

MODELING FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENTS' ACCEPTANCE AND REJECTION OF AI IN LANGUAGE LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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The advent of artificial intelligence technology (AI) has brought forth a learning revolution in higher education, as AI introduces novel possibilities for both educators and learners to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. To effectively integrate AI into language education, a deep understanding of students' perceptions regarding the implementation of AI in learning, as well as the factors influencing their acceptance and rejection, is necessary for school stakeholders at both low and high-stake levels. Framed within the technology acceptance model (TAM), this quantitative cross-sectional study employed a structural equation model to examine the interrelationships among potential external variables and core variables of the TAM model. It revealed factors impacting students' acceptance and rejection of the integration of AI in language acquisition, as well as the level of AI acceptance among students. The study recruited 523 individuals engaged in English as a medium of instruction or English combined with other languages as instruction at Hungarian educational institutions. An adapted questionnaire was used as the research instrument. Data were collected online through learning management systems and online platforms, as well as on paper in the classroom by course instructors. The reliability and validity of the measurement model were ensured through item validity, convergent, and discriminant validity. Additionally, the measurement model was proven to fit well with the data, as the model fitness values were within suggested thresholds. The measurement invariance between two gender groups was also investigated to confirm the consistency of the instrument's construct between male and female students. The findings of the study indicated that optimism, content relevance, and readiness significantly directly relate to students' behavioral intention toward AI, while AI literacy, subjective norms, and AI for social good have an indirect effect on students' acceptance through perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and attitude toward AI. Additionally, the current study also unveiled that students generally have a slightly positive attitude toward the integration of AI in their learning, and their behavioral intention stands at a moderate level. There is no remarkable difference between male and female students in their attitude toward AI; however, the behavioral intention to use AI in language learning differs significantly between the two groups, with female students expressing a higher intention to use AI than their male counterparts. The findings of this study have practical implications for the implementation of AI in higher education language learning.

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