

AI – the risks and benefits

Topic

Risks and benefits of AI both within education and language learning and in society more generally

Learning outcomes

- to review and develop vocabulary related to AI
- to make learners more aware of some of the potential risks and benefits of AI
- to encourage learners to think about how they can use AI to help with their English
- to practise speaking skills discussing issues around AI

Age/level

Age 13–17 and adults at CEFR level B2+

Time

70–80 minutes

Materials

- Lesson plan
- Student worksheet
- Presentation
- Audio files

Introduction

This lesson plan enables learners to explore some of the issues, risks and benefits of AI and how it can be used to help them develop their language skills. During the lesson students will:

- brainstorm vocabulary they associate with AI
- read about and discuss some of the potential risks and benefits of AI
- listen to people talking about how AI will impact education
- create a list of tips for using AI to help develop their English.

Procedure

1. Lead-in (20 minutes)

- Show the learners the images on **Slide 1** and ask them to work in groups to brainstorm words connected with the pictures. Set a time limit for this and a target number of words you want them to produce. Make this demanding as it will push them to be more productive and less critical.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get the learners to share their words with other groups and clarify the meaning of any that are unclear. Ask students to justify the connection between their words and the images when they discuss them together. • Ask learners which image they feel most accurately shows the future of AI. Ask them to justify their response.
2. Read and discuss (20 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show the learners Slide 2/the worksheet and ask them to read the statements and decide which are risks and which are benefits. • Get some feedback and clarify their answers. <i>Answers: 1. R, 2. R, 3. B, 4. B, 5. B, 6. B, 7. R, 8. R.</i> • Ask learners if they agree with each of the statements or if they think an alternative scenario is more likely to happen. • Give the learners some time to think about this, then put them into groups. • Ask learners to discuss which they think are more likely to be true, the risks or the benefits.
3. Listening (15–20 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell the learners they are going to listen to four people talking about the impact of AI on education. Ask them to listen and decide which one is the most optimistic. • Play the audios and give the learners some time to discuss them, then play them again and clarify their answers. Answer: <i>4 is the most optimistic.</i> Ask learners if they think the audios sound natural to them. Explain that they are AI-generated. Are there any advantages or disadvantages to using AI for listening practice? • Play the audio again and ask the learners to decide which they most agree with. Get the students to justify their opinions. You could also share your own opinion. <p>Script</p> <p><i>1. I think AI is going to have a terrible impact on education. Students are going to get it to do all their work for them. And then teachers will get it to mark the work. And in the end, nobody will be learning anything.</i></p> <p><i>2. Well, I think it's a real challenge. We need to prepare students for the kinds of jobs they will be doing when they graduate and that will probably involve using AI for part of that work, but we don't really know how AI will change people's jobs or how to prepare students for how they will use it.</i></p> <p><i>3. I think there's a simple solution and that is to ban AI from schools. Schools are places for learning and that involves putting in thought and doing hard work. What's the point of getting AI to do the work for you? Learning is a process, and we need to start valuing that process rather than the product. Certificates and qualifications are useless if you haven't done the work.</i></p> <p><i>4. I think AI is going to improve things in so many ways. It can provide much more interactive ways of learning. You can have a conversation with it while you're learning and ask it questions about almost anything. And think of all those places where teachers aren't available or don't want to go. Now with access to an AI bot, you can learn pretty much anything.</i></p>

4. Reading and discussion (15–20 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask learners to think about/discuss in groups how they could use AI to help with their English language learning.• Get feedback and put their suggestions on the board.• Ask learners to look at the suggestions on Slide 3/the worksheet.• Ask the student to read and decide which of the things they would be most likely to try.
5. Follow-up – homework	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell learners to look at the AI prompts on the worksheet.• Ask them to try one or two of the suggestions and come back to the next lesson and share what they learned and how it helped them.• Make sure learners are aware of data privacy issues when using digital tools themselves outside of the class. Make sure you take a look at any tools that you recommend before showing them in class so that you can evaluate if they are suitable for your learners. This follow-up could be done in class using a class/school account.

Contributed by

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