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AI AS TEACHING PARTNER: EXAMINING EFL EDUCATORS' PRACTICES IN ONLINE READING COMPREHENSION

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abstract

This study examines how EFL teachers incorporate Artificial Intelligence (AI) into teaching reading comprehension in online environments, with a focus on its role in lesson planning, delivery, and evaluation. The research aims to understand the diverse ways educators adopt AI tools in their practices. Using a qualitative approach, involving interviews and classroom observations, the study captures teachers' experiences with AI integration. Findings reveal that AI enhances the personalization of reading materials, enables real-time feedback during lessons, and streamlines the grading process. However, the study also highlights differing attitudes toward AI, as some teachers prefer traditional methods, citing concerns about losing pedagogical control and the limitations of AI technology. The study concludes that, while AI holds significant potential for improving instructional practices, there is a clear need for professional development programs to help teachers effectively balance AI use with traditional pedagogical methods. Future research should investigate the long-term effects of AI on student learning outcomes, examine AI's influence on teacher-student interactions, and evaluate the role of professional development in supporting AI adoption in education.

INTRODUCTION

The advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has brought transformative changes to various sectors, with education being a notable example. The integration of AI tools into pedagogical practices offers the potential to revolutionize how educators approach teaching and learning (Boubker, 2024; Díaz & Nussbaum, 2024; Williyan et al, 2024). This potential is particularly significant in the context of teaching reading comprehension to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in online environments (Srinivasan & Murthy, 2021), where AI can provide innovative solutions to both instructional challenges and student engagement.

Reading comprehension is a fundamental skill in language acquisition, crucial for academic success and effective communication. In online learning environments, where traditional face-to-face interactions are limited, the integration of AI tools can offer new avenues for enhancing instructional strategies (Dogan et al., 2023; Seo et al., 2021). AI tools, such as adaptive learning platforms, automated feedback systems, and intelligent tutoring systems, have the potential to support EFL teachers in designing and implementing more personalized and effective teaching methods.

Despite the promising capabilities of AI, there is limited empirical research exploring how EFL teachers actually utilize these tools in their practice. Specifically, there is a need to understand how AI is integrated into the design and planning of instructional strategies, the

implementation of teaching methods, and the evaluation and feedback processes. This gap in the literature underscores the importance of investigating these aspects to provide a comprehensive understanding of AI's role in online reading comprehension instruction.

The current body of research highlights the potential benefits of AI in education, including its ability to provide personalized learning experiences and real-time feedback (Guo & Li, 2024; Tapalova & Zhiyenbayeva, 2022). However, studies often focus on general applications of AI without delving deeply into the specific methodologies employed by EFL teachers in online contexts. By focusing on how EFL teachers plan, implement, and evaluate AI-enhanced reading comprehension instruction, this research aims to fill this gap and offer insights into the practical applications of AI in language teaching. Understanding these processes is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it can inform the development of AI tools that better align with instructional needs and enhance their effectiveness. Secondly, it provides valuable information for teacher training and professional development, ensuring that educators are equipped to make the most of AI technologies. Lastly, it contributes to the broader discourse on the integration of AI in education, offering evidence-based insights that can guide policy and practice.

This research will address these issues through a detailed exploration of EFL teachers' methods in using AI tools for teaching reading comprehension online. By investigating how these tools are integrated before, during, and after instruction, the study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of AI's impact on teaching practices and student outcomes in online learning environments. The research questions for this study include:

1. How do EFL teachers design and plan their instructional strategies for teaching reading comprehension in online environments with the integration of AI tools?
2. How do EFL teachers implement AI tools in their teaching methods to facilitate reading comprehension during online lessons?
3. How do EFL teachers leverage AI tools to support the evaluation and feedback processes for students' reading comprehension performance in online learning environments?

This section should describe in detail how the study was conducted. It includes information on the participants/population/sample, instruments, procedures, and data analysis. A complete description of the method used enables the reader to evaluate the appropriateness of the research methodology.

The Stages of Teaching Reading Comprehension

Bruggink et al (2022) outline three stages for teaching reading comprehension: pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading. The pre-reading stage focuses on activating students' prior knowledge and setting the context. Teachers discuss the topic, connect students' background knowledge to the text, and introduce key vocabulary to avoid comprehension issues (Jin et al., 2020; Boardman et al., 2018). They also establish reading purposes and encourage predictions based on text features like titles and headings to enhance focus. During the during-reading stage, teachers guide students as they interact with the text. This may involve reading aloud or having students read independently while pausing to ask comprehension questions or clarify difficult parts (Bruggink et al., 2022). Questions can be literal or inferential, and students may use annotation to highlight key information or make notes. Students are also encouraged to monitor their own understanding and seek clarification to enhance their independence as readers. In the post-reading stage, students consolidate their understanding by summarizing the text and identifying key points (Jin et al., 2020). Teachers often facilitate discussions where students

share insights, ask questions, and compare interpretations. This stage also involves deeper analysis, such as examining themes or evaluating arguments (Boardman et al., 2018). Follow-up activities, like creating graphic organizers or writing personal responses, help students apply their learning and think critically.

AI in Education: Theoretical Perspectives and Practical Applications

AI's integration in education has revolutionized traditional teaching methods by aligning with key learning theories. Grounded in constructivist and personalized learning frameworks, AI fosters a student-centered approach, tailoring content to individual needs and learning paces (Yeh, 2024). Constructivist theory, which highlights learners' active role in knowledge construction through interaction and experience, is well-supported by AI-driven adaptive learning environments. AI tools have transformed education by automating tasks like grading and attendance, allowing teachers to focus more on instruction and personalized support. Intelligent Tutoring Systems (ITS), for instance, provide customized tutoring by adapting to learners' skill levels and offering real-time feedback, enhancing one-on-one interaction (Schiff, 2021). ITS are especially valuable in language learning, where individualized attention is essential (Sein Minn, 2022). Additionally, AI-powered automated grading systems streamline the evaluation process, providing detailed feedback on language use and content comprehension, which is beneficial for large classes. Learning analytics further support this by tracking progress, identifying gaps, and offering insights into strengths and weaknesses (Alfredo et al., 2024; Renz et al., 2020). Lim et al (2023) note that learning analytics enable personalized learning experiences, allowing EFL students to improve at their own pace, which is crucial given their varying proficiency levels. Integrating AI tools into language education, especially for reading comprehension, allows educators to create adaptive and engaging learning environments. These environments enhance essential language skills and ensure personalized, responsive instruction for each student's needs.

Previous Studies and Novelty of the Research

Recent studies on AI in education, especially in English Language Teaching (ELT), reveal significant insights. This analysis highlights 24 highly relevant studies, summarizing their key themes and focal points in the table below.

Table 1. Previous Studies

No.	Focus	Authors (Year)
1	AI in EFL Online Learning and Teaching	(Samira Zitouni, 2022), (Luo & Qiu, 2024), (Toboula, 2023), (Celik et al., 2022), (Kuswoyo et al., 2022), (Alshumaimeri & Alshememry, 2024)
2	AI in EFL Reading and Writing Instruction	(Hsiao & Chang, 2023), (Jiang, 2022), (He, 2024), (Kianinezhad, 2023), (Zhao & Nazir, 2022)
3	AI Tools and Writing Assistance in EFL	(Alharbi, 2023), (Godwin-Jones, 2022), (Milad & Fayez, 2024), (Mollick & Mollick, 2023)
4	Reciprocal and Collaborative Teaching for EFL Reading	(Tseng & Yeh, 2018), (Ali & Razali, 2019)
5	Technology Integration and EFL Teaching Challenges	(Hakim, 2020), (Sharadgah & Sa'di, 2022), (Kawinkoonlasate, 2020)
6	AI for Developing Communicative and Cognitive Skills	(McCallum, 2024), (Goel & Joyne, 2017), (Fidan & Gencel, 2022), (Alhalangy & AbdAlgane, 2023)

While previous studies on AI in EFL teaching often address general language skills or specific AI applications like machine translation or intelligent tutoring systems, there is limited research on how EFL teachers integrate AI into reading comprehension instruction. Existing studies frequently focus on the technical capabilities of AI tools rather than how teachers plan, implement, and assess lessons with AI in online environments. Furthermore, research tends to emphasize student performance and general strategies rather than the teachers' perspectives on using AI for designing, delivering, and evaluating reading comprehension lessons online. This research addresses the gap by exploring EFL teachers' use of AI tools in designing, planning, and implementing online reading comprehension strategies. It sheds light on how teachers incorporate AI into real-time teaching and evaluation processes, offering new insights into AI's role throughout the instructional cycle—planning, implementation, and evaluation. By focusing on these aspects, this study highlights AI's potential as a pedagogical aid in EFL reading comprehension, an area not extensively covered in existing literature.

METHOD

Study Context and Participants

Based on Fraenkel et al (2023), this qualitative case study investigates how English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in their online reading comprehension instruction especially in lesson planning, execution, and evaluation (Fraenkel et al., 2023). Table 2 presents the Participants Selection Criteria. The study involved synchronous online teaching sessions using real-time virtual platforms for direct teacher-student interaction

Table 2. Participants Selection Criteria

Criteria	Description
Teaching Experience	Minimum of 2 years of experience in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL).
Higher Education Involvement	All participants are employed as EFL teachers in a higher education institution.
Online Teaching Experience	Must have experience teaching EFL in an online environment.
Use of AI Tools	Participants must utilize AI tools (e.g., adaptive learning platforms, automated feedback systems) in their teaching practices.
Reading Comprehension Focus	Involvement in teaching reading comprehension as part of their curriculum.
Purposive Sampling	Selected based on their experience and expertise relevant to the research topic.

By selecting participants, coded as T1 through T6, with diverse backgrounds and expertise in AI-enhanced instruction, the study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the varied pedagogical approaches and the role of AI in advancing reading comprehension instruction in EFL settings. This combined focus on research design and participant selection allows for a nuanced investigation into the effectiveness and challenges of AI in language teaching.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

Table 3 shows that data were collected through two main methods: semi-structured interviews and classroom observations, as adapted from Bruggink et al (2022). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six purposively selected EFL teachers experienced in using AI tools for online reading comprehension. These interviews, lasting 60–90 minutes and held in person or via video conferencing, explored their experiences, strategies, and challenges with AI

in teaching, focusing on planning, implementation, and evaluation stages. Classroom observations were conducted during regular online teaching sessions to examine AI tool usage in practice, including AI-enhanced platforms, adaptive learning tools, automated feedback systems, and teacher-student interactions. Each observation lasted 90 minutes, with detailed field notes documenting practices and interactions.

Table 3. Data Collecting and Analysis Procedures

Data Collection Method	Description
Semi-Structured Interviews	Six EFL teachers participated in interviews lasting 60–90 minutes, exploring AI-enhanced instruction.
Classroom Observations	Each teacher's online teaching session was observed, focusing on the use of AI tools and teacher-student interactions.

The data analysis involved several steps to ensure thorough examination, as detailed in Table 4. First, interview recordings were transcribed verbatim, and field notes from classroom observations were systematically organized. This ensured accuracy and facilitated a detailed review of the teachers' practices. Initial open coding was applied to identify emerging themes and patterns related to instructional strategies and AI tool usage. Thematic analysis followed Braun and Clarke (2021) approach: familiarizing with the data, generating and categorizing initial codes into themes, and refining these themes. The focus was on how AI tools influenced lesson planning, instructional execution, and assessment, and supported student engagement and comprehension.

Table 4. Thematic Analysis Steps and Descriptions

Analysis	Description
Familiarization	Reviewing transcripts and field notes to develop a deep understanding of the data.
Initial Coding	Line-by-line coding of transcripts and notes to identify significant phrases and instructional strategies.
Theme Generation	Grouping codes into themes and sub-themes related to AI-enhanced instruction.
Theme Refinement	Reviewing and refining themes to ensure they accurately reflect the participants' experiences.
Defining Themes	Defining and naming themes that encapsulate the core findings of the study.

To ensure validity and reliability, triangulation was used by comparing interview data with classroom observations, ensuring interpretations were supported and consistent. Member checking involved participants reviewing findings for accuracy, which helped refine the analysis. Findings were also interpreted within the context of existing literature and theoretical frameworks, such as constructivist learning theory and AI in education, to provide insights into the practical applications, benefits, and challenges of AI in EFL reading comprehension instruction.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The results and discussion are written in one unit; the author is not justified based on the results and prior discussion in the form of a new chapter. How to write in the results and discussion is done directly by reviewing directly one by one, the research results obtained with relevant references and prioritizing from primary sources. The results of the study can be equipped with tables, pictures and graphics to clarify the presentation of the research results verbally.

Before Teaching: Design and Planning of AI-Enhanced Reading Comprehension Instruction

This section presents findings on how EFL teachers design and plan AI-integrated reading comprehension strategies. Three key themes emerged: *personalization of reading materials, AI for content creation,* and *minimal AI use with traditional planning*. These highlight varying levels of AI integration, from personalized text modifications and automated content to conventional approaches with limited AI involvement.

Regarding the first theme, *personalization and adaptation of reading materials*, two participants demonstrated similar approaches to integrating AI in their lesson planning. T1 utilizes an adaptive learning platform to customize reading assignments based on students' performance, adjusting the text difficulty to match individual proficiency levels. Similarly, T3 employs AI tools for readability analysis and grammar checking, modifying the complexity of reading materials to align with students' needs. The following excerpt from the interviews provides further insight into these practices.

> *During planning, I use an AI-driven platform to generate personalized assignments based on students' prior performance, adjusting text difficulty accordingly. The AI also predicts potential challenges, helping me prepare scaffolding activities in advance. (T1 Interview)*

> *I use an AI-powered grammar checker and readability tool to assess text suitability. It provides reading level feedback, suggests modifications, and highlights grammar points, saving me time. (T3 Interview)*

For the second theme, *AI for content creation and lesson support*, participants showcased distinct yet complementary uses of AI. T5 employs an automated platform to generate reading comprehension questions, selecting those that best meet the objectives of each lesson. Meanwhile, T6 incorporates an AI chatbot to create interactive pre-reading activities, using predictive questioning to engage students and stimulate their prior knowledge. The following excerpts from the interviews offers a detailed look at how these AI tools support lesson planning and delivery.

> *AI significantly aids in organizing my lesson content. I use a platform that automatically generates reading comprehension questions from uploaded texts, including multiple-choice, open-ended, and inferential questions. I review and select questions that fit my lesson objectives, which speeds up planning, especially when teaching multiple classes. (T5 Interview)*

> *When planning lessons, I use an AI chatbot for interactive pre-reading activities. The chatbot asks predictive questions to activate students' prior knowledge and set a reading purpose, enhancing engagement in the online environment from the start. (T6 Interview)*

In the third theme, *minimal AI use with traditional planning*, participants demonstrated a preference for conventional methods over AI integration. T2 incorporates AI primarily for vocabulary analysis, but the core of lesson planning remains a manual process. Similarly, T4 adheres strictly to traditional lesson planning approaches, choosing not to incorporate AI tools

in any phase of the planning process. The following excerpts from the interviews delves deeper into these traditional practices and their impact on lesson preparation.

> *I don't use AI for lesson planning but manually select reading texts based on the curriculum. However, I use AI indirectly for vocabulary lessons by analyzing texts to highlight challenging words, which I then integrate into pre-reading activities. Core planning remains largely manual. (T2 Interview)*

> *For planning, I don't use AI; I stick to traditional methods. I select texts based on the syllabus and design comprehension questions manually, relying on my experience to identify challenging parts. I prefer the control and don't want to automate this stage of teaching. (T4 Interview)*

The exploration of AI integration in EFL teachers' planning for reading comprehension reveals a spectrum of approaches, from extensive use of AI for personalization and content creation to a reliance on traditional methods with minimal AI involvement. These findings highlight the diverse ways teachers adapt their practices to incorporate or forego AI, reflecting individual preferences and pedagogical strategies.

During Teaching: Use of AI Tools in Online Reading Comprehension Teaching

In analyzing EFL teachers' implementation of AI tools in synchronous online reading lessons, three primary themes emerged: *real-time assessment and feedback, AI-enhanced discussion and interaction, and minimal AI integration with emphasis on traditional methods*. These themes illustrate the broad spectrum of AI adoption in teaching practices, illustrating how teachers vary in their use of technology to support or complement traditional methods.

In the context of the first theme, *real-time assessment and feedback*, three participants illustrated a range of AI tool applications that both differ and complement each other in enhancing their teaching strategies. T1 uses an AI-powered reading tool to deliver immediate feedback and track student progress in real-time, enabling quick adjustments based on performance insights. T5 employs an AI-based quiz tool for immediate comprehension assessment and automatic grading, with the system adjusting question difficulty according to student responses. T6 implements an AI chatbot to pose comprehension questions and offer hints, facilitating self-correction and increasing student engagement. The following excerpts from the interviews offer further insights into how these AI tools are applied to support real-time assessment and feedback during lessons.

> *During lessons, I use AI-based reading comprehension tools that give instant feedback on students' answers and highlight areas needing improvement. The dashboard shows overall class progress, helping me decide if I should revisit sections or move on. This is especially useful for large classes, providing real-time insights and reducing the burden of manual grading. (T1 Interview)*

> *I use an AI-based quiz tool that assesses comprehension in real-time. During the lesson, I send quizzes to students, and the AI automatically grades and gives*

feedback. It quickly gauges understanding and adjusts question difficulty based on performance. (T5 Interview)

During the lesson, I use the AI chatbot from the pre-reading phase to ask students comprehension questions as they read. If they struggle, the chatbot provides hints or guides them to relevant text sections, keeping them engaged and allowing for self-correction before group discussion. (T6 Interview)

For the second theme, *AI-enhanced discussion and interaction*, one participant highlighted a distinct approach to integrating AI into lesson delivery. T3 employs an AI-powered discussion tool that not only generates comprehension questions but also provides feedback on student responses. This tool fosters deeper interaction and understanding by encouraging students to engage more actively with the material. The following excerpt from the interview further illustrates how this AI tool contributes to enhancing discussion and interaction in the classroom.

During the lesson, I use an AI-powered discussion tool that generates comprehension questions from the text and prompts students to answer. It provides feedback on their responses, suggesting areas for elaboration or alternative interpretations. I encourage students to engage with the AI to enhance their understanding before our group discussion. (T3 Interview)

In the third theme, *minimal AI integration with emphasis on traditional methods*, two participants showed a preference for conventional teaching methods over AI-enhanced approaches. T2 focuses on manual facilitation and student interaction through breakout rooms, using AI solely for pre-reading vocabulary analysis. In contrast, T4 adheres to traditional comprehension exercises and direct student interaction, deliberately avoiding AI tools during lessons to maintain a more hands-on approach. The following excerpts from the interviews further detail these traditional practices and their impact on teaching methods.

I don't use much AI during the lesson. Instead, I prefer breakout rooms for group discussions, where I guide and clarify. AI tools, like vocabulary analysis, are used in pre-reading stages, but real-time teaching focuses on interaction and critical thinking through human guidance. (T2 Interview)

I don't use AI during lessons. I focus on traditional comprehension exercises and discussions, asking questions and encouraging critical thinking. My approach is hands-on, emphasizing personal interaction in teaching. (T4 Interview)

The exploration of AI tools during EFL reading comprehension lessons reveals a diverse range of practices and preferences among teachers. While some embrace AI for real-time assessment and feedback or to enhance discussion and interaction, others favor traditional methods, integrating AI only minimally or not at all. These varying approaches underscore the ongoing debate over the role of technology in education, highlighting the need for a balanced approach that respects individual teaching styles and the unique dynamics of each classroom.

After Teaching: AI Support for Evaluating Reading Comprehension Performance

In examining how EFL teachers utilize AI for evaluating and providing feedback on students' reading comprehension, three prominent themes have emerged: *automated grading and analytics, AI-assisted evaluation with manual review, and human-centric evaluation*. These themes reveal the diverse strategies teachers employ, from leveraging fully automated systems for grading and detailed performance analytics, to combining AI tools with manual review processes for more nuanced assessments.

For the first theme, *automated grading and analytics*, two participants showcased how AI tools are used in varied but complementary ways to assess student performance. T1 employs AI-based tools to automatically grade comprehension quizzes, generating detailed analytics on student performance that allows for personalized feedback and lesson adjustments. Similarly, T5 utilizes an AI-powered platform to assess reading fluency and comprehension accuracy, including pronunciation and oral responses, to provide targeted feedback and suggest steps for improvement. The following excerpts from the interviews offer a deeper understanding of these AI applications in the evaluation process.

> *I use AI tools to automatically grade comprehension quizzes and provide detailed analytics on student performance. This helps me give personalized feedback and adjust future lessons based on common difficulties, saving time while maintaining meaningful feedback.*
>
> *I use an AI platform that records students' reading sessions to assess their fluency and comprehension. It analyzes pronunciation and understanding, then assigns a comprehension level and recommends steps for improvement. (T5 Interview)*

Regarding the second theme, *AI-assisted evaluation with manual review*, two participants highlighted their use of AI tools to support the evaluation and feedback process while maintaining a hands-on approach. T2 employs AI to assess student responses, flagging common mistakes and suggesting remedial activities, but also manually reviews written responses to ensure accuracy, especially for complex texts. Similarly, T4 utilizes AI for plagiarism detection and to support rubric-based evaluation of written summaries, yet personally reviews all work to ensure the AI's assessments align with their own understanding of student progress. The following excerpts from the interviews offer further insights into how these practices are applied in evaluating students' reading comprehension performance.

> *After each session, I use an AI system to assess student responses to comprehension exercises. The AI flags common mistakes, especially in inferential questions, and suggests remedial activities based on the results. I use this feedback to create supplementary exercises for the next class. However, I manually review written responses to ensure that the feedback is accurate, especially for more complex texts. (T2 Interview)*
>
> *I use AI-based plagiarism checkers to ensure students' summaries are original and an AI-supported rubric for evaluating their written answers. However, I*

always review the work to confirm the AI's assessment matches my own understanding of their progress. (T4 Interview)

Two interviewees emphasized that they favor conventional methods over artificial intelligence (AI) for formal evaluation in relation to the third subject, *human-centric evaluation*. T3 avoids using AI for evaluating comprehension, instead relying on live discussions and personal judgment to gauge students' overall understanding of the material. In contrast, T6 employs AI for automated grading of multiple-choice questions but manually reviews open-ended responses to capture nuances and provide more thorough feedback. The following excerpts from the interviews further illustrate how these approaches are applied in the evaluation process.

I don't use AI to evaluate students' comprehension. I prefer live discussions or written reflections for assessment. AI provides sufficient immediate feedback during lessons, but for evaluation, I believe human judgment is essential. (T3 Interview)

The AI handles instant grading for multiple-choice questions and provides quick feedback on straightforward tasks, but I manually review open-ended questions and written summaries due to its limitations in nuanced understanding. (T6 Interview)

A variety of strategies are revealed by investigating how EFL teachers use AI to assess and provide feedback on reading comprehension. These practices demonstrate the variety of approaches teachers take, ranging from the use of automated grading and analytics for in-depth insights to AI-assisted methods supplemented by manual review for nuanced comprehension and the preference for human-centric evaluation that values individual judgment. Every approach strikes a compromise between utilizing AI's advantages and preserving the crucial human component of educational evaluation.

Practical Application of AI as AI as a Pedagogical Aid

AI tools are applied in diverse ways in teaching reading, reflecting varied pedagogical approaches and levels of technological integration. Table 5 below summarizes classroom observations on how different teachers use AI to teach reading comprehension.

Table 5. Practical Application of AI in Teaching Reading

No	Teaching Activity	Description	Time
Teacher 1			
1	Introducing the reading text	The teacher introduces the reading passage using an AI-powered presentation tool (e.g., Prezi). AI helps generate visuals related to the topic and key themes.	15 Mins
2	Reading and listening to the text	The teacher uses an AI Text-to-Speech tool (e.g., NaturalReader) to narrate the reading passage. Students listen to the audio while following the text on their screens.	20 Mins
3	Comprehension task with AI feedback	The teacher assigns a comprehension task using an AI-based quiz tool (e.g., Quizlet). AI provides instant feedback on student responses, while the teacher adds insights.	30 Mins

4	Discussion and vocabulary assistance	The teacher facilitates a class discussion about the reading. An AI tool (e.g., Grammarly) suggests vocabulary words and meanings, while the teacher explains difficult terms.	25 Mins
Teacher 2			
1	Pre-reading discussion	Teacher 2 introduces the topic and reading text using a PowerPoint presentation. No AI tools are used in this stage. Students are encouraged to discuss prior knowledge of the topic.	10 Mins
2	Guided reading	Teacher 2 reads a section of the text aloud and explains difficult words and phrases. AI tools are not used; the focus is on teacher-student interaction.	25 Mins
3	Reading comprehension questions	Teacher 2 assigns comprehension questions using Google Forms, a simple tool for collecting student responses. There is no adaptive feedback or AI involvement in generating or assessing the questions.	25 Mins
4	Group discussion	Students discuss their answers in breakout rooms on Zoom. Teacher 2 monitors the discussion without using AI for analysis or feedback. Interaction and peer feedback are emphasized.	30 Mins
Teacher 3			
1	Vocabulary pre-teaching with AI assistance	Teacher 3 uses an AI-based vocabulary tool (Quizlet) to introduce key terms before students begin reading. The AI suggests word sets based on the text and adapts to student performance in previous tasks.	15 Mins
2	Interactive guided reading with AI prompts	Teacher 3 uses a reading platform (such as CommonLit or ReadTheory) that provides AI-generated questions after each paragraph to check comprehension. The questions adapt to student responses in real-time.	30 Mins
3	Comprehension questions through AI tools	AI-powered platform (like Edpuzzle) is used for embedding comprehension questions directly into the text. Teacher 3 reviews student responses in real-time to provide immediate feedback.	25 Mins
4	Group discussion using AI-assisted breakout rooms	Students are divided into groups for discussion using Zoom's breakout room feature. Teacher 3 uses a simple AI tool to monitor participation and provide automated feedback on group engagement.	20 Mins
Teacher 4			
1	Traditional guided reading	Teacher 4 leads the class in reading a passage, providing explanations and context for difficult parts. No AI tools are integrated at this stage.	30 Mins
2	Student-led Q&A session	Students are asked to answer questions based on the text, with the teacher facilitating discussions. AI is not used to generate or support this task.	25 Mins
3	Limited AI-enhanced feedback	Teacher 4 uses a basic spelling and grammar-check tool (Grammarly) to assist students in reviewing their answers to comprehension questions.	15 Mins
4	Peer discussion and feedback	Students work in pairs or small groups to discuss the text and their responses. No AI tool is involved in this peer discussion activity.	20 Mins
Teacher 5			
1	Pre-reading comprehension quiz using AI-generated questions	Teacher 5 uses AI to generate a short quiz before the main reading activity. This quiz checks students' prior knowledge and prepares them for the upcoming reading material.	15 Mins
2	Collaborative reading with AI-based annotation tool	During the reading activity, students use an AI-based annotation tool like Perusall, which helps them highlight difficult words or phrases and provides automated suggestions for understanding the text.	25 Mins
3	AI-assisted vocabulary practice	After the reading, Teacher 5 uses a vocabulary app like Quizlet, integrated with AI, to provide personalized vocabulary exercises based on words students struggled with in the text.	20 Mins
4	Teacher-led discussion	Teacher 5 wraps up the session with a teacher-led discussion where students share insights and interpretations of the text. No AI tools are used in this part of the session.	30 Mins
Teacher 6			

1	Guided reading with AI translation tool	Teacher 6 begins by guiding students through a complex text. An AI translation tool (such as Google Translate) is used to help students who struggle with understanding certain sentences or phrases in English.	20 Mins
2	Interactive reading task with minimal AI use	During the reading activity, Teacher 6 encourages students to engage in comprehension tasks, but only minimal AI support is used. The students mostly interact with the text independently.	30 Mins
3	Vocabulary learning through a dictionary tool	Teacher 6 instructs students to use an AI-powered dictionary app (such as Merriam-Webster or Linguee) to look up unknown words encountered in the text. AI is only used to suggest relevant definitions.	20 Mins
4	Class discussion and peer feedback	The final part of the lesson involves students discussing the text in small groups, providing peer feedback. No AI is used in this stage, as Teacher 6 focuses on human interaction and critical thinking.	20 Mins

The information presented in Table 5 underscores the diverse ways in which AI tools are applied to teaching reading comprehension, ranging from extensive integration to supplementary support. This variation reflects the broader spectrum of AI adoption in education, demonstrating how technology can be adapted to fit different teaching philosophies and classroom needs. By analyzing these practical applications, educators can gain insights into how AI can be effectively utilized to enhance reading instruction and address specific instructional goals.

Discussion

The first key finding illustrates how AI enables personalization in the design and planning of reading materials, as evidenced by the teachers who use AI to adapt texts according to students' proficiency levels (T1, T3). This aligns with Mejeh and Rehm (2024) assertion that adaptive learning technologies can enhance differentiated instruction by tailoring content to meet individual student needs. The participants in this study, particularly T1 and T3, confirmed that AI not only facilitates the customization of reading materials but also streamlines the planning process, allowing teachers to focus more on scaffolding and preparing targeted support for students. These results also extend Naseer et al (2024)findings on the utility of AI in content adaptation, showcasing its relevance in enhancing both student engagement and comprehension outcomes in online learning environments.

Interestingly, the theme of minimal AI use in planning (T2, T4) contrasts sharply with the personalized AI approaches. This echoes the findings of (Alshumaimeri & Alshememry, 2024), who cautions that while AI offers promising educational solutions, some educators remain skeptical or resist full integration due to concerns about losing control over content or instructional decision-making. The reluctance of certain participants to fully adopt AI mirrors this ambivalence, as they continue to favor traditional methods, relying on their experience and intuition. This tension between AI-driven pedagogy and traditional approaches suggests that AI integration in lesson planning is contingent not only on technological availability but also on the teacher's beliefs about pedagogical control and efficacy, a point similarly raised by Cabero-Almenara et al (2024).

During the teaching phase, the use of AI for real-time assessment and feedback emerged as a critical tool for enhancing the immediacy of feedback, which is essential in online environments where teachers have limited physical interaction with students (T1, T5, T6). This supports the findings of Lasekan et al (2024), who observed that real-time feedback mechanisms are pivotal in promoting student engagement and ensuring timely intervention in distance education. The instant feedback provided by AI in this study allowed teachers to make

on-the-spot adjustments to their lessons based on performance data, contributing to a more responsive and adaptive teaching process. However, the reliance on AI for comprehension questions and hints (T6) also aligns with Zhang et al's (2024) argument that AI-facilitated learning can promote active learning and self-correction, making students more autonomous in their learning.

However, the theme of minimal AI integration during lessons (T2, T4) reveals that some teachers still prefer more traditional methods of student interaction, such as discussion-based learning in breakout rooms. This preference for human-centered interaction reflects Kukulska-Hulme and Traxler's (2019) findings, which highlight the continuing importance of teacher presence and direct engagement in ensuring student comprehension and critical thinking, particularly in humanities-oriented subjects like EFL. The participants who favored traditional methods underscored the irreplaceable value of teacher-led discussions in fostering deeper understanding, a point that resonates with broader educational debates around the role of AI as a complement rather than a replacement for human pedagogy (Davis, 2024).

The findings on how teachers utilize AI for automated grading and analytics (T1, T5) illustrate the significant potential of AI to streamline the evaluation process by offering detailed, data-driven insights into student performance. This finding corresponds with Steiss et al (2024), who argue that AI can reduce teacher workload while improving the precision and timeliness of feedback. In particular, AI tools for evaluating reading fluency and comprehension accuracy, as used by T5, provide a new dimension of assessment that human teachers may not be able to achieve at the same scale, reinforcing the notion of AI as a valuable assistant in the evaluation process.

Nonetheless, teachers like T4 and T6, who combine AI-assisted evaluation with manual review, bring to light a critical perspective on the limitations of AI. These participants recognized the utility of AI in grading routine tasks such as multiple-choice questions or flagging plagiarism but expressed concern over AI's inability to capture the nuance and depth required for evaluating more complex responses. This cautious approach echoes Al-Zahrani's (2024) critique, which highlights the dangers of over-reliance on AI in educational assessment, arguing that AI systems lack the human insight necessary to fully understand student thinking, particularly in tasks that require higher-order cognitive skills.

The preference of some teachers for human-centric evaluation (T3, T6) underscores the importance of maintaining a balance between AI automation and human judgment. The teachers' emphasis on live discussions and personal reflections as evaluation tools aligns with Wang and Taheri's (2020) assertion that while AI can enhance certain aspects of education, it should not undermine the critical role of teachers in interpreting and responding to student needs (Al-Zahrani, 2024). This finding points to the necessity of developing AI systems that better integrate human judgment, rather than replacing it entirely, in the educational evaluation process.

CONCLUSION

This study examines how EFL teachers integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI) into the teaching of reading comprehension in online environments, revealing diverse practices across lesson planning, delivery, and evaluation stages. The research highlights AI's potential to personalize reading materials, enhance real-time feedback, and streamline grading processes, aligning with previous studies on adaptive learning and educational technologies. However, it also uncovers a range of attitudes toward AI, with some educators preferring traditional methods due to

concerns about pedagogical control. These findings underscore the need for professional development that helps teachers balance AI integration with traditional practices, ensuring that technological advancements support rather than replace effective pedagogy. To build on this research, future studies could explore longitudinal impacts of AI on student learning outcomes, investigate how AI integration affects teacher-student dynamics in various educational contexts, and assess the effectiveness of different professional development programs in fostering AI adoption. Additionally, research could examine how AI tools can be designed to better align with diverse pedagogical approaches and address specific concerns of educators, thereby facilitating more seamless and effective integration into teaching practices.

DECLARATION OF AI AND AI-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES

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