Harnessing AI in Blended Learning for Language Skill Development:
Addressing the Challenges and Opportunities for University Students

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in blended learning environments for language skill development in university settings. It examines the opportunities AI offers, such as personalized learning, intelligent tutoring systems, and adaptive learning technologies, which enhance student engagement and provide real-time feedback. The article highlights successful case studies of AI-powered platforms like Duolingo and Rosetta Stone, demonstrating their impact on language learning outcomes. Challenges related to technology access, educator training, student resistance, and the risk of over-reliance on AI are also discussed. The future of AI in education is explored, with an emphasis on emerging trends like immersive learning environments and AI-driven assessments. The article concludes by reaffirming the importance of leveraging AI to overcome challenges and seize new opportunities for effective language skill development in higher education, ultimately fostering more personalized and inclusive learning experiences.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of technology has profoundly transformed the landscape of education, notably in language learning. One of the most influential breakthroughs has been the advent of blended learning, a strategy that mixes traditional face-to-face instruction with online and digital resources. This technique enables a more flexible and tailored learning experience, fitting varied learning styles and timetables (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). When linked with the power of artificial intelligence (AI), blended learning offers unprecedented prospects to boost the development of language skills among university students, addressing the growing demand for innovative, effective, and accessible educational techniques (Horn & Staker, 2014).

AI has changed numerous areas, and education is no exception. In the context of language learning, AI can provide a wide array of benefits, from intelligent tutoring systems that deliver real-time, individualized feedback, to adaptive learning technologies that adjust lesson plans based on individual student development (VanLehn, 2011). AI-driven platforms may monitor student performance, identify areas of difficulty, and give personalized activities to address individual requirements. These systems also enable the creation of immersive and interactive settings where students may practice language skills in realistic scenarios, helping them build proficiency more effectively. Research reveals that AI's capacity for tailored education can considerably boost language acquisition, providing learners with the ability to practice more intensively and autonomously (Godwin-Jones, 2018).

Blended learning, on its own, provides various advantages, such as the opportunity to combine the best parts of traditional classroom instruction with the flexibility of online education. However, when supplemented by AI, it provides an even more dynamic and responsive learning experience. AI systems can measure student involvement, identify problems, and offer appropriate interventions, allowing instructors to modify their teaching approaches to better suit individual learners (Holmes et al., 2019). Additionally, AI can promote continual language practice outside the classroom, offering students the opportunity to learn at their own pace and on their own terms.

While the integration of AI in blended learning brings great opportunities, it is not without its challenges. The successful application of AI-driven technologies demands a large investment in technology, infrastructure, and training. Universities must ensure that both educators and students have access to essential resources and that instructors are prepared with the abilities to properly integrate AI into their teaching procedures (Dos Santos et al., 2018). Furthermore, there are concerns regarding the potential for AI to replace human contact in the learning process, leading to a loss of personal connection between teachers and students (Kataria, 2023). Addressing these problems is vital to ensure that AI is used as a complementing tool, rather than a replacement for traditional methods of instruction.

For university students, the capacity to exploit the opportunities afforded by AI and blended learning can have a tremendous impact on their language skill development. As global communication becomes increasingly digital and networked, knowledge of various languages has become a crucial asset. The issues faced by the digital divide, access to technology, and resistance to AI-based learning models must be addressed to ensure that all students can benefit from these breakthroughs (Popenici & Kerr, 2017). By overcoming these hurdles, universities can establish more equitable and effective language learning environments that equip students with the skills they need to flourish in a fast-changing world.

This article investigates the complex function of AI in blended learning environments for language skill development. It dives into the hurdles that universities must negotiate to properly integrate AI into their educational systems and the opportunities that AI brings in increasing language acquisition.