

University students' perceptions about the use of AI to support English learning

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Abstract

The development of technology has affected many educational practices around the world. Currently, the trend of using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to support learning is one of the examples on how the advancement of technology enter the educational contexts. However, there have been both agreement and disagreement on the use of AI which are supported by reasonable arguments. As there are both positive and negative views about the use of AI around the world, this study is conducted to reveal university students' perceptions on the use of AI to support English learning. Around 100 students in Pekalongan University became the respondents. The results show that Pekalongan University students also have various perceptions about the use of AI for supporting English learning. This study suggests that AI has not been fully accepted by students in Indonesia even when they are aware of the benefits in employing AI.

Keywords

AI, English learning, Students' perceptions

Introduction

Artificial Intelligent or mostly known as AI has entered many parts of our lives including education. Many classrooms have discussed AI in various degrees and the use of AI has been becoming parts of the debates in educational fields. As many other new trends being introduced in educational world, pros and cons come along with the introduction and use of AI in classroom settings. On one hand, AI is supported to be used to enhance learning due to its advantages. But on the other hand, objections on the use of AI come along due to various concerns on AI integration in education.

Among the popular benefits of AI include personalized learning, improved academic outcomes, and enhanced student engagement (Vieriu & Petrea, 2025). AI technologies, such as intelligent tutoring systems and interactive platforms, are also known for facilitating students' learning (Alemu et al, 2025). However, on the other hand, AI does not receive full supports due to some concerns in its implementation. Among the concerns are first, AI is believed to be lacking of empathy, creativity, and nuanced

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understanding of human educators (Holmes & Tuomi, 2022). Second, with the utilization of AI in providing feedback and evaluation, there are lacks of meaningful dialogue and reflection, which are essential for higher-order thinking (Facione, 2020). Third, other concerns on the use of AI in education cover the issue on decreasing of critical thinking skills, data privacy risks, and academic dishonesty (Vieriu & Petrea, 2025). Given the existing controversies on the utilization of AI in Education, it is important to conduct a study on the Indonesian university students' perceptions on the use of AI. This study is deemed crucial to reveal how actually university students in Indonesia view AI as their views about AI may impact the teaching and learning activities conducted in Indonesian university contexts. Logically, when students have positive views about utilizing AI in their learning, they will be willing to integrate AI to sharpen their skills or to promote their learning. It is unlikely that they show objection when the teachers try to employ AI as part of the teaching activities. However, when the students hold negative views about AI, their acceptance of AI in the classroom can be very low. They may be reluctant to support the teachers in using AI. Thus, they can opt for using no AI to support their learning. As teachers are not supposed to force the learners to integrate AI when they are not willing to do so, then it is important to reveal students' perceptions on the use of AI so that the teachers can make use of AI properly based on the students' beliefs and perceptions about it.

In addition, this kind of research needs to be carried out as there has been not much research on this topic in Indonesian contexts, especially in the areas of English language teaching and thus the findings can enrich the discussion on AI integration in English language teaching not only in Indonesian educational contexts but also in other educational contexts in many parts of the world. Employing a mixed method study, this study tries to explore the students' perceptions by involving around 100 students from Pekalongan University students majoring in English Language Education Department.

Method

The current study was carried out in Pekalongan University from October – December 2025. The authors designed a mixed-method study to find out the students' perceptions on the use of AI to support their English learning. The instrument consisted of an online questionnaire and an interview. The questionnaire consisted of 30 Likert-Scale items and one open ended question. The participants were students from English Language Education study program. Around 100 students were invited to join this study, however the response rate was only 50% and thus in this article, the results were presented based on the responses from 50 participants. The data were analyzed statistically by calculating the percentage of the participants who opted for the choices provided in the questionnaire such as 1 when they “strongly disagree”; 2 when they “disagree”; 3 when they are “neutral”; 4 when they “agree”; and 5 when they “strongly agree” to the statements/ items in the questionnaire. The results were also presented in bar charts to show the comparison of students' responses.

Results

Based on the questionnaire completed by the participants of this study, the authors found out that Pekalongan university students have various views about AI. This can be seen from the following findings.

First, in terms of the students' familiarity with AI, the participants acknowledged that they were familiar with AI and this was confirmed by the responses in the questionnaire in which 94% of the respondent showed agreement to this familiarity. To be more specific, there was 42% of the respondents who opted for strongly agree and 52% of the respondents who opted for agree. The other 4% expressed their neutral perceptions and 2% showed strong disagreement on the familiarity of AI. Figure 1 represents this finding.

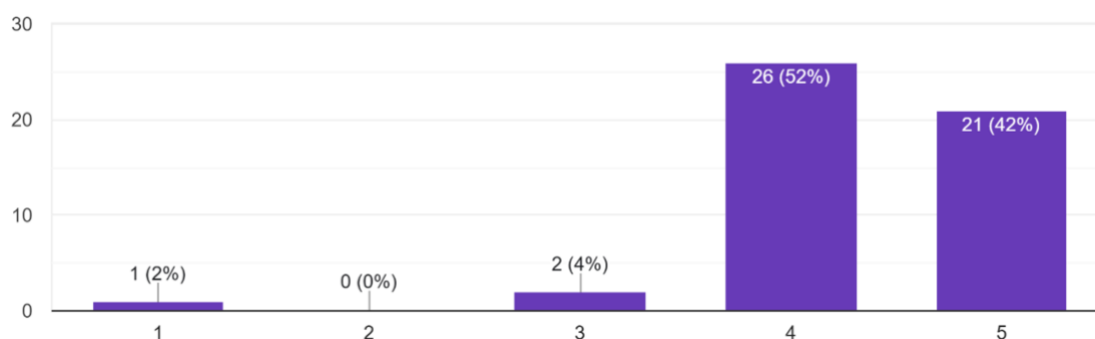


Figure 1. Students' familiarity with AI

Next, in terms of students' understanding on how AI is used in learning and teaching, the students also acknowledged their understanding. This was shown in their responses in the questionnaire in which 90% of the respondents expressed their agreement that they had understanding about how AI was used in teaching and learning. This finding is described in Figure 2.

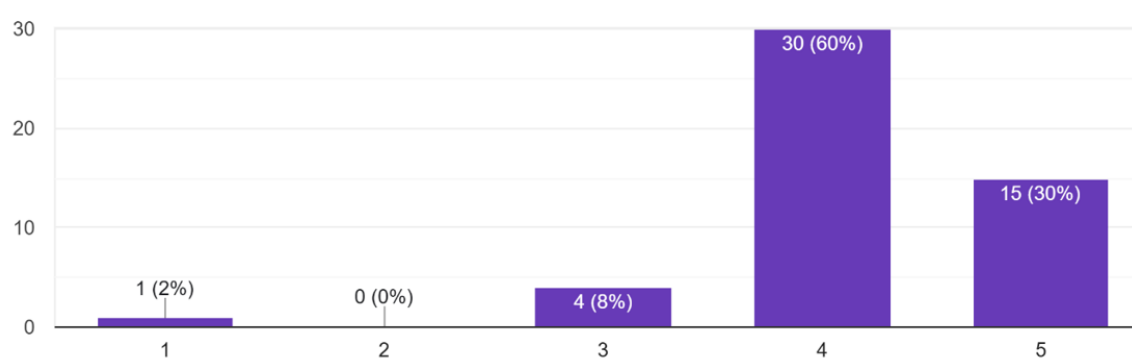


Figure 2. students' understanding on how AI is used in learning and teaching.

Further, being asked about their uses of AI for English learning, the respondents expressed lower agreement on the idea that they used AI. This is shown by the responses in the questionnaire in which only 84% of the respondents who used AI in their learning. Another 14% opted for neutral and 2% expressed strong disagreement on using AI which means that this respondent did not use AI for English learning. This finding can be seen in Figure 3.

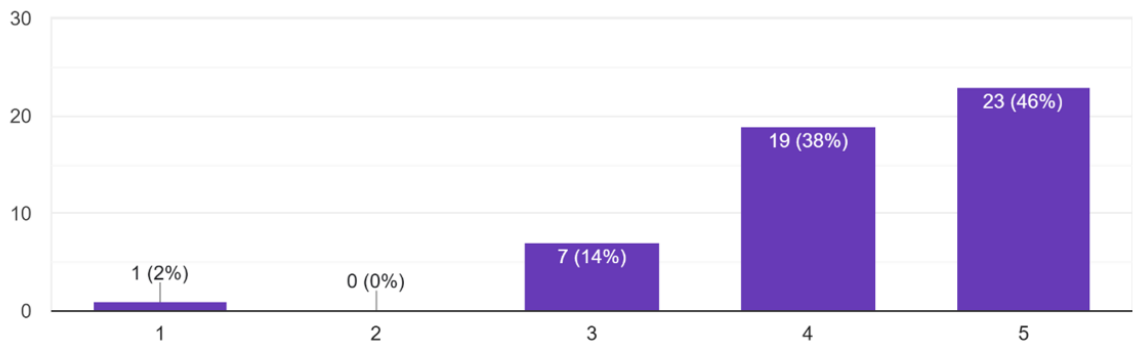


Figure 3. Students' uses of AI for English Learning

In addition to the findings above, this study revealed that the respondents held the beliefs that AI can benefit them especially in improving efficiency and performance. This can be seen from the responses in the questionnaire in which 70% of them showed agreement about the benefits of AI, and another 24% expressed their neutrality, and the other 6% expressed disagreement. This finding is presented in Figure 4.

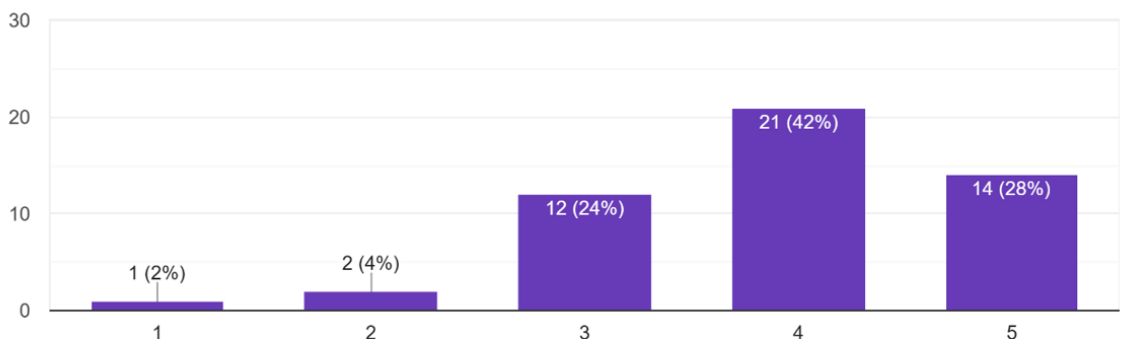


Figure 4. Students' beliefs on AI benefits in improving learning efficiency & performance

Although the students' showed agreements on AI benefits, but they also have some concerns about the use of AI. First, the respondents were aware that in the use of AI in education, there emerged some ethical issues. This is represented in the respondents' answers in the questionnaire in which 76% percepts expressed that they were aware of these kinds of issue, 14% felt neutral, and the other 10% had no awareness about this. The finding can be seen in Figure 5.

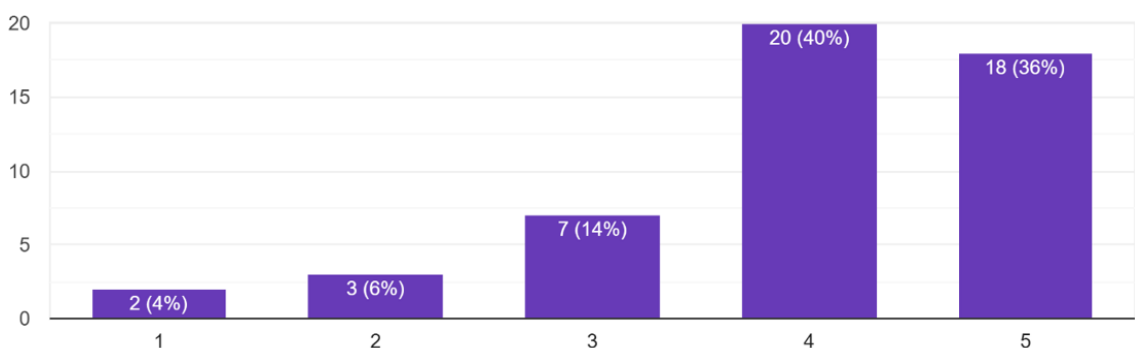


Figure 5. Students' awareness of the ethical concerns on the use of AI in education

Following the finding above, students also showed awareness that AI generated information may contain errors & biases. This was shown in the questionnaire responses

in which 74% of the respondents expressed their agreement on this awareness. The other 14% opted for neutral and 2% opted for strongly disagree, suggesting that they had no awareness about the potentials of AI in producing erroneous and biased information. This particular finding is represented by Figure 6.

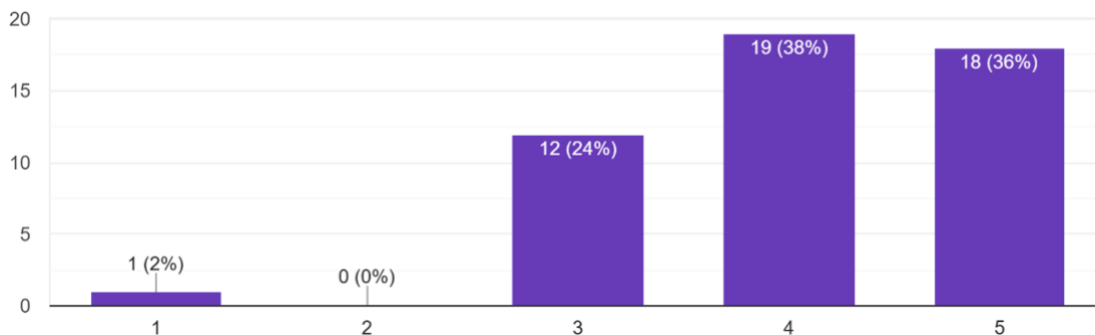


Figure 6. Students' awareness that AI generated information may contain errors & biases

Finally, the respondents of this study also expressed their worries that the integration of AI can reduce human creativity and critical thinking. This is shown in their responses in which 62% of the respondents expressed their concerns on the decreasing of creativity and critical thinking skills when AI is employed in their learning. Another 20% of the respondents were neutral and 18% showed no concerns on the effects on AI on critical thinking and creativity that humans possess. This finding can be seen in Figure 7.

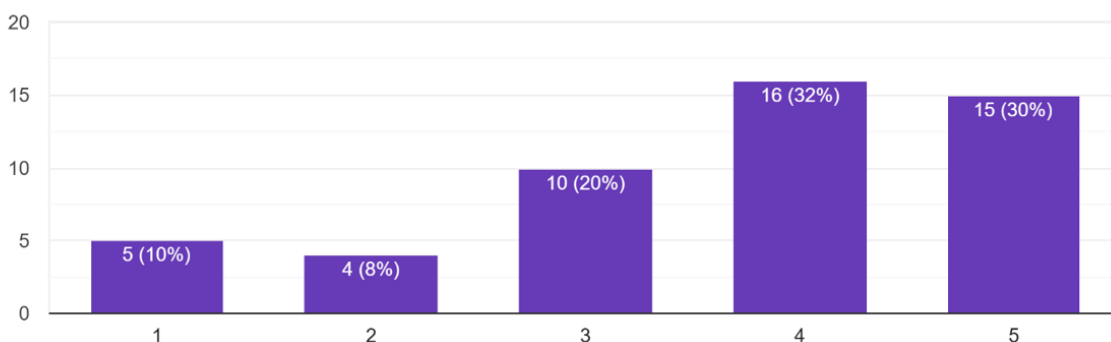


Figure 7. Students' worries that AI will reduce human creativity and critical thinking

Some other concerns were expressed in the following respondents' statements.

"Relying too much on using AI make me feel like it's hard to improve my critical thinking" (Respondent 2)

"I'm scared that AI will reduce our competence as teachers in the future" (Respondent 7)

"AI's gonna make some things super easy, but it'll also bring new challenges like bias and security issues" (Respondent 12)

"I think AI is very helpful but it is dangerous for students who do not know how to use AI wisely and responsibly" (Respondent 15)

Discussion

Based on the results presented in the previous section, this study suggests that the respondents, who were the students from English Language Education Department of Pekalongan University had various perceptions about the use of AI to support their English Learning. The majority of respondents in this study had been familiar with AI and they had some knowledge on its use in teaching and learning. Many of them had employed AI in their learning too. They also believed in the benefits of AI in improving learning efficiency and performance.

Even so, they were also aware of the lacks or weaknesses of AI as well as the ethical issues coming along with it. They expressed their concerns on the use of AI since AI brought unresolved ethical issues. They also believed that AI generated information is not always correct. They also had some worries that the use of AI will reduce their creativity and critical thinking skills.

This study implies quite balanced views or perceptions about AI in education as expressed by Indonesian university students. Despite the benefits acknowledged by the respondents, AI was not fully accepted by the respondents due to some issues emerging along with the use of AI in English learning specifically, and in education in general. This finding is in line with the study conducted by [Vieriu & Petrea \(2025\)](#), [Adel et al. \(2024\)](#) and [Birks and Clare \(2023\)](#).

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has revealed the university students' perceptions on the use of AI to support the English learning in an Indonesian context. The study has proven the diverse perceptions not only about the benefits of AI but also the concerns and issues on AI utilization in English language learning. As discussion about AI in education is still going on, this study contributes to the discussion both nationally and internationally. This study adds to the body of literature the data on how Indonesian university students perceived AI which has become the trend and object of studies in many educational settings. Further, this study highlights the need for a more balanced approach in integrating AI in English education to ensure that AI utilization in education, especially in language learning, is fair and ethical.

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