

OPPORTUNITIES FOR USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TOOLS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT TECHNICAL COLLEGES

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Abstract

The rapid development of artificial intelligence has created new pedagogical opportunities for English language teaching, especially in technical colleges where learners need both communicative competence and profession-oriented language skills. Unlike general secondary education, technical colleges require English instruction to be connected with vocational terminology, workplace communication, technical documentation, safety instructions, professional presentations, and digital literacy. This article analyzes the opportunities for using artificial intelligence tools in teaching English at technical colleges through an IMRAD-based conceptual-analytical approach. The study examines how AI-supported platforms, generative language models, automated feedback systems, speech recognition tools, machine translation, adaptive learning environments, and AI-based assessment applications can support English language learning. The analysis shows that AI tools may improve personalization, expand access to authentic language practice, support pronunciation and writing development, reduce teachers' routine workload, and strengthen profession-oriented English instruction. However, the effective use of AI depends on methodological control, teacher competence, ethical regulation, data privacy, academic integrity, and the preservation of human interaction in the classroom. International guidance emphasizes that AI in education should be human-centred, ethically regulated, and pedagogically justified rather than used as a replacement for teachers. The article concludes that AI tools can be highly valuable in technical colleges if they are integrated into lesson objectives, vocational content, communicative tasks, and assessment criteria. The proposed model recommends using AI as a supportive didactic instrument for planning, practice, feedback, differentiation, and reflection, while maintaining the teacher's central role in instruction, motivation, critical thinking, and ethical supervision.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, English language teaching, technical colleges, vocational education, AI tools, communicative competence, digital pedagogy, adaptive learning, professional English.

Introduction

English language teaching at technical colleges has a specific pedagogical mission. Its purpose is not limited to teaching grammar rules, vocabulary lists, or general communication. In technical colleges, English becomes a practical professional tool that helps students understand technical manuals, communicate in workplace situations, read professional documentation, participate in international cooperation, use digital platforms, and present technical ideas. Therefore, English language instruction in this context must combine communicative competence, professional terminology, digital competence, and learner autonomy.

The development of artificial intelligence has changed the conditions of language education. AI-based tools can generate texts, correct grammar, evaluate pronunciation, simulate dialogues, translate professional terminology, adapt tasks to learner level, and provide immediate feedback. The British

Council's work on AI and English language teaching notes that AI is becoming an important area of discussion in ELT because it affects materials development, assessment, classroom interaction, teacher workload, and learner support. This is especially relevant for technical colleges, where students often have different levels of English proficiency, limited classroom hours, and strong practical needs connected with their future professions.

The relevance of the topic is also strengthened by global policy discussions. UNESCO's guidance on generative AI in education stresses the importance of a human-centred approach, national regulation, teacher preparation, and responsible implementation of AI in educational environments. The OECD also emphasizes that AI development creates important questions for education and skills, including how AI affects learning, assessment, and the future of work. These international perspectives show that AI is not merely a technological trend; it is becoming a strategic component of educational modernization.

At the same time, the use of AI in English teaching cannot be accepted blindly. A weak approach would be to assume that AI automatically improves learning. This assumption is dangerous because technology without methodology may produce superficial learning, plagiarism, dependence on ready-made answers, inaccurate language output, and reduced learner effort. AI tools can support English learning only when they are connected with clear learning outcomes, teacher-guided tasks, ethical rules, and reflective assessment. The central research problem of this article is therefore the following: how can AI tools be used effectively and responsibly in teaching English at technical colleges?

The aim of the article is to analyze the pedagogical opportunities of AI tools in English language teaching at technical colleges and to propose a practical methodological framework for their integration. The objectives are: to identify key AI-supported functions relevant to English teaching; to examine their potential benefits for vocational language education; to analyze possible risks and limitations; and to suggest principles for effective AI integration in technical college classrooms.

Methods

This article uses a conceptual-analytical research design. The method is appropriate because the study does not report an experimental intervention or survey-based statistical findings. Instead, it analyzes international literature, policy guidance, and pedagogical logic to develop a structured model for AI-supported English teaching in technical colleges.

The analysis was conducted through three stages. First, relevant international guidance and analytical sources on AI in education and English language teaching were reviewed. The review focused on UNESCO guidance on generative AI in education, OECD discussions on AI and education, European ethical guidelines for educators, and British Council publications on AI in English language teaching. UNESCO presents generative AI as a field requiring policy, capacity-building, equity, and human-centred governance. The European Commission's guidelines are aimed at helping educators understand the ethical use of AI and data in teaching and learning. These sources were selected because they provide authoritative international perspectives on the responsible use of AI in education.

Second, the study identified the main pedagogical functions of AI tools in English language teaching. These functions include text generation, grammar correction, pronunciation practice, speech recognition, automated feedback, translation support, adaptive exercises, chatbot-based dialogue, lesson material generation, assessment assistance, and learner progress tracking. The British

Council's systematic review indicates that AI in ELT has become a growing research field and that more comprehensive investigation is needed to understand its classroom impact.

Third, the identified AI functions were interpreted in relation to the specific needs of technical colleges. Technical college students usually need English for professional communication, technical vocabulary, occupational safety, equipment instructions, workplace dialogue, CV writing, interviews, and practical documentation. Therefore, the analytical framework evaluates AI not as a general digital tool, but as a didactic instrument for profession-oriented English learning.

The limitation of the method is that the article does not provide original empirical data. This means that the conclusions should be understood as theoretically grounded and methodologically reasoned rather than statistically proven. For a stronger journal submission, the next stage should include classroom experimentation, teacher interviews, student surveys, and pre-test/post-test comparison of English language outcomes.

Results

The analysis shows that AI tools create several major opportunities for teaching English at technical colleges. These opportunities are pedagogically significant because they respond to real classroom problems: mixed proficiency levels, limited contact hours, insufficient speaking practice, lack of individualized feedback, weak motivation, and the need for professional language content.

The first opportunity is personalization of learning. In a typical technical college classroom, students rarely have equal English proficiency. Some students can understand basic professional instructions, while others struggle with elementary grammar and vocabulary. AI-supported platforms can adapt tasks to learner level, generate additional practice, simplify texts, provide explanations, and create differentiated exercises. For example, the same technical text about electrical safety, automotive repair, tourism services, accounting software, or medical equipment can be transformed into easier or more advanced versions. This allows the teacher to work with one professional theme while giving students level-appropriate materials.

The second opportunity is improvement of writing skills. AI tools can help students draft professional emails, technical descriptions, summaries, CVs, reports, and workplace instructions. However, the correct method is not to allow students to submit AI-generated texts as their own work. A stronger approach is to use AI as a writing assistant. Students may first write their own draft, then compare it with AI feedback, identify grammar mistakes, improve coherence, and reflect on the changes. This process turns AI into a feedback mechanism rather than a cheating mechanism. The AP has reported that schools are increasingly reconsidering how to define cheating in the age of AI and that many educators are moving toward clearer rules and more in-class writing or oral assessment. This point is directly relevant to technical colleges because students must learn to produce professional language, not merely copy machine-generated texts.

The third opportunity is pronunciation and speaking practice. Many technical college students have limited exposure to English-speaking environments. AI speech recognition tools and conversational chatbots can provide additional oral practice beyond classroom time. Students can practice job interviews, customer-service dialogues, technical explanations, safety briefings, and workplace problem-solving situations. Pronunciation tools can identify mispronounced words and help learners repeat difficult sounds. This is particularly useful where class size is large and the teacher cannot give detailed oral feedback to every student during each lesson.

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The fourth opportunity is profession-oriented vocabulary development. Technical college students need specialized vocabulary connected with their fields. General English textbooks often do not fully cover the terminology of mechanics, construction, medicine, agriculture, economics, information technology, tourism, or electrical engineering. AI tools can generate glossaries, contextual examples, dialogues, matching exercises, and short technical reading passages. For example, in an automotive college, students can practice vocabulary related to engines, brakes, diagnostics, fuel systems, and maintenance procedures. In a medical college, they can practice patient communication, anatomy terms, hospital instructions, and professional ethics vocabulary. This makes English learning more meaningful because language becomes connected to future employment.

The fifth opportunity is support for teachers. Teachers spend considerable time preparing lesson plans, worksheets, vocabulary tasks, reading texts, tests, rubrics, and differentiated activities. AI tools can reduce routine workload by helping teachers create first drafts of materials. However, these materials must be checked, corrected, localized, and pedagogically adapted by the teacher. AI-generated content may contain factual inaccuracies, unnatural examples, unsuitable vocabulary, cultural bias, or tasks that do not match the learners' level. Therefore, AI can accelerate material preparation, but it cannot replace professional methodological judgment.

The sixth opportunity is formative assessment. AI-based systems can provide immediate feedback on grammar, spelling, vocabulary use, pronunciation, and reading comprehension. Immediate feedback is valuable because students can correct mistakes while the learning process is still active. In technical colleges, AI-supported formative assessment may be used for short writing tasks, vocabulary quizzes, pronunciation drills, listening comprehension, and role-play preparation. Nevertheless, final assessment should not rely entirely on AI systems because language competence includes context, intention, communication strategy, creativity, and interactional appropriateness.

The seventh opportunity is learner autonomy. AI tools can support independent learning outside the classroom. Students can ask for explanations, generate practice tasks, review grammar, translate difficult words, and simulate conversations. This is important for technical college students because classroom hours are often insufficient for real language mastery. If students learn how to use AI critically, they can continue learning beyond the lesson. The real goal is not simply to "use AI," but to teach students how to ask good questions, verify answers, edit outputs, and take responsibility for learning.

The main findings can be summarized as follows:

AI-supported opportunity	Pedagogical value in technical colleges	Main risk	Teacher's control mechanism
Adaptive exercises	Supports mixed-level groups	Overdependence on automated tasks	Match tasks with lesson objectives
AI writing feedback	Improves grammar and coherence	Plagiarism and passive copying	Require drafts, reflection, and oral defense
Speech recognition	Increases pronunciation practice	Incorrect or limited feedback	Combine AI practice with teacher correction
Chatbots	Simulates workplace communication	Artificial or inaccurate dialogue	Use guided role-play scripts

AI-supported opportunity	Pedagogical value in technical colleges	Main risk	Teacher's control mechanism
AI-generated materials	Saves teacher preparation time	Low-quality or inaccurate content	Teacher edits and validates all materials
Translation tools	Helps with terminology	Literal translation errors	Compare translation with professional context
AI assessment	Gives fast formative feedback	Weak validity for final grading	Use AI only as auxiliary feedback

Discussion

The findings show that AI tools can be useful in teaching English at technical colleges, but only under controlled pedagogical conditions. The central issue is not whether AI should be used, but how it should be used. A technically impressive tool can still produce poor educational results if it is not connected with learning outcomes. For example, asking students to “write an essay with AI” is a weak task because it encourages dependence and hides the learner’s real ability. A stronger task would require students to write a first draft independently, use AI to receive feedback, revise the text, explain the changes, and then present the final version orally. In this case, AI supports learning instead of replacing it.

The first major discussion point concerns the role of the teacher. Some discussions about AI exaggerate the possibility of replacing teachers. This is unrealistic. In English language teaching, the teacher performs functions that AI cannot fully replace: motivating learners, managing classroom interaction, understanding emotional barriers, selecting culturally appropriate materials, correcting pragmatic errors, developing communicative confidence, and connecting language with real professional identity. International guidance also emphasizes a human-centred approach to AI in education rather than a technology-centred approach. Therefore, AI should be understood as an assistant, not as an autonomous teacher.

The second issue is academic integrity. AI tools can make plagiarism easier if students use them to generate complete assignments. This risk is especially strong in writing tasks. The solution is not a simple ban. A ban may be ineffective because students can still use AI outside the classroom. A better solution is transparent regulation. Teachers should define acceptable and unacceptable AI use. Acceptable use may include brainstorming, vocabulary practice, grammar explanation, pronunciation training, and feedback on a student’s own draft. Unacceptable use may include submitting AI-generated work as original, using AI during closed assessments, or copying answers without understanding. Clear classroom rules reduce confusion and make assessment fairer.

The third issue is quality control. AI output is not always reliable. It may produce grammatically correct but contextually wrong sentences. It may give inaccurate technical explanations. It may create examples that do not match local professional practice. In technical colleges, this is especially important because technical language must be precise. A wrong translation of a safety instruction, medical term, electrical procedure, or machinery description can create misunderstanding. Therefore, teachers must verify AI-generated materials before using them in class.

The fourth issue is equity. AI can expand access to learning, but it can also increase inequality. Students with better devices, internet access, and digital skills may benefit more than students with limited access. The OECD’s recent work on AI adoption in education discusses AI as a tool that can

be deliberately deployed to address disparities, but such benefits require deliberate implementation rather than automatic technological diffusion. Technical colleges should therefore consider infrastructure, teacher training, student access, and institutional policy before making AI-based learning compulsory.

The fifth issue is professional relevance. The strongest argument for AI in technical college English teaching is its ability to connect language learning with vocational contexts. Traditional English lessons may fail when students do not see the connection between classroom content and their future profession. AI can help teachers create customized professional scenarios. For example, students in an IT college can practice explaining software problems to a client; students in a construction college can describe safety rules at a building site; students in a tourism college can simulate hotel reception dialogue; students in an accounting college can write a business email about an invoice or report. This makes English practical, contextual, and motivating.

The sixth issue is assessment design. AI changes what teachers should assess. If AI can correct grammar instantly, then assessment should not focus only on mechanical grammar exercises. It should also evaluate communicative purpose, vocabulary appropriateness, professional context, oral explanation, problem-solving, and the learner's ability to revise and justify language choices. Technical college English assessment should include role-play, presentations, project work, professional documentation, vocabulary application, and oral defense of written tasks.

Based on the analysis, the following methodological model is proposed:

1. **Preparation stage:** the teacher defines the lesson objective, professional context, target vocabulary, communicative function, and permitted AI use.
 2. **Guided AI interaction stage:** students use AI tools for controlled tasks such as vocabulary explanation, pronunciation practice, grammar feedback, or dialogue simulation.
 3. **Human interaction stage:** students perform pair work, group discussion, role-play, presentation, or workplace simulation without relying entirely on AI.
 4. **Reflection stage:** students compare their original work with AI feedback and explain what they changed and why.
 5. **Assessment stage:** the teacher evaluates both language outcome and learning process, including originality, professional relevance, communicative effectiveness, and responsible AI use.
- This model prevents the most common failure mode: using AI as a shortcut instead of a learning instrument.

Conclusion

Artificial intelligence tools create significant opportunities for teaching English at technical colleges. Their strongest value lies in personalization, writing support, pronunciation practice, profession-oriented vocabulary development, formative feedback, teacher workload reduction, and learner autonomy. In technical colleges, these opportunities are especially important because English must serve practical professional communication, not only general linguistic competence.

However, AI integration must be methodologically disciplined. The main risks are plagiarism, passive learning, inaccurate output, excessive dependence, data privacy concerns, unequal access, and weakening of real classroom communication. These risks do not mean that AI should be rejected. They mean that AI should be used under clear pedagogical, ethical, and institutional rules.

The article argues that AI tools should function as supportive didactic instruments within a human-centred teaching model. Teachers remain responsible for defining objectives, selecting content,

checking accuracy, organizing communication, assessing learning, and developing students' critical thinking. The smallest practical change that would make AI integration effective is not buying many platforms; it is training teachers to design AI-supported tasks with clear objectives, visible student effort, and transparent assessment criteria.

For future research, the topic should be tested empirically. A strong next study could compare two groups of technical college students: one group taught through traditional profession-oriented English tasks and another group taught through AI-supported profession-oriented tasks. Pre-test and post-test results in vocabulary, writing, speaking confidence, and professional communication would provide stronger evidence for international publication.

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