. 78-93].

Personalization of the classroom environment reflects principles of inclusive, adaptive tuition that guarantees assimilation of material owing to the individualized pace of progress. Interacting with the AI-assistant every student may adapt the curriculum to his or her individual memory capacity practicing repeated sessions when it is required. The promising personalization principle is covered by Alisoy, who is convinced teachers of FL can yield largely from AI-powered elaborations [1, P. 89-98].

Scientists corroborate that AI assistants facilitate doing away with learner's anxiety and frequent mistakes connected with high affective filter environment and low students' confidence [7, P. 114-125]. Anxiety is a natural psychological reaction witnessed by humans while being exposed to a completely new experience of receiving and comprehending information in a foreign language and

learning new vocabulary sets or cultural concepts. This feeling is motivated by the lack of cognitive control over the informational volumes in a foreign language. Once intercultural understanding is achieved and the gap between FL and mother tongue is bridged, anxiety cedes place to productivity, attainment and maintenance of language proficiency. The adepts of psycholinguistic theory underline the fundamental role of regular training practices in gaining native-like speaking and writing habits, which grow exponentially upon the exposure to the culturally rich environment generated by AI [1, P. 89-98].

Regarding naturalistic learning mode, according to Sallam, it can be perfectly applied via the vocal models of native speakers designed for communication on practical speaking sessions. The vocal assistant mimics native-like speaking habits with fluency adjusted to the level of students' language proficiency [6, P. 223-242]. Proceeding from this elaboration a variety of classroom activities based upon human-computer interactions in a form of dialogues may be inserted into the speaking practices.

Developing the philosophy of implementing authentic materials in multiple forms comprising generated texts, images, video and voice recordings some researchers, however Hannan voices concerns about ethical implications of using AI and errors appearing in their output. Hannan stipulates that the materials generated by models are, unfortunately, far from perfection containing fictional and overtly incorrect data, biased information replicated from the initial textual dataset which had been invoked for pre-training and fine-tuning of the program [4, P. 265–279].

When this biased information is disseminated among students, their academic results become inaccurate. Moreover, Sallam contends if biases relate to discriminatory judgements or misconceptions inherited and generated by the models, intercultural misunderstanding or even conflict can be ignited fostering tension instead of a smooth cooperative environment [6, P. 223-242].

Another common drawback of AI-driven models is their inability to tell apart literal and figurative meanings of lexical units in a given context. This deficiency is explained by Paratore in his seminal paper by the nature of AI-toolkit which is principally distinct from human-like cognition and merely fails to address nuance of speech constructions [5, P. 73-79].

Eventually, statistical data on comprehension and cohesive reproduction of collocational metaphorical phrases is ambivalent: in several cases models and chat-GPTs manage to provide adequate results, though this tendency is sometimes reversed and the meaning gets lost. Special interest of researchers there is attached to computer-assisted and automated translation apps. Typically, the translation software handles tasks associated with literal word-to-word translation successfully, meanwhile the adequate and equivalent work on interpretation of figurative meaning remains underdone [7, P. 114-125].

Overcoming flaws and errors in the performance of AI-driven apps, programmers suggest integrating into the software modules special quality or validity evaluation matrix responsible for checking the output. Presumably, substantial improvement of the output quality will make the AI-based elaborations even more enticing and appealing for FL teachers. At least when it comes to the extension of cross cultural exposure, as it has been emphasized by Hannan, AI-powered tools appear extremely valuable in essence of providing a full-fledged topic coverage [4, P. 265–279].

Drawing a final line to the theoretical analysis it would be fair to acknowledge that the question of implementing or forbearing the use of the described advanced technologies in FLT remains unsettled. Most practitioners and scholars recognize their psychological contributions to the healthy environment. Connecting personalization with successful academic performance, they believe

that LLMs maintain a low-filter affective filter fighting off learner's anxiety or frustration. Another prominent feature of AI apps is embodied in the opportunity to replicate precisely native-speaker speech accents and organize practical session with authentic materials presented in multifaceted sets of activities.

Having said that, it is hardly possible to abjure deficiencies in the LLMs' work. Surely, such dark sides as biased output produced by LLMs in oral or written form, likewise erroneous inappropriate responses to prompts undermine methodological value of this advanced technology in the classroom.

Attempting to handle the issue of shaping an amiable psychological environment in FLT empirically, the author designed a survey among college students of transportation and tourism faculties of the Nizhny Novgorod State Engineering and Economics University. This survey was designed digitally while using Google form and distributed among the interviewees in social networks.

Within 2 weeks of a trial about 100 students took part in it. Respondents were asked to prioritize the advantageous points of AI-powered toolkits. The AI-driven apps chosen for the experiment were: Busuu, Voxy and Speakingpal. Respondents were instructed to register an account and download these updated apps practicing alternatively with each of them. After the end of the testing period the subjects were invited to estimate the superior features of the platform regarding the process of language acquisition.

The results collected and retrieved from their responses are presented in the table.

Table 1

benefit of AI	the number of students in %
dealing with authentic materials, native-like realistic speech	5
blurring off the barrier between classroom and home education	30
getting immediate personal feedback, a chance to consult and self-improve	40
personalized instruction and explanations when it is necessary	15
flexibility, variety of interaction	10

Obviously, most of the subjects regard immediate feedback and individualized consultations as a top priority. This fact can be partially motivated by the students' interest in scoring high during the mock test and exams, getting higher marks for their academic performance. Another plausible explanation is a desire to attain sufficient communicative skills in order to make friends with a foreigner or go abroad in the future as a part of international mobility programs. Blurring off the distinctions between classroom and autonomous working space was appreciated really highly too drawing about 30% of the respondents. Presumably, blended learning is interwoven with a chance of getting extra practice without leaving the comfort of home. Unfortunately, individually-tailored instructions were inferior in popularity, selected by 15 % only. Perhaps, sufficiency of conventional printed instructions found in the textbooks compensates for this ignorance. Variety of interaction and authentic materials were not relevant either, amounting to 10 % and 5 % respectively.

In conclusion, it is worth noting that AI-powered tools prove their effectiveness in the formation of a healthy psychological environment. Owing to flexibility and learner-friendly design LLMs cater perfectly for the personalized needs bridging the gap between the curriculum requirements and students' ambitions. AI potential value is embedded in the generic materials

produced for the training sessions so that to reflect the native-like features and offer a multitude of interactive engaging activities. Nevertheless, every learner and teacher should be equally aware of the implications of this advanced remedy (false, erroneous responses, biased information). Consequently, instant verification via validity tests and evaluation matrix is required for the sake of filtering the content properly.

The survey graphed in this paper inevitably has some limitations reasoned by the sparsity of time allotting to the administration of the project. Further investigation of the topic concerned will entail experimentation and expert-based assessment. A thorough fundamental evaluation of experienced linguists – FL teachers would highlight bright sights of AI-powered appliances and assist in foreseeing their pitfalls.

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