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Conference “Innovative Approaches of Language Teaching:
Bridging Theory and Practice”**

**«Тілдерді оқытудың инновациялық тәсілдері: теория мен
практиканы ұштастыру» атты II көктемгі халықаралық
ғылыми-практикалық конференция**

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«Тілдерді оқытудың инновациялық тәсілдері: теория мен практиканы ұштастыру» атты ІІ көктемгі халықаралық ғылыми-практикалық конференция материалдар жинағында шетел тілдерін оқыту саласындағы озық тәжірибелермен алмасуға, мәдениетаралық қарым-қатынасты нығайтуға, цифрлық дәуір жағдайында шетел тілдерін оқытудағы инновациялық технологияларды таратуға, сондай-ақ халықаралық ғылыми-академиялық ынтымақтастықты кеңейтуге бағытталған ғылыми-практикалық зерттеулердің нәтижелері енгізілген. Материалдарда білім алушылар мен жас ғалымдардың осы бағыттағы зерттеулерге белсенді қатысуын ынталандыру мәселелері қарастырылған.

В сборник материалов ІІ весенней международной научно-практической конференции «Инновационные подходы преподавания языков: слияние теории и практики» включены результаты научно-практических исследований, направленных на обмен передовым опытом в области преподавания иностранных языков, укрепление межкультурной коммуникации, распространение инновационных технологий обучения в условиях цифровой эпохи, а также расширение международного научно-академического сотрудничества. В материалах рассматриваются вопросы стимулирования активного участия обучающихся и молодых ученых в исследованиях в данной области.

The proceedings of the ІІ Spring International Scientific and Practical ONLINE Conference “Innovative Approaches of Language Teaching: Bridging Theory and Practice” include the results of scientific and practical research aimed at sharing advanced experience in foreign language teaching, strengthening intercultural communication, disseminating innovative teaching technologies in the digital age, and expanding international scientific and academic cooperation. The materials also address issues related to encouraging the active participation of students and young researchers in this field.

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теории и практики»**

The Main Themes of the Conference:

1. Teaching foreign languages for professional and interdisciplinary purposes.
2. Innovative technologies in foreign language teaching methodology.
3. Language training in the context of multilingualism and lifelong learning.
4. Language education based on digital technologies and artificial intelligence.

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**ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES
IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION:
A CRITICAL REVIEW OF OPPORTUNITIES AND
CHALLENGES IN THE POST-CHATGPT ERA**

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Introduction

The release of ChatGPT in November 2022 marked a watershed moment for education. Within months, language learners worldwide had access to a conversational AI capable of composing essays, explaining grammar, translating texts, and simulating dialogue in dozens of languages — all at no cost and with no waiting time. For foreign language education, this development has been both exhilarating and profoundly unsettling. It forces educators to confront a fundamental question: when a learner can instantly obtain grammatically polished, contextually appropriate output in a target

language, what is the purpose of language instruction, and what role does the teacher play?

This article argues that AI tools — including large language models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and Claude — represent a genuine paradigm shift in language education, not merely an incremental technological upgrade. However, the critical variable determining whether this shift benefits learners is not the technology itself but the pedagogical framework in which it is embedded. Without deliberate instructional design, AI tools risk replacing productive learning struggle with effortless output generation, thereby undermining the very cognitive processes that drive language acquisition.

This position is particularly relevant for Kazakhstan, where English language education occupies a uniquely complex institutional position. The national trilingual policy — promoting Kazakh, Russian, and English — places significant demands on language teachers who must raise learners' English proficiency within multilingual, resource-constrained environments [1]. Against this backdrop, AI tools present both an opportunity to scale quality language support and a risk of exacerbating existing inequalities in educational access.

The present article pursues three objectives: (1) to map the major categories of AI tools currently applied in foreign language education, with emphasis on LLM-based systems; (2) to critically synthesize recent empirical evidence on their effects on learning outcomes, motivation, and teacher roles; and (3) to articulate a set of pedagogically grounded principles for their ethical and effective integration, with reference to the Kazakhstani higher education context. The study is based on a conceptual review of recent scholarly literature published primarily between 2022 and 2024.

Methods

This study employs a conceptual literature review methodology. Unlike systematic reviews, which impose strict quantitative inclusion criteria, conceptual reviews prioritize analytical depth and thematic coherence, making them well suited to rapidly evolving fields where the primary goal is interpretive synthesis rather than statistical aggregation [2]. The field of AI in language education is currently characterised by high publication velocity and considerable conceptual fragmentation — conditions under which a conceptual approach is both epistemologically appropriate and practically necessary. Rapid developments in generative AI since 2022 have rendered earlier systematic reviews partially obsolete, making an up-to-date conceptual mapping the most productive scholarly contribution at this moment in time.

Literature was identified through targeted searches of Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, and Frontiers in Psychology, using search terms including "ChatGPT language learning," "LLM foreign language education," "generative AI EFL," "AI writing feedback," and "Kazakhstan English education digital." Priority was given to peer-reviewed articles published between 2015 and 2025, with a particular focus on

empirical studies and systematic reviews addressing LLM-based tools published from 2022 onwards.

The analysis proceeded thematically. Four major themes were identified through iterative reading: (1) typology and affordances of AI tools for language learning; (2) empirical evidence on learning outcomes; (3) risks and unintended consequences of AI adoption; and (4) implications for teachers and institutional policy, with specific attention to the Kazakhstani context. These themes structure the Results and Discussion section below.

Results and Discussion

From CALL to Generative AI: A Typological Overview

The integration of technology into language teaching has a long history, from early audio-language laboratories to web-based Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) platforms. Each technological generation has introduced new affordances while also generating new debates about the relationship between technology and pedagogy. Godwin-Jones [3] traces this evolution from early drill-and-practice software to the current generation of AI-powered tools, arguing that each shift has demanded corresponding shifts in pedagogical theory. The current generation, however, differs qualitatively from its predecessors in at least two respects: generative capacity and accessibility.

Earlier AI applications in language education — such as Intelligent Tutoring Systems (ITS), automated writing evaluation (AWE) platforms like Grammarly, and speech recognition tools like ELSA Speak — were designed for specific, bounded tasks. They could score essays, identify grammatical errors, or provide pronunciation feedback, but they could not generate extended, contextually sensitive language or engage in open-ended dialogue. LLMs such as GPT-4, Gemini, and Claude fundamentally change this picture. They can function simultaneously as conversation partners, writing coaches, grammar explainers, vocabulary tutors, and translation assistants — and they are freely available to any learner with internet access [4].

A systematic review published in 2025 examining 49 empirical studies from 2023–2024 found that higher education was the dominant setting for GenAI use in language classrooms, and English was the primary target language across the studies [5]. The review identified three principal roles that learners and teachers assigned to GenAI tools: as a conversation partner for speaking and writing practice, as a feedback provider for drafting and revision, and as an information resource for language queries. These findings suggest that the field has moved rapidly from theoretical speculation about LLMs' potential to empirical documentation of their actual classroom use.

What the Evidence Says: Learning Outcomes

Empirical studies on the effects of LLM-based tools on language learning outcomes are accumulating rapidly, though the evidence base remains heterogeneous in terms of research designs, outcome measures, and participant populations. Several consistent patterns are nonetheless emerging.

For writing development, the evidence is cautiously optimistic. Studies indicate that ChatGPT-assisted writing practice can improve grammatical complexity and vocabulary range compared to traditional instruction [6]. Importantly, however, the quality of feedback matters: a study evaluating ChatGPT-4's performance in assessing writing proficiency found it superior to earlier models but still insufficiently reliable to replace trained human raters [7]. This finding points to a more nuanced position than either wholesale adoption or wholesale rejection — AI writing tools appear most effective as a supplementary resource within teacher-guided instructional cycles, not as standalone evaluators.

For oral communication skills, the picture is encouraging but incomplete. Research has consistently shown that interaction with AI chatbots reduces foreign language anxiety, a well-documented barrier to oral production in second language contexts [8]. Learners report feeling less judged by a machine than by human interlocutors, which may encourage more risk-taking and extended production. However, longitudinal evidence for sustained phonological or fluency gains from chatbot interaction remains sparse, and the ecological validity of AI-mediated conversation as preparation for real-world communication has been questioned [5].

For vocabulary acquisition, a 2024 study specifically examining LLM-based chatbots found significant positive effects on both vocabulary gains and self-directed learning behaviours in EFL contexts [9]. The researchers attributed these effects to the chatbots' ability to provide immediate, personalised, contextually embedded lexical exposure — mechanisms broadly consistent with established theories of incidental vocabulary acquisition. These findings are particularly relevant for Kazakhstani learners, whose English contact outside formal instruction is often limited, making AI-mediated input a potentially important supplementary source.

The Overreliance Problem: A Central Pedagogical Risk

This article's central argument is that uncritical AI adoption poses a specific and underappreciated pedagogical risk: the displacement of productive cognitive effort. Language acquisition depends critically on processes of noticing, hypothesis testing, and form-meaning mapping — processes that, as Ellis [10] comprehensively demonstrates, require the learner to attend consciously to target language features in input. When AI tools generate grammatically perfect output on demand, they remove the very processing effort that drives internalization.

A systematic review by Teng (2025), examining 49 empirical studies on GenAI in EFL classrooms, identified overreliance, reduced critical thinking, and academic integrity concerns as the three most frequently cited problems across studies [5]. These are not peripheral issues. If learners submit AI-generated text as their own, or if they habitually use AI to avoid the effort of formulating meaning in a foreign language, then the technology actively undermines the learning objectives it is ostensibly serving.

From a cognitive perspective, this risk aligns with the concept of "desirable difficulties" in learning science: some degree of effortful, error-prone processing appears necessary for durable linguistic encoding. AI tools that eliminate all difficulty

also eliminate many of the mechanisms that make learning stick. The pedagogical implication is not to ban AI tools, but to design tasks that require demonstrable evidence of learner engagement beyond AI-generated output — oral defences, in-class writing components, process portfolios, and iterative revision sequences.

Teacher Role Transformation in AI-Enhanced Classrooms

The evidence consistently supports the position that AI tools transform rather than eliminate teacher roles. As AI systems assume responsibility for routine feedback tasks — grammar correction, vocabulary explanation, basic comprehension checking — teachers are repositioned toward functions that AI cannot perform: facilitating authentic communicative interaction, developing intercultural competence, scaffolding metacognitive awareness, and addressing the affective dimensions of language learning [4].

This repositioning is, in principle, pedagogically advantageous. However, it requires teachers to possess both the digital literacy to use AI tools effectively and the pedagogical knowledge to integrate them purposefully. A 2024 study of EFL teachers in Kazakhstan — directly relevant to the context of the present article — found that teachers were least confident specifically in the ethical dimensions of AI use: issues of data privacy, algorithmic bias, and fostering learner autonomy rather than dependence [11]. This finding points to a critical gap in professional development provision, suggesting that AI integration must be accompanied by sustained, practice-based teacher education that addresses not only technical skills but also ethical reasoning.

The Kazakhstani Context: Specific Challenges and Opportunities

Kazakhstan presents a distinctive language education environment that amplifies both the opportunities and challenges of AI integration. The national trilingual policy, which positions English as a compulsory component of multilingual education alongside Kazakh and Russian, creates high institutional demand for English language development [1]. At the same time, the 2024 EF English Proficiency Index ranked Kazakhstan 103rd out of 116 countries — a finding that highlights the gap between policy ambition and current achievement [13].

In 2024, the Kazakhstani government adopted the Concept for the Development of Artificial Intelligence for 2024–2029, which explicitly acknowledges shortages of AI-literate educators and insufficient teacher training mechanisms in higher education [14]. This policy context makes AI literacy a national strategic priority, not merely a pedagogical preference. For language teachers at institutions such as L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University, this means that engagement with AI tools is increasingly an institutional expectation rather than an individual choice.

A specific challenge in the Kazakhstani context concerns the linguistic biases of current LLMs. As research on multilingual LLM performance has demonstrated, these models were trained predominantly on English-language data and perform considerably less reliably for Kazakh and, to a lesser extent, Russian [15]. This means that Kazakhstani learners seeking AI-mediated language support in Kazakh encounter

a systematically lower quality of assistance than English-speaking users — a digital inequality with direct implications for the equitable implementation of trilingual education policy.

Nevertheless, the potential of AI tools to provide Kazakhstani learners with extended, individualised English language practice — beyond the limited hours available in formal instruction — is substantial. Research conducted at the International Information Technology University in Almaty found that AI writing tools positively affected academic writing achievement, student engagement, and ethical awareness among IT students learning Russian as a second language [16]. These findings, while focused on Russian rather than English, provide a locally grounded proof of concept for AI-assisted language learning in the Kazakhstani higher education context.

Ethical and Institutional Considerations

Beyond academic integrity and overreliance, two further ethical dimensions warrant attention. First, data privacy: LLM platforms process learner-generated text — including potentially sensitive personal reflections and learner difficulties — on commercial servers, often under terms of service that learners neither read nor understand. Institutions have a responsibility to inform learners about these implications and to establish clear policies governing which tools are approved for use in assessed work.

Second, assessment validity: existing language assessment instruments were designed for a pre-LLM world. The construct validity of writing assessments that prohibit AI assistance while failing to prevent its use is fundamentally compromised. This calls not for the abandonment of writing assessment but for its redesign toward tasks that authenticate learner performance: spoken interaction, real-time production under observation, and process-oriented portfolios that document the learner's trajectory rather than merely its endpoint [6].

Conclusion

This conceptual review has argued that the integration of AI tools — particularly LLM-based systems such as ChatGPT — into foreign language education represents a genuine paradigm shift that demands critical, pedagogically grounded responses from educators and institutions. Three conclusions emerge from the synthesis.

First, AI tools offer demonstrable benefits for vocabulary acquisition, writing development, and reduction of communicative anxiety — but these benefits are contingent on thoughtful instructional design. The critical variable is not the tool but the pedagogical framework within which it operates. Tools that eliminate productive effort may produce short-term gains in surface fluency while undermining the deeper cognitive processing that sustains language development.

Second, teacher professional development is the linchpin of effective AI integration. Research in the Kazakhstani context specifically identifies ethical AI literacy — not merely technical proficiency — as a critical gap in current teacher preparation. Addressing this gap requires sustained, practice-based professional

development that engages teachers with both the affordances and the limitations of AI tools in their specific instructional contexts.

Third, the Kazakhstani context introduces specific challenges — including LLM bias against Kazakh-language content and the gap between trilingual policy ambitions and current English proficiency levels — that must inform any locally relevant approach to AI integration in language education. A tool designed for and trained on majority-language data cannot be uncritically adopted in a multilingual, post-Soviet educational context without attention to these structural asymmetries.

The most productive path forward is neither uncritical adoption nor reflexive rejection of AI tools, but deliberate, evidence-informed integration guided by a clear understanding of how language is learned, what teachers uniquely provide, and what ethical responsibilities institutions bear toward their learners. As Kazakhstan's national AI strategy takes shape, language educators have both an opportunity and an obligation to ensure that these considerations inform policy and practice at every level.

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ЦИФРЛЫҚ ТЕХНОЛОГИЯЛАР ЖӘНЕ ЖАСАНДЫ ИНТЕЛЛЕКТ НЕГІЗІНДЕГІ ТІЛДІК БІЛІМ БЕРУ

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Кіріспе

Қазіргі таңда білім беру жүйесі цифрлық технологиялардың қарқынды дамуымен тығыз байланысты. ақпараттық қоғам жағдайында жаңа технологиялар оқу процесін ұйымдастырудың тиімді құралдарының біріне айналып отыр. Әсіресе тілдік білім беру саласында цифрлық технологиялар мен жасанды интеллекттің рөлі ерекше маңызды. Дәстүрлі оқыту әдістерімен қатар цифрлық құралдарды қолдану оқушылар мен студенттердің білімді меңгеру деңгейін арттыруға мүмкіндік береді [1; 5].

Бүгінгі күні интернет ресурстары, онлайн платформалар, мобильді