

THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN TEACHING ENGLISH: INSIGHTS FROM EFL TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has the potential to significantly improve the development of teaching materials in EFL contexts as it is increasingly incorporated into language instruction. While the majority of current studies focus on how AI affects student learning results, there aren't many studies that look at teachers' perspectives on the adoption of AI throughout the stages before teaching. This study investigates junior high school English teachers' perspectives on using AI in preparing English teaching materials, with particular emphasis on their attitudes, perceived benefits, and challenges encountered. This qualitative descriptive study collected data through semi-structured interviews with three English teachers from a junior high school in West Java, Indonesia. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed three main themes. First, teachers viewed AI positively as a helpful tool but emphasized that it cannot replace teachers. Second, AI was perceived to enhance time efficiency and material generation. Third, teachers encountered challenges related to content revision, prompt formulation, and over-dependency. This study contributes to the growing body of research on AI integration in EFL contexts by providing insights into teachers' experiences and informing more effective AI implementation strategies.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, EFL Teachers, Teacher Perspectives, Teaching Material Preparation.

A. INTRODUCTION

The 21st-century English language teaching (ELT) scene has changed due to globalization and the swift progress of technology (Arystanbayeva, 2024). Teachers are essential in EFL contexts because they not only provide instruction but also provide interesting and culturally suitable instructional materials (Muliyah & Aminatun, 2020). According to Kundu and Bej (2025), in order to meet the varied demands of students at different competence levels, it is becoming more and more important to use new pedagogical approaches in EFL contexts. Hapsari and Prasetyarini (2025) stated that teachers must include 21st-century skills in their lesson plans, such as critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, and collaboration.

However, many teachers still face various challenges that significantly hinder their ability to create effective learning resources. Wahyuningtias et al. (2025) stated that several pedagogical challenges, such as proficiency levels, managing students' varying levels of motivation, and providing individual instruction, are present in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). Natsir et al. (2022) argued that theoretically, English instruction at vocational high schools should assist and relate to the particular abilities that students need, depending on their major. In actuality, English instruction at Indonesian vocational high schools is largely comparable to that in general education. Artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to help teachers prepare materials in order to overcome the challenges they confront. AI platforms like ChatGPT provide teachers and educational institutions with significant chances to enhance the teaching and evaluation of second and foreign languages (Hong, 2023). According to Kehoe (2023), AI tools can provide customized instructional materials, reducing time restrictions and improving instruction quality at the same time. Teachers can get thorough and organized lesson plans and subject plans by just giving clear prerequisites and objectives.

A study by Wang (2025) examines how ChatGPT-4 might improve students' communication skills in English. The findings showed that using ChatGPT-4 significantly improved students' English and helped them build their communication skills in the language. In line with the research, Hoang et al. (2023) investigate how well Chatbot Mission Fluent, an AI chatbot, can help vocational students at a college in Hanoi pronounce words correctly. According to the results, integrating AI chatbots into regular classes can improve students' language proficiency by giving them more practice and instant feedback. In addition, the result of a study by Karataş et al. (2024) stated that ChatGPT improves students' learning experiences, particularly in the areas of writing, grammar, and vocabulary acquisition. Its adaptability and accessibility in a variety of learning activities also boost motivation and engagement.

However, there are still a number of important study gaps in understanding teachers' perspectives on AI adoption, particularly for pre-teaching preparation phases, despite the promising potential of AI technologies in helping material preparation and the established improvements in student learning outcomes. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate the perspectives of junior high school English teachers regarding the use of AI in the preparation of English teaching materials, with a particular emphasis on analyzing their attitudes toward the adoption of AI, identifying perceived benefits from AI utilization, and exploring challenges encountered during the material preparation process.

B. METHOD

This study used a qualitative descriptive research approach to obtain a thorough, in-depth understanding of English teachers' perspectives on the use of AI in preparing instructional materials. According to Villamin et al. (2025), by producing data on experiences or events from the perspectives of the participants, the qualitative descriptive design enables researchers to stay "data-near" and obtain a thorough understanding of the phenomenon without necessarily concentrating on the study of lived experiences, culture, or theory development. As argued by Braun and Clarke (2021), qualitative descriptive designs are especially useful for learning new, contextually grounded views on well-known subjects or for examining phenomena about which relatively little is known.

The study was conducted in one of the junior high school in Indonesia's West Java. The participants were three English teachers who were specifically chosen based on the following criteria: (1) currently teaching English at the junior high school level, which includes grades 7, 8, or 9; (2) having at least two years of teaching experience; and (3) exhibiting a willingness to participate voluntarily in the study.

Semi-structured interviews were used to gather data. Open-ended questions covering three related topics were included in the semi-structured interview: (1) teachers' views toward AI in material preparation; (2) perceived benefits of AI utilization; and (3) Teachers' challenges. Each interview took place in person and lasted between thirty and forty-five minutes. With the participants' consent, all interviews were audio recorded, and the researcher then transcribed each one to make sure it was complete for analysis. According to Ruslin et al. (2022), semi-structured interviews are more effective than other interview formats because they enable researchers to get detailed information and supporting data from interview subjects while taking the study's objectives into account. Besides that, unlike an unstructured interview, when its path is not thoroughly determined, it gives researchers the flexibility and adaptability to stay on course. Thematic analysis was employed to examine the qualitative information collected from the interview responses systematically. Lochmiller (2021) stated that Thematic analysis is the process by which an analyst generates a broad knowledge of coded data based on the recurrent use of codes and the patterns connected to those codes. Based on Özden (2024), Thematic analysis involves six steps in the data analysis process: familiarizing with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perspectives of junior high school English teachers regarding the use of AI in the preparation of English teaching materials. The results were divided into three primary categories based on the interviews with three English teachers: (1) Teachers' attitudes toward the adoption of AI; (2) the perceived benefits from AI utilization; and (3) challenges encountered during the material preparation. These categories are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Teachers' Perspectives on AI Use in English Teaching Material Preparation

Categorization	Code
Attitudes toward AI	AI as a helpful tool
	AI cannot replace teachers
Benefits of AI	Time Efficiency
	Material generation assistance
Challenges in AI Use	Content revision needed
	Instruction difficulty
	Over-dependency concern

1. Teachers' Attitudes toward the Adaptation of AI

The findings reveal that the teachers held generally positive but cautious attitudes toward the adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) in English teaching. They viewed AI as a useful technology that could support their preparation of teaching materials while recognizing that its outputs required careful evaluation and revision. Two themes emerged from the interview data: AI as a helpful tool and AI cannot replace teachers. These themes indicate that, although the teachers appreciated the practical support provided by AI, they continued to regard teachers' professional judgment and pedagogical expertise as essential in ensuring the quality and appropriateness of AI-generated materials.

AI as a Helpful Tool

The teachers perceived AI as a useful tool that could support their preparation of English teaching materials. However, their positive perceptions were accompanied by an awareness that AI-generated content could contain inaccuracies and therefore required teachers' review and modification. After approximately one year of using ChatGPT, Teacher 1 described her experience:

"It's quite helpful, although sometimes there are a few mistakes. So it needs to be revised, checked again, and I have to read it carefully. It can't be used directly in its raw form, just as it is." (T1)

Similarly, Teacher 2, who regularly uses multiple AI tools, including ChatGPT, Grammarly, expressed a positive view:

"In my opinion, using AI as an assistive tool is very helpful in preparing teaching materials." (T2)

This finding suggests that teachers perceived AI as a practical resource that could facilitate the material preparation process by providing instructional support and reducing the effort required to develop teaching content. Rather than replacing teachers' work, AI appeared to function as a supplementary tool that could make preparation more efficient. This finding is consistent with Shaffer et al. (2025), who found that AI can benefit instructors by reducing the time required to produce educational content while maintaining the quality and accuracy of the materials

AI cannot Replace Teachers

Despite recognizing the usefulness of AI, the teachers emphasized that the technology could not replace their role in the teaching process. Their responses suggest that AI was perceived as a supporting resource rather than an autonomous instructional agent. This perception was closely related to the teachers' responsibility for evaluating the relevance, accuracy, and pedagogical appropriateness of AI-generated materials. In this sense, the teachers maintained that effective use of AI still depended on their professional knowledge and decision-making. Teacher 1 stressed the significance of comprehending the traits of students:

"No, because sometimes when AI explains things, it doesn't really use baby language. Because here, grade 7 students are still at a very basic level. Whereas ChatGPT's explanations are still for advanced learners." (T1)

By emphasizing the teacher's role in modifying materials, Teacher 2 reaffirmed this viewpoint:

"Of course not, AI cannot replace the teacher's role in preparing materials. AI only helps provide ideas or examples, but the teacher is still the one who determines whether the material is appropriate for the students' needs and characteristics." (T2)

These show that teachers continue to distinguish clearly between their own invaluable contributions and AI as a support tool. Based on the data above, it can be concluded that in terms of attitudes, teachers perceived AI as a helpful tool in preparing teaching materials, though with some significant doubts about its limitations. The results show that teachers recognize AI's value in producing preliminary material and cutting down on preparation time. However, this acceptance is conditional. Every teacher agreed that AI cannot take the role of teachers, especially when it comes to comprehending students' characteristics, adjusting language complexity, and contextual appropriateness. This perspective aligns with Wahyuningtias et al. (2025) found that teachers view AI as a helpful tool for developing teaching materials. They stress, however, that AI cannot take the place of humans in the educational process.

2. Perceived Benefits from AI Utilization

Beyond their generally positive attitudes toward AI, the teachers also identified several practical benefits arising from its use in preparing English teaching materials. Their experiences suggest that AI not only supports teachers in developing instructional content but also makes the preparation process more efficient. Two main benefits emerged from the interview data: time efficiency and material generation assistance. While time efficiency relates to the reduction of time and effort required to search for resources and prepare instructional materials, material generation assistance reflects the teachers' ability to use AI to generate and develop various types of teaching content. These benefits demonstrate the practical value of AI in supporting teachers' instructional preparation while complementing, rather than replacing, their professional work.

Time Efficiency

Among the benefits identified by the teachers, time efficiency emerged as one of the most prominent advantages of using AI in preparing English teaching materials. The teachers described AI as a tool that could streamline tasks that previously required considerable time and effort, particularly searching for relevant resources, developing instructional content, and preparing questions. As stated by Teacher 1 in the following excerpt:

"In the past, before using AI, I used to open many sources from books, not just one book, and also Google, not just one website. But with ChatGPT, I just ask it to repeat, try to revise, revise, revise. That's it. Maybe I just have to revise it several times, but I don't need to open many sources." (T1)

The efficiency advantages were also recognized by Teacher 2:

"AI helps speed up the process of creating questions and materials, so teaching preparation becomes more efficient." (T2)

This finding indicates that teachers perceived AI as a means of streamlining instructional preparation by reducing the time needed to develop questions and teaching materials. Rather than having to complete these tasks entirely from the beginning, teachers could use AI to accelerate the initial production process and subsequently refine the generated content according to their instructional needs. This finding is consistent with Wulandari and Purnamaningwulan (2024), who found that Indonesian EFL pre-service teachers perceived AI-assisted teaching as making teaching preparation more time-efficient.

Material Generation Assistance

Beyond saving preparation time, the teachers also perceived AI as a useful resource for generating and developing a variety of instructional materials. Their experiences indicate that AI could provide an initial foundation for materials, such as worksheets, questions, and content adapted to different levels of student proficiency. This perception was clearly reflected in Teacher 1's experience, who described AI-generated content as a starting point that still required further teacher input:

"Everything helps, but again, it still needs to be adjusted, because AI is just like the foundation, we still have to add things. So AI provides the base, and we complete it." (T1)

Teacher 2 gave more detailed examples:

"AI helps me most when creating worksheets and questions. I'm also often helped when creating materials that need to be adapted to different student levels." (T2)

These experiences show that while teachers' involvement is still necessary for contextual adaptation, AI serves as a basis for material development. The data above showed that in terms of benefits, teachers identified time efficiency and material generation assistance as the primary benefits of AI integration in their preparation processes. These benefits align with a previous study showing how AI might improve teaching effectiveness. Kehoe (2023) discovered that in initial teacher education environments, generative AI technologies dramatically cut down on class planning time, freeing up teachers to concentrate more on pedagogical issues rather than material sources. It's crucial to remember that these efficiency improvements have a catch, teachers still need to put in a lot of work to evaluate, revise, and modify AI-generated content to fit the skill levels of their students. According to this research, AI changes the nature of preparatory tasks from material sourcing to content selection and refinement, rather than reducing teachers' workload.

3. Teachers' Challenges in Preparing the Material

Despite the practical benefits of AI in supporting the preparation of English teaching materials, the teachers also encountered several challenges in its use. Their experiences indicate that the efficiency and convenience offered by AI do not necessarily result in ready-to-use instructional materials. Instead, teachers remained responsible for evaluating, revising, and adapting AI-generated content to ensure its accuracy, clarity, and suitability for their students. Three main challenges emerged from the interview data: the need for content revision, difficulty in providing effective instructions, and concerns about over-dependency on AI. These challenges highlight that effective AI integration requires not only access to the technology but also teachers' critical judgment, ability to formulate appropriate instructions, and awareness of the potential risks associated with excessive reliance on AI.

Content Revision Needed

The first challenge identified by the teachers concerned the need to revise and adapt AI-generated content before it could be used in classroom instruction. Although AI could accelerate the preparation of teaching materials, its outputs were not always sufficiently accurate, clear, or appropriate for the students' proficiency levels. The teachers therefore needed to critically examine the generated content and make necessary modifications to ensure its alignment with their instructional objectives and students' learning needs. This issue was evident in the experiences of Teachers 1 and 2, who both emphasized the need to review and adjust AI-generated materials before using them in their teaching.

Teacher 1 explained that AI-generated materials could contain errors and unclear instructions, requiring further revision:

"Sometimes there are a few mistakes. So it needs to be revised, checked again. Sometimes the instructions need to be detailed." (T1)

Similar problems were faced by Teacher 2:

"Not all materials from AI are directly suitable for students. Sometimes the difficulty level is too high or too low, so I need to adjust it again." (T2)

These responses indicate that AI-generated materials should be treated as initial drafts rather than ready-to-use instructional resources. The teachers' role remains essential in checking accuracy, clarifying instructions, and adjusting the level of difficulty to match students' needs. Thus, while AI can facilitate material preparation, its effective use still depends on teachers' critical evaluation and pedagogical decision-making. This finding is consistent with Wu et al. (2025), who highlighted the critical role of AI literacy among preservice English teachers in creating instructional materials. Similarly, the present findings suggest that AI literacy enables teachers to critically evaluate and appropriately adapt AI-generated content to students' needs.

Instruction Difficulty

Another challenge concerned the difficulty of formulating clear and effective instructions or prompts when interacting with AI. The teachers' experiences suggest that the quality and relevance of AI-generated materials depend partly on how clearly teachers communicate their instructional requirements. When prompts are vague or insufficiently specific, the resulting materials may not adequately reflect students' proficiency levels or learning needs. This challenge was particularly evident in Teacher 2's experience, who described the difficulty of providing precise instructions to obtain an appropriate output:

"Usually, it's about how to give instructions. Sometimes when I don't explain the request clearly, the output doesn't match my students' level. So I have to try several times until I get the right result." (T2)

This implies that effective AI use requires teachers to formulate clear, specific, and context-sensitive prompts. This finding is consistent with Qian (2025), who argued that the effectiveness of generative AI tools in education depends largely on prompt engineering. Similarly, the present finding suggests that teachers' ability to formulate effective prompts

is essential for obtaining AI-generated materials that align with students' proficiency levels and instructional needs.

Over-Dependency Concern

Beyond the challenges related to revising AI-generated content and formulating effective prompts, the teachers also expressed concerns about the possibility of becoming overly dependent on AI. This concern relates to the potential shift in teachers' roles from actively developing instructional ideas to relying excessively on AI-generated suggestions. However, the teachers did not share the same level of concern, these differing perspectives are reflected in the following interview excerpts.

Teacher 2 voiced concerns about relying too much on AI:

"Yes, I'm afraid of becoming too dependent if I rely too often on ideas from AI." (T2)

Similarly, although Teacher 3 did not use AI, she expressed a related concern:

"If it's too much, it can actually make teachers lazier or dependent." (T3)

In contrast, Teacher 1 believed that she remained in control of her teaching practice:

"Not really, because it's just an addition, just an assistant. Because the rest comes from me too, not everything from AI. So I remain in control." (T1)

These differing viewpoints imply that worries about dependency can vary depending on personal teaching and AI usage habits. The findings revealed that there are several challenges that teachers encounter when using AI for material preparation, including content revision needed, instruction difficulty, and over-dependency concerns. The need for content revision became a major obstacle. This result is consistent with the findings of Elza et al. (2024), who observed that AI-generated materials often fall short of students' real language competency, requiring substantial teacher intervention for contextual modification and adaptation. In addition, concerns about over-dependency on AI emerged as another challenge. According to Wahyuningtias et al. (2025), uncontrolled AI use may have detrimental consequences on educational innovation and critical thinking.

This study suggests that junior high school English teachers must carefully balance technological affordances when using AI in their material. Teachers exhibit conditional acceptance of AI, acknowledging its usefulness as an additional tool for increasing productivity and producing original content while simultaneously reiterating the indispensable role of human judgment in customizing lessons to the requirements and situations of students. According to Karataş et al. (2024), rather than taking the place of professional decision-making, AI works best as an assistive technology when paired with teachers' pedagogical skills. Findings from recent research on AI-assisted instructional preparation are supported by the perceived advantages, especially time efficiency and material-generating assistance (Kehoe, 2023; Wahyuningtias et al., 2025). However, the identified challenges, content revision requirements, prompt engineering challenges, and over-dependency concerns highlight the fact that implementing AI is not a simple process of adopting technology but rather necessitates significant teacher mediation, adaptation, and critical engagement.

D. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore English teachers' perspectives on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in preparing teaching materials at the junior high school level. The findings revealed three main aspects of teachers' experiences: attitudes toward AI adoption, perceived benefits of AI utilization, and challenges encountered during material preparation. First, the teachers generally viewed AI positively as a helpful and complementary tool rather than a replacement for teachers. They emphasized that AI could support their instructional work while teachers remained responsible for evaluating and adapting the generated content. Second, AI was perceived as beneficial in terms of time efficiency and material generation assistance, particularly in supporting the development of questions, worksheets, and other instructional materials. Third, the teachers also encountered several challenges, including the need for content revision, difficulty in formulating effective prompts, and concerns about over-dependency on AI. These findings suggest that the effective integration of AI in English teaching requires teachers to maintain critical judgment and pedagogical control while developing sufficient AI literacy to evaluate and adapt AI-generated materials. However, this study only involved three teachers from one of the junior high school in West Java. In order to give a more thorough examination of AI integration patterns in the development of English teaching materials, future research should consider increasing the sample size to include teachers from a variety of geographic regions and school types and use quantitative methodologies. Furthermore, in order to have a more comprehensive knowledge of AI's impact on language learning effectiveness, future research should include students' experiences with AI-generated materials, as this study largely focused on teachers' perspectives. It is advised that educational institutions create methodical professional development programs based on these findings in order to assist teachers in acquiring both technical AI literacy skills and pedagogical techniques for using AI technologies in their teaching practices.

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