ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN INDIA: SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

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Abstract
Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly becoming a part of classrooms and language learning around the world, including India. In English Language Teaching (ELT), AI tools such as chatbots, automated writing checkers, and speech recognition software are being used by teachers and students for practice and feedback. These tools promise faster learning, better personalization, and support for teachers who manage large classes. However, there are also limitations: accuracy problems, dependence on technology, inequality of access in rural and urban areas, and the risk of reducing real communication. This paper explores the scope of AI in ELT in the Indian context, highlights its advantages and challenges, and suggests ways for responsible and balanced use.

1. Introduction

English plays a central role in India as a link language across states, in higher education, and in employment opportunities. The **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** has emphasized the importance of technology in education, including AI, to make learning more engaging and inclusive. In this environment, AI is entering English language classrooms in both schools and colleges.

From apps that give grammar corrections to platforms that offer pronunciation practice, students in India—particularly in urban private schools and universities—already use AI. However, the situation is different in rural government schools and smaller colleges, where internet access, devices, and digital literacy remain challenges.

Therefore, it becomes important to study AI's role in English teaching in India, where the socio-economic and cultural context is very different from Western countries.

2. Scope: How AI Can Support ELT in India

2.1 Personalized Learning

India has overcrowded classrooms, sometimes with 60–80 students per teacher. AI tools can help by giving personalized practice. For example, an app can adjust the difficulty of reading texts depending on a learner's proficiency. Chatbots like ChatGPT or Indian-developed platforms can answer questions anytime, which is useful for students who cannot afford private tuition.

2.2 Writing Support

Many Indian students struggle with grammar, sentence formation, and academic writing. Automated Writing Evaluation (AWE) tools such as Grammarly or Quillbot are already widely used. These can help students draft and revise essays quickly. Teachers in India, who often have heavy workloads, can use such tools to save time on correcting basic errors, and focus more on higher-level skills such as critical thinking and creativity (Ngo et al.; Wei et al.).

2.3 Speaking and Pronunciation Practice

Spoken English is highly valued in India's job market. AI-powered apps with speech recognition can provide instant feedback on pronunciation and fluency. For students in rural areas with little exposure to English-speaking environments, such tools reduce hesitation and improve confidence. A pilot project in Maharashtra showed that schoolchildren using AI-based English practice apps spoke with greater accuracy and confidence than those without such support (British Council).

2.4 Teacher Support

Indian teachers, especially in government schools, face pressure to complete the syllabus. AI can generate lesson plans, comprehension questions, and vocabulary lists. This reduces preparation time and allows teachers to spend more energy on classroom interaction. In higher education, English teachers can use AI to create model essays, mock interviews, or group discussion topics for training students in placement activities.

2.5 Accessibility and Inclusion

AI can also support students with special needs. For example, text-to-speech features help dyslexic students, and speech-to-text tools can help those with hearing challenges. Considering India's focus on inclusive education under NEP 2020, AI can play an important role if used carefully (Government of India).

3. Pedagogical Use in India

3.1 Human-in-the-Loop Approach

AI should not replace teachers. In India, where cultural context, motivation, and moral guidance are part of education, teachers remain central. AI can provide suggestions, but teachers must adapt

them to suit students' background, language exposure, and local culture.

3.2 Focus on Process, not Just Product
Many students may use AI to generate complete essays or homework answers. Teachers should design activities where process matters, such as drafts, reflections, and oral presentations, to ensure real learning.

3.3 AI Literacy
Students in India must be taught how to use AI responsibly: checking facts, avoiding over-dependence, and learning how to cite AI-generated material. Teacher training programs (like those run by NCERT and UGC) should include AI literacy.

4. Limitations and Challenges in the Indian Context
4.1 Accuracy and Quality of AI Output
AI sometimes gives wrong explanations or artificial examples. Indian students, especially beginners, may not recognize errors and could learn incorrect usage. Teachers need to guide students in verifying information (UNESCO).

4.2 Inequality of Access
Urban students in private schools have smartphones, laptops, and Wi-Fi. But in rural areas, many students have only basic phones or limited internet. If AI becomes a central part of ELT, this digital divide may widen (U.S. Department of Education).

4.3 Cultural and Linguistic Bias
Most AI tools are trained on Western English models. They may undervalue Indian English expressions or local cultural references. For example, AI might mark "cousin-brother" as wrong, even though it is common in Indian usage. Teachers should explain the difference between global English standards and Indian English usage.

4.4 Academic Integrity
With tools like ChatGPT, students can easily generate essays or exam answers. This raises questions of honesty. Indian universities already face plagiarism issues; AI makes this problem more complex. Institutions must develop clear policies about acceptable AI use (TESOL International Association).

4.5 Teacher Identity and Training
Some teachers fear that AI will replace their role. In reality, AI should be seen as an assistant. However, proper training is needed. Teacher development programs in India should train educators in using AI wisely rather than resisting it.

4.6 Privacy and Data Concerns
Many AI tools collect data such as student texts, voice samples, or personal details. India's **Digital Personal Data Protection Act (DPDP) 2023** emphasizes privacy, but schools and colleges are often unaware of such issues. Students' data should not be misused by foreign companies.

5. Practical Suggestions for Indian Classrooms
1. **Use AI as a helper, not a master.** Teachers should remain central.
2. **Blend AI with local resources.** AI-generated exercises can be combined with Indian stories, folk tales, or local cultural material.
3. **Focus on oral and interactive tasks.** AI cannot replace real group discussions, debates, and classroom dialogue.
4. **Train teachers.** Workshops under UGC, NCERT, and state boards should prepare teachers for AI use.
5. **Ensure equity.** Government schemes like Digital India must support rural schools with devices and connectivity.

6. Conclusion
AI has great potential to transform English teaching in India by making it more personalized, efficient, and inclusive. It can help bridge the gap between students who can afford private coaching and those who cannot. At the same time, it brings challenges of inequality, cultural bias, misuse, and privacy.
For India, the best way forward is a **balanced approach**: use AI as a support system while keeping teachers in control. AI should serve as a tool to empower students, not as a substitute for real communication, cultural learning, and human interaction. With proper policies, teacher training, and infrastructure support, AI can help fulfill the vision of NEP 2020—education that is equitable, inclusive, and future-ready.

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