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Artificial Intelligence and the Transformation of English Language Teaching in the Face of Insecurity in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examines the transformative role of artificial intelligence (AI) in English language teaching within context is affected by insecurity in Nigeria. With the disruption of conventional classroom instructions due to insurgency, banditry, and communal conflicts, there is a growing need for alternative, technology-driven approaches to sustain learning. The study adopts a descriptive research design to explore how AI-powered tools such as intelligent tutoring systems, grammar correction applications, and virtual learning platforms facilitate continuous English language instruction. Data are gathered from teachers and students in selected secondary schools through questionnaire and interviews. The findings reveals the AI enhances personalized learning, improve learners' engagement, and provide flexible access to instructional materials despite physical leaning constraints. However, challenges such as limited digital literacy, inadequate infrastructure, and unequal access to technology hinder its effective implementation. The study concludes that while AI presents significant opportunities for transforming English language education in insecure environments, strategic investments in teacher training, digital infrastructure, and policy support are essential for maximizing its benefits. It recommends the integration of AI-driven tools into the English curriculum and the development of inclusive digital education policies to ensure equitable access for all learners.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, English language teaching, insecurity, digital learning, Nigeria.

Introduction

In recent years, Nigeria has experienced increasing levels of insecurity, including insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, and communal conflicts, which have significantly disrupted educational activities across regions. These security challenges have led to frequent school closures, displacement of learners and teachers, and reduced access to formal education (Onoja, 2025). As a result of these problems, the continuity and quality of teaching, particularly in core subjects such as English language, have been adversely affected. English language plays a central role in Nigeria's education system as it serves as the official language and the primary medium of instruction at all levels of education. Therefore, any disruption in its teaching has far-reaching implications for students' academic achievement and communication competence.

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The teaching and learning of English language require consistent interaction, practice, and feedback to develop learners' proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, in insecure environments where traditional classroom instruction is frequently interrupted, learners are often deprived of these essential opportunities. Studies have shown that prolonged disruption in schooling negatively affects literacy development and language acquisition, leading to poor academic outcomes and reduced confidence in communication (McLeod &McCormack, 2021). In many affected regions in Nigeria, students experience irregular schooling, which limits their exposure to structured language instruction and meaningful engagement with learning materials.

The emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education has introduced innovative approaches that can potentially address these challenges. AI-powered tools such as intelligent tutoring systems, automated writing assistants, speech recognition applications, and virtual learning platforms have been widely recognized for their ability to support personalized and flexible learning (Hirsh-Pasek et al., 2015). These technologies enable learners to access instructional content remotely, receive immediate feedback, and engage in self-paced learning, making them particularly relevant in contexts where physical classroom interaction is constrained.

Furthermore, AI-driven language tools have been shown to enhance learners' engagement and improve language proficiency by providing interactive and adaptive learning experiences (Wasik et al., 2020).

For instance, automated feedback systems help learners identify and correct grammatical errors, while speech recognition tools support pronunciation and oral communication skills. These features make AI a valuable resource for sustaining English language learning in situations where teachers' physical presence is limited. Despite these potentials, the integration of AI into English language teaching in Nigeria remains limited, particularly in regions affected by insecurity. Many schools still rely on conventional teaching methods that are not adaptable to disrupted learning conditions. In addition, challenges such as inadequate digital infrastructure, lack of teacher training, high cost of technological devices, and unequal access to internet connectivity continue to hinder the effective adoption of AI in education (Akinwale & Adepoju, 2022). These limitations create a gap between the opportunities offered by AI its practical application in supporting English language learning in insecure environments.

Given these challenges, there is a need to explore how artificial intelligence can be effectively utilized to transform English language teaching in Nigeria, especially in areas affected by

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insecurity. This study, therefore, examines the role of AI in sustaining and improving English language teaching and learning, while also identifying the challenges and prospects associated with its integration in insecure educational contexts.

Artificial Intelligence in English Language Teaching

Artificial intelligence (AI) has become an increasingly influential component of modern educational practices, offering innovative solutions for teaching and learning across disciplines. In education, AI refers to the use of intelligent computer systems that can stimulate human cognitive processes such as learning, reasoning, and problem-solving to enhance instructional delivery (Hirsh-Pasek et al., 2015). These technologies are designed to support both teachers and learners by providing adaptive, personalized, and data-driven learning experiences. In the context of English language teaching, AI has introduced new possibilities for improving learners' linguistic competence through interactive and technology-enhanced approaches.

Recent studies indicate that AI-powered tools such as intelligent tutoring systems, chatbots, automated writing evaluation systems, and speech recognition applications have significantly transformed language learning environments (McLeod & McCormack, 2021). These tools enable learners to receive immediate feedback on their performance, thereby improving grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and overall communication skills.

For example, automated writing tools can detect grammatical errors and suggest corrections, while speech recognition systems help learners refine their pronunciation and fluency. Such features promote independent learning and continuous practice, which are essential for mastering he English language.

Moreover, AI supports personalized learning by adapting instructional content to meet individual learners' needs, abilities, and pace of learning. Unlike traditional classroom settings where instructions is often generalized, AI-based platforms analyze learners' performance data and adjust tasks accordingly to enhance understanding (Wasik et al., 2020). This individualized approach is particularly beneficial to English language learning, where students often exhibit varying levels of proficiency. By providing targeted support, AI helps bridge learning gaps and improve overall language acquisition.

Another significant contribution of AI to English language teaching is its ability to facilitate remote and flexile learning. Virtual learning platforms powered by AI enable students to access educational resources anytime and anywhere, thereby reducing dependence on physical classroom

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settings. This is especially important in contexts where insecurity disrupts regular schooling. Learners can engage with digital content, participate in virtual discussions, and complete assignment without being physically present in school. Such flexibility ensures continuity in learning and minimizes the negative impacts of educational disruptions.

In addition, AI enhances learner's engagement b incorporating interactive and multimedia elements into language instructions. Gamified learning applications, virtual simulations, and conversational AI tools create dynamic learning environments that motivate students to participate actively in learning activities (Hirsh-Pasek et al., 2015). These tools make language learning more engaging and enjoyable, thereby increasing learners' interest and retention. Interactive platforms also encourage collaboration and communication among learners, which are essential components of language development. Despite these advantages, the adoption of AI in English language teaching in Nigeria faces several challenges. One of the major constraints is the lack of adequate technological infrastructure, including reliable electricity supply, internet connectivity, and access to digital devices (Akinwale & Adepoju 2022). Many schools, particularly in rural and insecurity-prone areas, lack the basic facilities required to support AI-based learning. This digital device limits the effectiveness of AI as a tool for transforming education. Effective integration of AI in language teaching requires educators to possess the necessary skills to operate digital tools and incorporate them into instructional practices.

However, many teachers in Nigeria have not received adequate training in the use of educational technologies, which hinders their ability to utilize AI effectively (Onoja, 2025). In addition, concerns about the cost of implementing AI technologies and maintaining digital systems further restrict their adoption in many schools.

Furthermore, issues related to data privacy, ethical considerations, and over-reliance on technology have also been raised in discussions on AI in education. While AI provides valuable support for learning, it cannot completely replace the role of teachers in facilitating meaningful interaction, providing emotional support, and guiding learners' overall development. Therefore, a balanced approach that integrates AI with traditional teaching methods is necessary to achieve optimal learning outcomes. The integration of artificial intelligence into English language teaching presents significant opportunities for enhancing learning, particularly in disrupted educational contexts. However, its effectiveness depends on the availability in infrastructure, teacher

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preparedness, and supportive educational policies. Addressing these challenges is essential for maximizing the potential of AI in transforming English language education in Nigeria.

Insecurity and its Impact on English Language Teaching in Nigeria

Insecurity has become a major challenge confronting the Nigeria educational system, with far-reaching implications for teaching and learning processes. Issues such as insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, and communal conflicts have led to widespread disruption of academic activities, particularly in vulnerable regions of the country. Schools have been forced to close intermittently, while some have been permanently shut down due to safety concerns. These disruptions have significantly affected students' access to education and the overall quality of instructional delivery (Onoja, 2025).

The teaching and learning of English language are particularly affected by such disruptions because language acquisition require continuous practice, interaction, and exposure to structured learning environments. In situations where schooling is inconsistent, students are deprived of opportunities to essential language skills such as reading comprehension, writing proficiency, speaking fluency, and listening ability. Research indicates that interruptions in formal education can lead to learning loss, especially in literacy development, which forms the foundation for academic success (McLeod & McCormack, 2021). As a result, many learners in insecurity-affected areas struggle with basic language competencies.

Furthermore, insecurity often leads to displacement of students and teachers, thereby disrupting established teacher-student relationships and instructional community. Displaced may find themselves in unfamiliar learning environment where access to qualified English language teachers and appropriate learning materials is limited. This situation further compounds the challenges of language acquisition and may result in reduced motivation and engagement among learners. In many cases, overcrowded classrooms in safer regions also limit effective participation and individualized attention, which are crucial for language learning.

In addition, the psychological effects of insecurity on learners cannot be overlooked. Exposure to violence, fear, and uncertainty can negatively impact students' cognitive and emotional well-being, thereby affecting their ability to concentrate and participate actively in learning activities (Denham & Burton, 2020). Language learning, which requires active communication and confidence, may be particularly hindered in such conditions. Students experiencing trauma or

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anxiety may be less willing to engage in speaking r collaborative activities, which are essential for developing communicative competence.

Lack of consistent access to instructional resources further exacerbates the problem. In many insecurity-affected areas, schools lack adequate textbooks, teaching aids, and language laboratories that support effective English language teaching. Teachers, on the other hand, may resort to traditional, teacher-centered methods due to limited resources and time constraints. Such approaches often emphasize rote learning rather than interactive and communicative language use, thereby limiting students' ability to apply language skills in real-life contexts (Akinwale & Adepoju, 2022). Moreover, the integration of digital learning solutions, which could serve as alternatives in insecure environments, remains limited due to infrastructural challenges. Poor internet connectivity, unreliable electricity supply, and limited access to digital devices hinder the adoption of technology-based learning approaches. This digital gap further widens educational inequalities between learners in stable and unstable regions, leaving many students in insecurity-prone areas at a significant disadvantage.

Despite these challenges, the need for innovative and flexible approaches to sustain English language teaching in insecure environments has become increasingly urgent. Educational stakeholders are beginning to recognize the importance of leveraging technology, particularly artificial intelligence, to provide alternative learning pathways that can mitigate the effects of disruption.

By enabling remote access to learning materials, supporting personalized instruction, and facilitating continuous engagement, AI has the potential to address many of the challenges associated with insecurity in education. In view of these realities, it becomes necessary to explore how AI-driven solutions can be effectively integrated into English language teaching to ensure continuity, improve outcomes, and reduce the negative impact of insecurity on education in Nigeria.

AI as a Tool for Sustaining English Language in Insecure Environments

The increasing disruption of educational activities caused by insecurity in Nigeria has necessitated the adoption of innovative approaches to ensure continuity in teaching and learning. Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a viable tool for sustaining education in crisis-affected environments by providing flexible, accessible, and adaptive learning opportunities. In the context of English language teaching, AI offers practical solutions that can help overcome the limitations

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of traditional classroom instruction in insecure regions. One of the most significant contributions of AI to English language teaching in insecure environments is its ability to support remote learning. AI-powered platforms enables students to access instructional materials, participate in learning activities, and receive feedbacks without being physically present in school. This is particularly in areas where insecurity has led to school closures or restricted movement. Through mobile learning applications and online platforms, learners can continue developing their language skills despite disruptions in formal education. Studies have shown that digital learning environments enhance accessibility and provide opportunities for continuous engagement, especially in challenging contexts (Hirsh-Pasek et al., 2015).

AI also promotes personalized learning, which is essential in situations where teacher-student interaction is limited. Intelligent tutoring systems and adaptive learning platforms can assess learners' performance and provide customized instructional content based on their individual needs and proficiency levels. This ensures that learners receive appropriate support in areas such as grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing skills. Personalized learning not only improves academic outcomes but also helps learners build confidence and independence in language use (Wasik et al., 2020).

Furthermore, AI-driven tools provide immediate feedback, which is critical for effective language acquisition. In traditional classroom settings, feedback may be delayed due to large class size or limited instructional time.

However, AI applications automated writing evaluators and grammar checkers allow learners to receive instant corrections and suggestions, thereby enhancing their learning process. Similarly, speech recognition technologies enable learners to practice pronunciation and oral communication skills, which are often neglected in disrupted learning environments (McLeod & McCormack, 2021). These tools create opportunities for continuous practice, which is essential for mastering the English language.

Another important role of AI in sustaining English language teaching is its ability to create interactive and engaging learning environments. AI-powered applications often incorporate multimedia elements such as audio, video, and gamified content that make learning more appealing to students. Interactive features such as quizzes, simulations, and conversational agents encourage active participation and help maintain learners' interest even in the absence of physical classroom interaction. Engagement is a key factor in language learning, as it motivates learners to practice

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regularly and improves retention of knowledge. In addition, AI can support teachers by reducing their workload and enhancing instructional efficiency. For instance, automated grading systems and content generation tools allow teachers to focus more on facilitating learning rather than performing routine tasks. AI can also assist in identifying students' learning difficulties and recommending appropriate interventions. This is particularly beneficial in insecure environments where teachers may have limited time and resources to provide individualized attention to students. Despite these benefits, the effective use of AI in sustaining English language teaching in insecure environment depends on several factors. Access to digital devices, reliable internet connectivity, and stable electricity supply are critical for the successful implementation of AI-based learning solutions. In many parts of Nigeria, these infrastructural requirements are still inadequate, thereby limiting the reach and effectiveness of AI in education (Akinwale & Adepoju, 2022). In addition, the cost of acquiring and maintaining technological tools may pose challenges for both schools and learners.

Teacher readiness is another important factor that influences the successful integration of AI in education. Educators need to be equipped with necessary digital skills and pedagogical knowledge to effectively use AI tools in teaching English language. Without proper training and support, the potential of AI may not be fully realized. Studies emphasize the importance continuous professional development for teachers to enhance their competence in technology integration (Onoja, 2025).

Moreover, while AI provides valuable support for learning, it cannot replace the human elements of teaching, such as emotional support, motivation, and interpersonal interaction. Language learning is inherently social, and effective communication skills are best developed through meaningful interaction with others. Therefore, AI should be viewed as a complementary tool that enhances, rather than replaces, traditional teaching methods.

Challenges of AI in English Language Teaching in Nigeria

Despite the numerous benefits associated with the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in English language teaching, several challenges continue to hinder its effective implementation in Nigeria, particularly in insecurity-affected regions. These challenges are largely infrastructural, economic, pedagogical, and policy-related, and they significantly influence the extent to which AI can be utilized to transform language education.

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One of the most prominent challenges is the issue of inadequate technological infrastructure. The successful deployment of AI-driven learning systems depends heavily on access to reliable electricity, stable internet connectivity, and appropriate digital devices. However, many parts of Nigeria, especially rural and insecurity-prone areas, still struggle with erratic power supply and poor internet services. This digital limitation restricts both teachers and students from fully engaging with AI-based learning platforms (Akinwale & Adepoju, 2022). As a result, the potential of AI to support English language teaching in these areas remains largely untapped.

Another major constraint is the high cost of technological resources. Devices such as smartphones, tablets, and computers, as well as internet data subscriptions, are often expensive and unaffordable for many leaners and schools. This creates a digital divide between students in urban and rural areas, as well as between those from different socio-economic backgrounds. Consequently, while some learners benefit from AI-driven educational tools, others are excluded, thereby widening educational inequalities.

The issue of limited teacher competence in digital technology also poses a significant challenge. Effective integration of AI in English language teaching requires teachers to possess both technological and pedagogical skills. However, many educators have not received adequate training in the use of AI tools and digital instructional methods. This lack of preparedness affects their ability to effectively incorporate AI into teaching practices and to guide learners in using such technologies (Onoja, 2025). Continuous professional development is therefore essential to equip teachers with the necessary skills for technology-enhanced teaching.

In addition, there are concerns related to data privacy and ethical considerations in the use of AI in education.

AI system often rely on data collection and analysis to personalize learning experiences. Without proper regulations and safeguards, there is a risk of misuse of learners' data and violation of privacy. These concerns highlight the need for clear policies and ethical guidelines governing the use of AI in educational contexts.

Another important challenge is the potential for over-reliance on technology, which may reduce meaningful human interaction in the learning process. Language learning, particularly English, requires social interaction, collaborative activities, and emotional engagement, which cannot be fully replaced by AI systems. Therefore, while AI provides valuable support, it should be

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integrated in a way that complements, rather than replaces, the role teachers in facilitating communication and interaction.

Future Prospects of AI in English Language Teaching in Nigeria

Despite these challenges, the future prospects of AI in English language teaching in Nigeria remain promising. With increasing global emphasis on digital transformation in education, there is growing awareness of the need to integrate technology into teaching and learning processes. Government initiatives and private sector investments in digital education infrastructure can significantly improve access to AI tools and resources.

Furthermore, advancements in mobile technology present opportunities for expanding AI-based learning in Nigeria. Mobile devices are becoming increasingly widespread, and mobile learning applications can serve as accessible platforms for delivering AI-supported English language instruction. This is particularly relevant in insecurity-affected areas where traditional schooling is disrupted but mobile access may still be available.

There is also a growing need for policy development an institutional support to promote the integration of AI in education. Educational policies should prioritize digital literacy, teacher training, and the provision of technological resources to schools. In addition, partnerships between government, educational institutions, and technology providers can facilitate the development and implementation of context-appropriate AI solutions for language learning.

Moreover, future research can explore innovative ways of combining AI with culturally relevant teaching practices to enhance English language learning in Nigeria. Contextualizing AI tools to reflect local realities, languages, and learning needs will make them more effective and acceptable to learners and educators.

Conclusion

This paper examined the role of artificial intelligence in transforming English language teaching in Nigeria, particularly in the face of increasing insecurity that continues to disrupt educational activities. The study established that insecurity has significantly affected the continuity and quality of English language instruction by limiting access to classrooms, reducing learner engagement, and creating gaps in language acquisition. Given the central role of English as the medium of instruction and a tool for communication, these disruptions pose serious implications for students' academic development and future opportunities.

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The paper further highlighted that artificial intelligence offers innovative and practical solutions for sustaining English language teaching in such challenging contexts. AI-driven tools provide opportunities for remote learning, personalized instruction, immediate feedback, and interactive engagement, all of which are essential for effective language acquisition. These technologies enable learners to continue developing their language skills despite disruptions in formal schooling, thereby mitigating the negative impact of insecurity on education.

In addition, the paper emphasized that while AI presents significant benefits, its effective implementation is constrained by factors such as inadequate infrastructure, high cost of technological resources, limited digital competence among teachers, and policy gaps. These challenges underscore the need for a strategic and coordinated approach to integrating AI into the Nigerian educational system.

Finally, the paper concludes that artificial intelligence has the potential to transform English language teaching in Nigeria by providing flexible, inclusive, and adaptive learning solutions, particularly in insecurity-affected areas. However, realizing this potential requires deliberate efforts in infrastructure development, teacher training, and policy support. A balanced integration of AI with traditional teaching methods will be essential in ensuring that technology enhances, rather than replaces, the human elements of language learning.

Recommendations

Based on the discussions and conclusions of this paper, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the effective integration of artificial intelligence in English language teaching in Nigeria, particularly in insecurity-affected context:

1. **Provision of Digital Infrastructure:** Government and educational stakeholders should invest in the provision of reliable digital infrastructure, including stable electricity supply, internet connectivity, and access to affordable digital devices. This will create an enabling environment for the effective use of AI-driven learning tools in schools, especially in rural and insecurity-prone areas.
2. **Teacher Capacity Building:** Continuous professional development programmes should be organized to equip English language teachers with the necessary digital and pedagogical skills required to effectively integrate AI tools into their teaching practices. Training should focus on practical usage of AI applications for language instruction, assessment, and learner support.

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3. **Integration of AI into Curriculum:** Curriculum developers should incorporate AI-based learning approaches into English language curriculum to promote interactive, personalized, and technology-enhanced learning. This will ensure that AI is not used as an add-on but as an integral part of instructional delivery.
4. **Promotion of Affordable Learning Technologies:** Efforts should be made by government and private organizations to develop and promote low-cost or subsidized AI-powered educational applications that are accessible to learners from different socio-economic backgrounds. This will help reduce the digital divide and promote inclusive education.
5. **Policy Development and Implementation:** Educational policymakers should develop clear policies and frameworks that support the adoption of AI in education while addressing issues related to data privacy, ethical use, and quality assurance. Such policies will guide the effective and safe implementation of AI technologies in teaching and learning.
6. **Public-Private Partnerships:** Collaboration between government, educational institutions, and technology companies should be encouraged to facilitate the development, deployment, and maintenance of AI-based educational solutions tailored to the Nigerian context.

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