



AI-ASSISTED ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN THE PHILIPPINE CLASSROOM: A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF CONTRIBUTIONS, CHALLENGES, AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study examines how artificial intelligence (AI) tools shape English language instruction in Philippine higher education classrooms. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with twelve English language teachers from public and private institutions in Central Luzon, Philippines, and document analysis of AI-assisted classroom outputs, the study investigates teacher perceptions, observed instructional outcomes, and the pedagogical and ethical implications of integrating AI tools—particularly ChatGPT, Grammarly, and QuillBot—into English language teaching (ELT). Three principal themes emerged from the data: (1) AI as a facilitator of student engagement and language skill development, particularly in writing, grammar, and vocabulary; (2) recurring challenges including infrastructure constraints, academic integrity concerns, and uneven digital literacy; and (3) the need for localized, culturally responsive AI integration frameworks suited to the Philippine linguistic context. Guided by socioconstructivist theory and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the findings indicate that while AI tools carry genuine pedagogical value for Filipino learners of English, their responsible use depends on deliberate instructional scaffolding, coherent institutional policy, and sustained teacher professional development. Implications for curriculum design and future research are discussed.

KEYWORDS: artificial intelligence, English language teaching, Philippine education, ChatGPT, qualitative research, EFL/ESL, technology integration

1. INTRODUCTION

The growing presence of artificial intelligence tools in educational settings has substantially reshaped how language instruction is delivered and how students engage with English. From automated writing feedback platforms such as Grammarly and QuillBot to large language models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT, AI technologies are increasingly embedded in both instructional design and student learning practice. In the Philippine context, where English functions as a medium of instruction from the primary through tertiary levels and carries significant implications for academic and professional advancement (Dalan, 2024), questions about how AI reconfigures the English language classroom warrant close attention.

The Philippines presents a distinctively complex sociolinguistic environment. English is one of the country's two official languages alongside Filipino, and students routinely navigate Taglish—a hybrid blending of Tagalog and English—in both academic and informal communication (Tardaguila, 2024b). This multilingual reality means that AI tools calibrated primarily to standard American or British English may not adequately serve the communicative norms and learning needs of Filipino students (Dalan, 2024). While many institutions have begun incorporating AI into classroom practice, the absence of systematic policy guidance from the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) on

AI integration has left teachers negotiating pedagogical and ethical decisions largely without institutional direction (Estrellado & Miranda, 2023).

Existing scholarship has documented AI tools' potential to support writing development (Barrot, 2023), improve grammatical accuracy (Kohnke, Moorhouse, & Zou, 2023), and enable more personalized learning experiences (Tan et al., 2025). At the same time, concerns regarding student over-reliance, plagiarism, the erosion of critical thinking, and cultural misalignment between AI-generated content and local learning contexts have been consistently raised in the literature (Mabuan, 2024; De Guzman et al., 2024). Against this backdrop, a contextually grounded investigation of AI's role in the Philippine English classroom is both timely and necessary.

This study draws on qualitative inquiry to explore how English language teachers in Central Luzon perceive, adopt, and respond to the use of AI tools in their instructional practice. Guided by socioconstructivist theory and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the research addresses three questions: (1) What contributions do AI tools make to English language teaching and learning in Philippine higher education? (2) What challenges do teachers identify in integrating these tools? and (3) What pedagogical implications emerge from these findings?



2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 AI in Language Education: Global Trends

Artificial intelligence has become one of the more consequential forces in contemporary language education. Since the public release of ChatGPT in November 2022, scholarly interest in its applications across educational contexts has grown rapidly (Ulla, Perales, & Tarrayo, 2023). Systematic reviews examining AI tools in language learning point to a shift from exploratory accounts toward empirically grounded inquiry, with student writing, grammatical development, and engagement emerging as the most frequently studied outcomes (Wafa & Sulistyaningsih, 2024). Studies have demonstrated that ChatGPT can function as a conversational partner in ESL settings, offering real-time interaction that supports both writing and oral language development (Javier & Moorhouse, 2023). Generative AI tools have also been employed to design formative assessments, create gamified learning activities, and provide individualized feedback—functions that augment rather than displace teacher expertise (Kohnke et al., 2023; Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2024).

Among AI writing tools, Grammarly is among the most widely used by students and educators in Philippine higher education. Its adaptive feedback mechanism offers real-time commentary on grammar, punctuation, style, and clarity, providing both learners and teachers with actionable linguistic information (Dalan, 2023). Paraphrasing tools such as QuillBot have likewise gained considerable traction, particularly for academic writing tasks, though their adoption is accompanied by documented concerns about authorial agency and the integrity of student-produced work (Barrot, 2023).

2.2 AI in the Philippine Language Classroom

Research conducted within the Philippine context reflects a nuanced picture of AI integration in language education. A phenomenological study of English and literature teachers in Philippine classrooms identified four broad themes in how educators experience and respond to AI: improved teaching and enhanced student learning, challenges and risks, ethical concerns, and changes in pedagogical strategy (Ulla et al., 2023). De Guzman et al. (2024) similarly found that Filipino English teachers and students hold a range of attitudes toward generative AI, from cautious acceptance to anxiety stemming from concerns about academic dishonesty and student dependency.

Dalan (2024) argues that the structural and sociolinguistic complexity of the Philippines creates particular challenges for AI integration. Tools developed primarily for standard English varieties often fail to account for the communicative realities of Filipino learners, who frequently draw on Filipino and regional languages in their meaning-making processes. Mabuan (2024) corroborates this, noting that while Filipino English teachers recognize the benefits of AI tools—among them translation support, conversational practice, and access to cultural information—they also flag significant limitations: susceptibility to plagiarism, limited contextual understanding, and concerns about the reliability of AI-generated content.

Research on ChatGPT's integration in Philippine higher education has reported positive effects on personalized learning, with teachers in some studies noting improvements in student creativity, engagement, and knowledge retention (Ulla et al., 2023). At the same time, a national review of AI use across Philippine educational levels has highlighted a pronounced disparity: higher education institutions in urban centers demonstrate markedly more advanced AI adoption than those in rural or semi-urban settings, reflecting broader inequities in infrastructure and resource allocation (Estrellado & Miranda, 2023).

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in two complementary theoretical frameworks. The first is socioconstructivism, as articulated by Vygotsky (1978), which holds that learning is mediated by tools and social interaction within culturally embedded contexts. From this perspective, AI tools function as mediating artifacts that can scaffold English language learning when aligned with learners' linguistic and cultural realities. The concept of the Zone of Proximal Development is particularly relevant here: AI-assisted feedback may enable students to accomplish tasks beyond their independent capacity, provided the scaffolding is appropriately calibrated to their developmental level.

The second framework is the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), originally proposed by Davis (1989), which explains technology adoption through two primary constructs: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. In the Philippine ELT context, teachers' decisions to integrate AI tools are shaped by both perceptions, which are further conditioned by institutional support, professional training, and access to reliable infrastructure. Together, these frameworks provide a productive lens for interpreting how teachers make sense of AI tools and under what conditions they are likely to incorporate them into instructional practice.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a qualitative phenomenological design, which is suited to capturing the lived experiences and interpretive processes of teachers as they navigate the integration of AI tools in their classrooms (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Phenomenology allows for contextually grounded accounts of how participants understand and respond to a shared phenomenon—in this case, the use of AI in English language teaching—attending to the meanings they assign to these experiences rather than seeking to generalize across populations.

3.2 Participants

A purposive sampling strategy was used to recruit twelve English language teachers from public and private higher education institutions in Central Luzon, Philippines. Participants were selected on the basis of three criteria: active teaching of English language courses at the tertiary level; self-reported use of at least one AI tool in their instructional practice within the preceding



academic year; and willingness to participate and provide informed consent. Teaching experience among participants ranged from two to nineteen years, with representation across diverse institutional types, subject specializations—including Technical Writing, Speech Communication, and Philippine Literature—and varying degrees of familiarity with AI tools.

3.3 Data Collection

Data were gathered through two primary methods. Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant, lasting approximately 45 to 75 minutes per session. Interview questions were organized around four domains: AI tools currently in use and their classroom applications; perceived contributions to student learning; challenges encountered in integration; and views on institutional support and policy. All interviews were conducted in English and audio-recorded with participant consent. Document analysis was conducted on a selected set of AI-assisted student outputs—including essays revised with Grammarly and written work developed through ChatGPT prompts—alongside corresponding teacher feedback, providing a basis for triangulating interview accounts with observable classroom artifacts.

3.4 Data Analysis

Interview transcripts were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis framework: familiarization with the data, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. Two independent coders analyzed the transcripts; disagreements were resolved through discussion and consensus. Member-checking was conducted with three participants to validate emerging themes. Document analysis followed a qualitative content analysis approach, attending to patterns in AI-assisted language features relative to unassisted student writing.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Institutional ethical clearance was obtained prior to data collection. All participants provided written informed consent and were assured of the confidentiality of their responses. Participant identifiers were anonymized (T1–T12) throughout analysis and reporting. Data were stored securely and used exclusively for research purposes. The potential for AI-mediated academic misconduct, acknowledged in the literature (Barrot, 2023), was treated as an empirical question to be examined through participant accounts rather than assumed as a background condition.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Theme 1: AI as a Pedagogical Facilitator in English Language Teaching

Across all twelve participants, AI tools—particularly ChatGPT, Grammarly, and QuillBot—were described as meaningfully enhancing several dimensions of English language teaching and learning. This finding is consistent with the broader literature on AI's positive effects on student engagement, writing quality, grammatical development, and vocabulary acquisition (Kohnke

et al., 2023; Javier & Moorhouse, 2023; Wafa & Sulistyaningsih, 2024).

AI-assisted writing feedback was cited most frequently as the most immediately visible contribution. Seven participants described Grammarly as a practical classroom tool that reduced the burden of surface-level error correction while simultaneously cultivating students' capacity for self-editing. One participant (T3) observed that students who used Grammarly consistently over the course of a semester showed discernible improvement in grammatical accuracy and expressed greater confidence in revising their own work—an observation aligned with research documenting AI writing tools' positive effects on academic writing performance among Filipino students (Dalan, 2023; Mabuan, 2024).

ChatGPT was used by nine of the twelve participants and was described as altering how students engage with writing tasks. Teachers noted that ChatGPT provided immediate, interactive feedback that allowed learners to practice English in a relatively low-stakes environment. Javier and Moorhouse (2023) characterize this dynamic as the AI functioning as an "interlocutor"—a conversational partner that can extend language practice beyond the classroom hour. One participant (T7) incorporated ChatGPT into her Technical Writing course by having students generate a draft using the tool and then systematically compare it with their own unassisted writing, analyzing differences in register, organization, and lexical choice. This approach reflects a pedagogical strategy in which AI-generated output serves as a catalyst for critical language awareness rather than a substitute for student effort.

Vocabulary development also featured prominently across participant accounts. Teachers observed that AI tools expanded students' access to lexical resources beyond what conventional textbooks typically provide, and several participants integrated AI-generated word lists and contextualized sentence examples into their lessons. Students appeared to engage more actively with vocabulary when they could query AI tools for explanations and examples in real time—an observation consistent with research on the role of immediate, tailored feedback in language skill development (Kohnke et al., 2023).

Several teachers also noted that AI facilitated more differentiated instruction by enabling them to address the varied English proficiency levels represented in their classrooms. This finding is consistent with Tan et al.'s (2025) review of AI-enabled adaptive learning platforms, which documents the potential of such tools to deliver content calibrated to individual learner needs—an advantage particularly relevant in Philippine tertiary classrooms, where proficiency levels vary considerably.

4.2 Theme 2: Challenges and Risks of AI Integration

Despite the perceived benefits, all twelve participants identified significant challenges that complicate the responsible use of AI in Philippine English classrooms. These challenges were organized around four sub-themes: academic integrity, infrastructure inequity, linguistic misalignment, and teacher preparedness.



Academic integrity was the most prominently discussed challenge, raised by eleven of twelve participants. Teachers expressed apprehension about students using AI to generate entire written assignments with minimal personal input—an issue consistently documented in Philippine higher education research (Barrot, 2023; Mabuan, 2024; De Guzman et al., 2024). Participants noted the increasing difficulty of distinguishing AI-generated text from student-authored work, a challenge corroborated by Casal and Kessler (2023), who found that even experienced language scholars are largely unable to reliably differentiate the two. Several participants responded by requiring students to submit both AI-assisted and unassisted drafts or to document their AI use transparently. This reflects a pedagogical orientation in which managing AI in the classroom does not mean prohibiting it, but rather establishing clear boundaries that preserve the integrity of the learning process.

Infrastructure inequity emerged as a second major challenge, particularly for participants from public universities in semi-urban and rural areas. Inconsistent internet connectivity, limited device access, and the absence of institutional subscriptions to premium AI services created an uneven learning environment. Teachers in public institutions reported relying on free-tier versions of AI tools with restricted functionality, while students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds faced additional disadvantages. This disparity reflects a pattern documented at the national level, where urban higher education institutions demonstrate substantially more advanced AI integration than those in less resourced settings (Estrellado & Miranda, 2023).

Linguistic misalignment represented a third, distinctly Philippine challenge. Four participants explicitly raised concerns about AI tools' limited capacity to process or appropriately evaluate Filipino-inflected English, Taglish, or code-switched student writing. Grammarly, in particular, was observed to flag syntactic patterns common in Philippine English as errors, even when these reflected legitimate features of the local variety (Dalan, 2024). This concern carries particular weight given that code-switching is a constitutive feature of Philippine academic discourse (Tardaguila, 2024b), and tools that treat such patterns as deficiencies risk eroding students' confidence in their own linguistic competence.

Finally, teacher preparedness emerged as a critical gap. Only three of the twelve participants had received formal institutional training on AI integration; the remaining nine had developed their practices through self-directed exploration, peer exchange, or online resources. This finding underscores the need for targeted professional development and coherent institutional guidance (De Guzman et al., 2024). The absence of CHED policy frameworks on AI in higher education was raised by several participants as a factor that leaves teachers navigating pedagogical and ethical dilemmas without institutional recourse.

4.3 Theme 3: Pedagogical Implications and the Need for Localized AI Frameworks

The third theme concerns the broader pedagogical implications of AI integration and, in particular, the call for approaches that are

responsive to the Philippine linguistic and cultural context. Participants consistently maintained that AI should serve as an assistant to, rather than a substitute for, human instruction. This position is aligned with calls in the literature for human-centered approaches to AI in language education—those that enhance rather than displace teacher expertise (Celik et al., 2022; Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2024). Several participants described developing what they termed "AI-aware" pedagogies: designing tasks that explicitly require students to evaluate, critique, and improve AI-generated outputs rather than submit them as their own work.

The call for localized AI integration frameworks was particularly prominent. Participants argued that AI tools must be contextualized within Philippine linguistic and cultural realities—accommodating code-switching, Filipino rhetorical conventions, and the multilingual identities of Filipino learners. This argument is grounded in the study's own data: participants observed that globally standardized tools consistently misread local linguistic practices, and that students required explicit guidance to use AI productively within their own communicative repertoires. AI tools supplemented with Philippine English data, locally relevant prompts, and culturally appropriate examples would, participants suggested, serve Filipino learners more effectively than unadapted global tools.

Participants also called for clear institutional policy on AI use, professional development opportunities, and ethical guidelines. The existing literature on AI in Philippine higher education has similarly identified policy development as an urgent priority (De Guzman et al., 2024; Celik et al., 2022), and participants in this study confirmed that such frameworks have yet to be meaningfully operationalized at the level of daily classroom practice. A coordinated effort among school administrators, language educators, and technology developers is needed to produce guidelines that ensure both ethical use and pedagogical effectiveness.

Two participants also raised concerns about the cognitive demands placed on students who rely heavily on AI for writing scaffolding. They observed that extensive AI assistance may reduce opportunities for the kind of effortful language processing that supports long-term internalization—a concern that warrants empirical follow-up, particularly in K-12 settings where foundational language skill development is most critical.

5. CONCLUSION

This study examined how AI tools contribute to and affect English language instruction in Philippine higher education classrooms through a qualitative phenomenological framework. The findings indicate that ChatGPT, Grammarly, and QuillBot offer genuine pedagogical value for Filipino English learners, supporting improvements in writing quality, vocabulary development, student engagement, and differentiated instruction. These benefits are accompanied by serious concerns around academic integrity, infrastructure inequity, linguistic misalignment, and the absence of coherent institutional policy—concerns that caution against uncritical AI adoption and



underscore the need for thoughtful, contextually grounded integration strategies.

The study contributes to the literature on AI in Philippine language education by foregrounding teacher perspectives from Central Luzon, a region whose educational realities are often underrepresented in national research and policy discussions. It also advances a localization argument: the most effective and equitable forms of AI integration in Philippine English classrooms will be those that are culturally situated, linguistically responsive, and supported by coherent institutional frameworks—arguments grounded not in external analogy but in the direct experiences of the teachers interviewed for this study.

Future research should examine AI's effects on speaking and listening development, which remain underexplored in the Philippine context, and should extend inquiry to K-12 settings. Longitudinal and mixed-methods designs would complement the present findings by providing empirical evidence on long-term learning outcomes. The development and evaluation of AI tools specifically adapted to Philippine English and the multilingual realities of Filipino learners represents a pressing direction for both researchers and educational technology developers.

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