Introduction

In today's increasingly digital educational landscape, the teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) is undergoing a significant transformation. One of the key areas experiencing change is grammar instruction—a fundamental yet often challenging aspect of language learning. Traditional approaches to teaching grammar have long relied on static rules, prescriptive exercises, and teacher-centered delivery. While these methods have proven effective in certain contexts, they often fall short in fostering learner engagement and adapting to the dynamic needs of students across proficiency levels.

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Interactive grammar instruction has emerged as a response to these challenges, offering a more engaging, communicative, and student-centered alternative. Interactivity in grammar teaching is not limited to classroom discussions or peer activities; it extends to the intelligent use of digital tools that provide real-time feedback, simulate conversations, and scaffold learning in meaningful ways. This shift toward interactive methodologies aligns with broader trends in education, where personalization and learner autonomy are increasingly prioritized.

At the heart of this evolution lies Artificial Intelligence (AI), a technology that has moved rapidly from theoretical promise to practical application in classrooms around the world. AI-driven platforms and tools are now capable of analyzing language input, identifying grammatical patterns, and offering personalized feedback that supports both inductive and deductive grammar learning. Whether through adaptive quizzes, automated writing evaluation, or AI-powered chat interfaces, these tools enhance the responsiveness and flexibility of grammar instruction.

The purpose of this article is to explore how ESL educators can effectively leverage AI to create interactive grammar lessons that not only teach rules but also foster deeper understanding and usage. By examining the foundations of grammar teaching, the functions of AI in language education, and the tools currently available, this article aims to provide practical guidance for both novice and experienced teachers. In addition, it will consider the pedagogical, ethical, and logistical aspects of integrating AI in ESL instruction.

While the focus is on practical implementation, the discussion will remain grounded in current

research and best practices to ensure that the guidance offered is both actionable and informed. Ultimately, the goal is to empower educators to navigate the intersection of language pedagogy and technology with confidence and clarity, enhancing learning outcomes for students in the process.

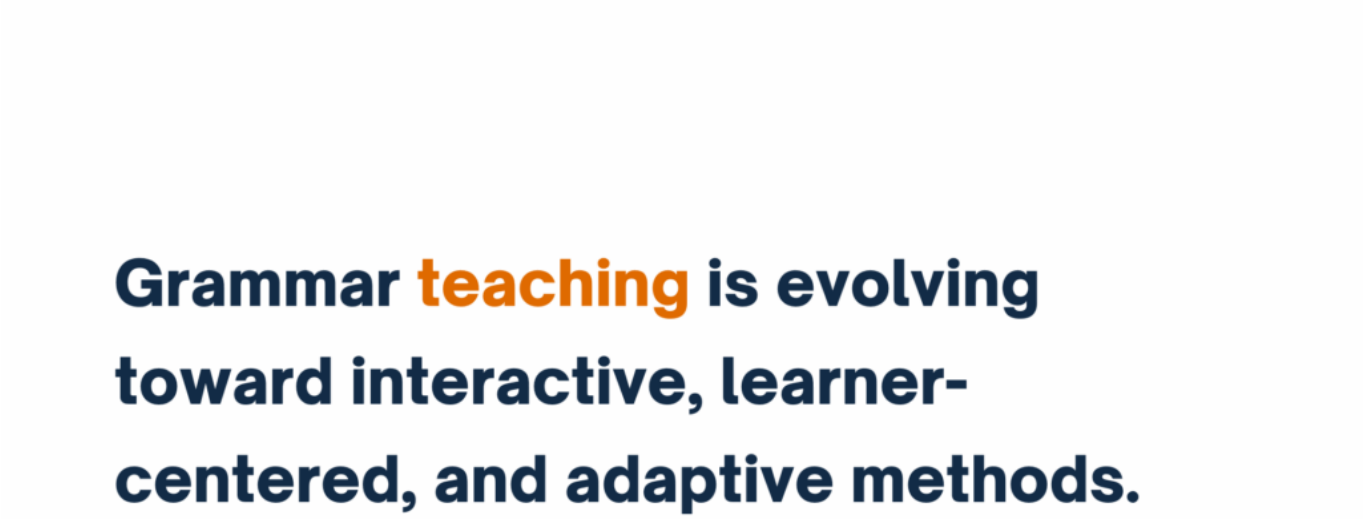
Understanding Grammar Instruction in ESL Contexts

Traditional methods of teaching grammar

Grammar instruction has long been a cornerstone of English language teaching. Traditionally, grammar has been taught using a rule-based, explicit approach wherein instructors present grammatical structures in isolation, followed by controlled practice exercises. This deductive method, often accompanied by grammar drills, gap-fill activities, and sentence transformation tasks, emphasizes accuracy and correctness in written and spoken output (Ur, 2012). While this approach has provided learners with a structural understanding of English, it often lacks contextual grounding and can be disengaging, especially for learners seeking communicative competence.

Historically, grammar was also seen as an end in itself rather than a means of facilitating real-world communication. Grammar-translation methods and audiolingual drills, though systematic, failed to offer learners the opportunity to use language meaningfully. According to Ellis (2006), such approaches often emphasize form over function, resulting in learners who may understand grammatical rules but struggle to apply them in spontaneous or natural communication. In addition, these methods rarely address the varied learning preferences or paces found in a typical classroom, leaving some learners unmotivated or confused.

Although form-focused instruction remains relevant in many curricula, the need for balance between accuracy and fluency has become more pronounced. In response, ESL pedagogy has moved toward approaches that better integrate grammar instruction with communicative activities, allowing learners to use target structures in meaningful contexts.



Current learner expectations and classroom challenges

The modern ESL classroom is shaped not only by pedagogical shifts but also by evolving learner expectations. Today's students—many of whom are digital natives—often expect interactive, personalized, and visually engaging content. They are accustomed to receiving immediate feedback and prefer content that adapts to their progress, a feature rarely found in traditional grammar instruction (Chen, 2020). This expectation creates a significant challenge for educators who must bridge the gap between established instructional practices and the dynamic demands of current learners.

Moreover, English language learners enter classrooms with varying degrees of background knowledge, motivation, and learning styles. Some may excel in inductive reasoning, while others benefit from rule explanation and repetition. Teachers are therefore faced with the complex task of providing instruction that is both structured and adaptable. The rise of mobile learning, online platforms, and hybrid models has increased this complexity, as teachers are now expected to deliver content that works equally well in physical and digital environments.

Adding to these pedagogical demands is the pressure of limited classroom time and large class sizes. In such settings, it becomes increasingly difficult to offer individual support, provide timely feedback, or adjust tasks to suit different learning paces. These challenges underscore the limitations of conventional methods and highlight the need for a new approach to grammar instruction—one that leverages technology without compromising pedagogical integrity.

The need for interactivity and personalization

In response to these challenges, there has been a noticeable shift toward learner-centered grammar instruction that values interactivity and personalization. Rather than treating grammar as a static set of rules, interactive methods position it as a dynamic tool for expression. This change is supported by research that emphasizes the role of meaningful input, active engagement, and personalized feedback in successful language acquisition (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011).

Interactive grammar instruction involves integrating grammar into tasks that require real communication, using digital tools that can respond to learner input in real time. For example, digital platforms can now track learner errors, offer hints, and adapt question difficulty based on performance. Such responsiveness ensures that students are neither overwhelmed by complexity nor disengaged by simplicity. Moreover, these systems support exploratory learning, allowing students to test hypotheses, receive corrective feedback, and revise their output—a process shown to facilitate deeper learning (Ellis, 2006).

Personalization in grammar instruction is particularly important because it addresses learner variability. By tailoring content to the individual, educators can support learners who need additional scaffolding while also challenging those ready for more advanced application. AI-driven tools now make this level of differentiation possible, providing learners with custom grammar tasks and instant feedback that mirrors the kind of responsive instruction typically offered in one-to-one tutoring.

Furthermore, personalization fosters learner autonomy. When students are given tools to explore grammar at their own pace, they become more engaged and take greater responsibility for their learning. This not only improves motivation but also enhances long-term retention, as learners construct meaning through active participation rather than passive reception.

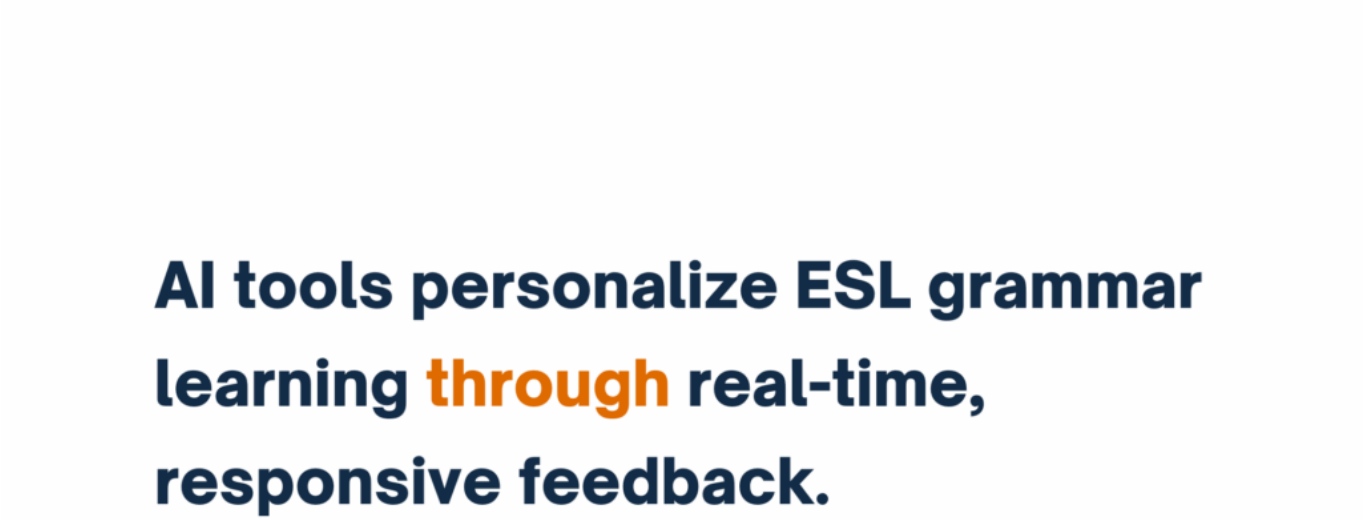
The transition to more interactive and personalized grammar instruction reflects a broader trend in language education: the integration of technological innovation with sound pedagogical practices. As AI becomes more prevalent in educational settings, its potential to support this transformation cannot be overlooked. In the following sections, we will explore how AI technologies are shaping ESL grammar instruction, the tools available, and the strategies teachers can use to integrate these innovations into their classrooms effectively.

The Role of AI in ESL Education

Defining AI in education

Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education refers to the use of computer systems capable of performing tasks that normally require human intelligence, such as problem-solving, pattern recognition, and language understanding. In the context of English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, AI encompasses a range of tools and technologies designed to enhance learning outcomes by making instruction more adaptive, responsive, and efficient. These tools are often embedded in digital platforms that use algorithms to analyze learner input, diagnose errors, and provide tailored feedback or recommendations.

AI in ESL education builds upon a foundation of computational linguistics and machine learning, allowing educational technologies to process natural language and interact meaningfully with learners. Rather than replacing teachers, AI serves as an augmentation tool that enables educators to deliver more personalized and interactive instruction at scale. As Liu and Lei (2022) note, AI in education should be viewed as a partnership between human teachers and intelligent systems, with each playing a complementary role in the learning process.



Common AI applications in language learning

AI technologies are increasingly present in language learning environments through various applications that target specific skills such as vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, writing, and grammar. Some of the most prominent AI-driven tools include intelligent tutoring systems (ITS), automated writing evaluation (AWE), speech recognition software, and conversational chatbots.

Intelligent tutoring systems are designed to mimic one-on-one instruction by adapting lesson content in real time based on student performance. These systems are particularly useful in grammar instruction, where immediate feedback and tailored exercises can support mastery of complex structures (Johnson et al., 2016). For example, learners working with an ITS may be presented with grammar tasks that adjust in difficulty based on their accuracy and response time.

Automated writing evaluation tools use natural language processing (NLP) to assess written input and provide feedback on grammar, mechanics, and coherence. Platforms such as Write & Improve and Grammarly use machine learning to identify common errors and suggest corrections, thus helping learners become more self-aware and independent in their language use.

Speech recognition tools also leverage AI to support pronunciation and listening skills. Applications

like ELSA Speak analyze speech patterns and provide corrective feedback on segmental and suprasegmental features of spoken English. While not strictly focused on grammar, these tools contribute to overall language competence and reinforce grammatical accuracy in spoken output.

AI-powered chatbots are another noteworthy development. These conversational agents simulate dialogue and engage learners in meaningful exchanges that require the use of grammatical structures in context. According to Kukulska-Hulme (2020), mobile-assisted language learning applications using AI chatbots are particularly effective in increasing learner engagement and offering authentic communicative opportunities.

Finally, adaptive learning platforms integrate several of these technologies to create a comprehensive learning environment. These platforms collect and analyze learner data to generate individualized learning pathways, ensuring that grammar instruction is both targeted and relevant.

How AI supports grammar teaching

AI offers several pedagogical advantages for grammar instruction, particularly in terms of responsiveness, scalability, and personalization. One of the key benefits is the ability to provide immediate, context-specific feedback. In traditional settings, learners may have to wait for feedback from instructors, which can delay correction and reduce learning efficiency. AI systems, by contrast, analyze input in real time and provide corrective feedback that allows learners to revise their responses on the spot (Wang & Vasquez, 2012).

This immediacy supports both deductive and inductive approaches to grammar learning. In deductive models, AI tools can explicitly present grammar rules and evaluate learners' understanding through structured tasks. In inductive models, learners interact with the system and discover grammatical patterns through guided experimentation and discovery. AI's capacity to track learner performance over time also allows for spaced repetition and data-driven review, which are known to enhance retention.

Moreover, AI facilitates the differentiation of instruction in a way that is difficult to achieve in traditional classrooms. Through the use of learner analytics, AI systems can detect patterns of misunderstanding, isolate specific problem areas, and generate tasks that address individual needs. For instance, a learner consistently misusing the present perfect tense might receive additional exercises focused on that structure, complete with contextual explanations and usage examples.

Another strength of AI is its scalability. Grammar practice that would otherwise require extensive teacher preparation and supervision can now be delivered through intelligent platforms to hundreds of students simultaneously. This is particularly beneficial in large or remote classrooms where personalized support is often limited.

Despite these advantages, it is important to emphasize that AI should not be viewed as a replacement for skilled teaching. Rather, it should be integrated into the instructional design as a complement to human instruction. Teachers bring contextual awareness, empathy, and pedagogical judgment that machines cannot replicate. When used thoughtfully, AI allows educators to offload routine tasks and focus more on higher-order teaching responsibilities, such as guiding discussions, addressing misconceptions, and fostering communicative competence.

The development of AI for grammar instruction continues to evolve, with increasing emphasis on natural language understanding and emotional intelligence. As these technologies mature, their role in shaping responsive, learner-centered ESL instruction will likely expand. The following sections will explore how teachers can harness AI tools effectively and responsibly to transform their grammar teaching practices.

Designing Interactive Grammar Lessons with AI

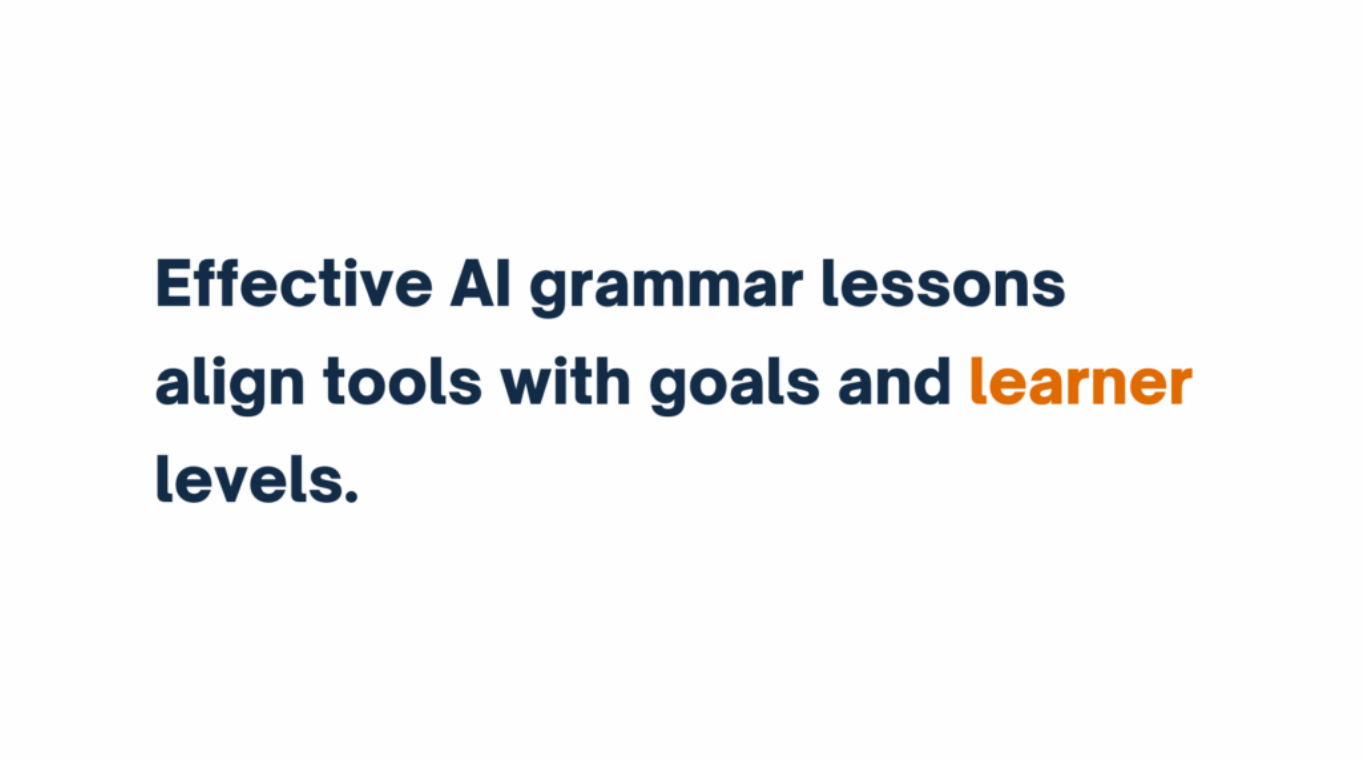
Principles of interactive grammar instruction

Effective grammar instruction in the ESL classroom requires more than the rote memorization of rules or repetitive drills. At its core, interactive grammar instruction emphasizes learner engagement, contextualized practice, and the integration of form with meaning. According to Chapelle (2003), successful interactive instruction involves authentic tasks, immediate feedback, and opportunities for learners to test and revise their language output.

One foundational principle is the communicative use of grammar. Learners benefit most when grammar structures are introduced and practiced in ways that reflect their real-world applications. This can be achieved by embedding grammar into meaningful contexts, such as storytelling, dialogue construction, or opinion writing tasks. The grammar taught should not only be correct in form but also functional in achieving communicative goals.

Another key principle is active learner participation. Interactivity should invite learners to make choices, manipulate input, and receive responses that influence subsequent learning steps. AI technologies support this through dynamic feedback loops and adaptive content generation, which allow learners to become active participants in their learning process rather than passive recipients of information (McCarthy, 2016).

Additionally, lessons should be designed with cognitive load in mind. Learners process new grammatical information more effectively when it is scaffolded, paced appropriately, and reinforced through varied and repetitive exposure. AI platforms, particularly those that adapt content based on learner performance, can help teachers manage this balance more effectively than static materials.



Selecting AI tools aligned with lesson objectives

With the proliferation of AI tools available for language instruction, it is essential for teachers to select platforms that align with specific lesson goals. Rather than adopting technology for its own sake, educators should identify what they want learners to achieve and then choose the tools that best support those outcomes.

For example, Grammarly is particularly well-suited to writing-focused grammar instruction. It provides real-time suggestions on grammar, punctuation, and style, offering explanations that help learners understand their errors. Grammarly works well in lessons focused on formal writing, revision, and self-editing skills.

ChatGPT, developed by OpenAI, excels in promoting communicative grammar through conversation practice and contextualized sentence construction. Teachers can use it to simulate real-life dialogues, generate prompts, or model correct grammatical usage in response to student-generated input. Because it is a generative language model, it can support both inductive and deductive approaches by allowing students to observe correct usage patterns or request rule explanations.

Quillionz is an AI platform that assists educators in creating quizzes and comprehension questions. Teachers can input texts that target specific grammar points, and the system generates exercises aligned with the structure of the content. This tool is useful for formative assessment and practice, especially at the sentence and paragraph level.

Write & Improve, a tool developed by Cambridge English, is another valuable resource. It focuses on writing accuracy and grammar development by allowing learners to submit text and receive automated feedback within seconds. The platform categorizes grammar issues and tracks

improvement over multiple submissions, making it ideal for monitoring learner progress and developing metalinguistic awareness.

When selecting tools, educators should also consider usability, learner data privacy, and alignment with curriculum standards. According to Lee and Wang (2022), effective AI-enhanced instruction depends not only on tool capability but also on how well it integrates with teacher planning, classroom delivery, and learner readiness.

Adapting tasks for different proficiency levels

Grammar instruction must be tailored to match learner proficiency to be effective. AI tools make this adaptation more accessible by offering features that differentiate content automatically. However, teachers must still be intentional in how they design and assign tasks to ensure they are appropriate for the learner's developmental stage.

For beginner-level students, tasks should focus on high-frequency grammar structures such as the present simple, articles, and basic question forms. Platforms like Write & Improve can be used to scaffold short writing tasks that require clear, simple constructions, while Grammarly can support sentence-level correction and reinforcement. ChatGPT may be used in a limited capacity, such as generating basic question-and-answer drills or simple storytelling prompts with controlled input.

Intermediate learners can handle more complex structures, such as past tenses, conditionals, and relative clauses. AI tools at this level should support exploratory learning and error correction. For example, ChatGPT can be used for role-play scenarios or collaborative storytelling, where learners must choose appropriate grammatical forms based on context. Teachers can also guide learners to experiment with sentence restructuring and peer correction using AI-generated suggestions.

Advanced learners benefit from tasks that promote syntactic variety, stylistic refinement, and grammatical accuracy in extended discourse. At this level, tools like Grammarly and Write & Improve can assist with academic writing or argumentative essays. AI-generated feedback can help students identify subtle grammar issues related to cohesion, agreement, and tone. Additionally, learners may use platforms like Quillionz to create their own quizzes, reinforcing their understanding of complex grammar patterns through question design.

Adapting tasks to proficiency levels also involves managing cognitive demand. Tasks that are too easy may bore students, while overly complex tasks can frustrate them. AI tools equipped with analytics can alert teachers when learners are consistently underperforming or excelling, allowing for timely adjustment of lesson content.

Ensuring learner autonomy and engagement

Autonomy and engagement are central to effective grammar learning. AI technologies can foster autonomy by offering learners immediate feedback, opportunities for self-correction, and the freedom to choose tasks that align with their interests and goals. These affordances support self-directed learning, a critical skill for language learners who need sustained practice beyond the classroom.

Godwin-Jones (2021) highlights that AI tools are particularly effective when they enable learner agency, allowing students to control the pace, sequence, and content of their grammar practice. For example, learners using Grammarly can explore corrections at their own pace, choose whether to accept or reject suggestions, and review explanations to deepen understanding. Similarly, ChatGPT allows users to shape interactions by posing their own questions or initiating dialogues, promoting an exploratory mindset.

Maintaining engagement also requires variety and relevance. Grammar lessons enhanced with AI should not consist solely of correction exercises. Instead, they should incorporate tasks that involve creation, decision-making, and collaboration. For instance, learners might use AI to co-write short stories, design infographics with correct language structures, or participate in peer editing using automated suggestions.

Teachers should also consider gamification strategies supported by AI. Some platforms include features like progress tracking, achievement badges, or time-based challenges, which can motivate learners to persist through difficult grammar tasks.

To sustain motivation and engagement, educators must guide students in developing a growth mindset toward language learning. Encouraging learners to view AI feedback as a tool for improvement rather than a judgment helps reduce anxiety and builds confidence. This pedagogical framing is essential in maintaining a supportive and respectful learning environment, where learners feel empowered to take risks and learn from mistakes.

As AI becomes more embedded in language instruction, teachers have an unprecedented opportunity to transform grammar learning into a more responsive, interactive, and learner-centered experience. By thoughtfully integrating AI tools with sound pedagogical design, educators can ensure that grammar instruction remains effective, relevant, and engaging in the modern ESL classroom.

Tools and Platforms for AI-Powered Grammar Teaching

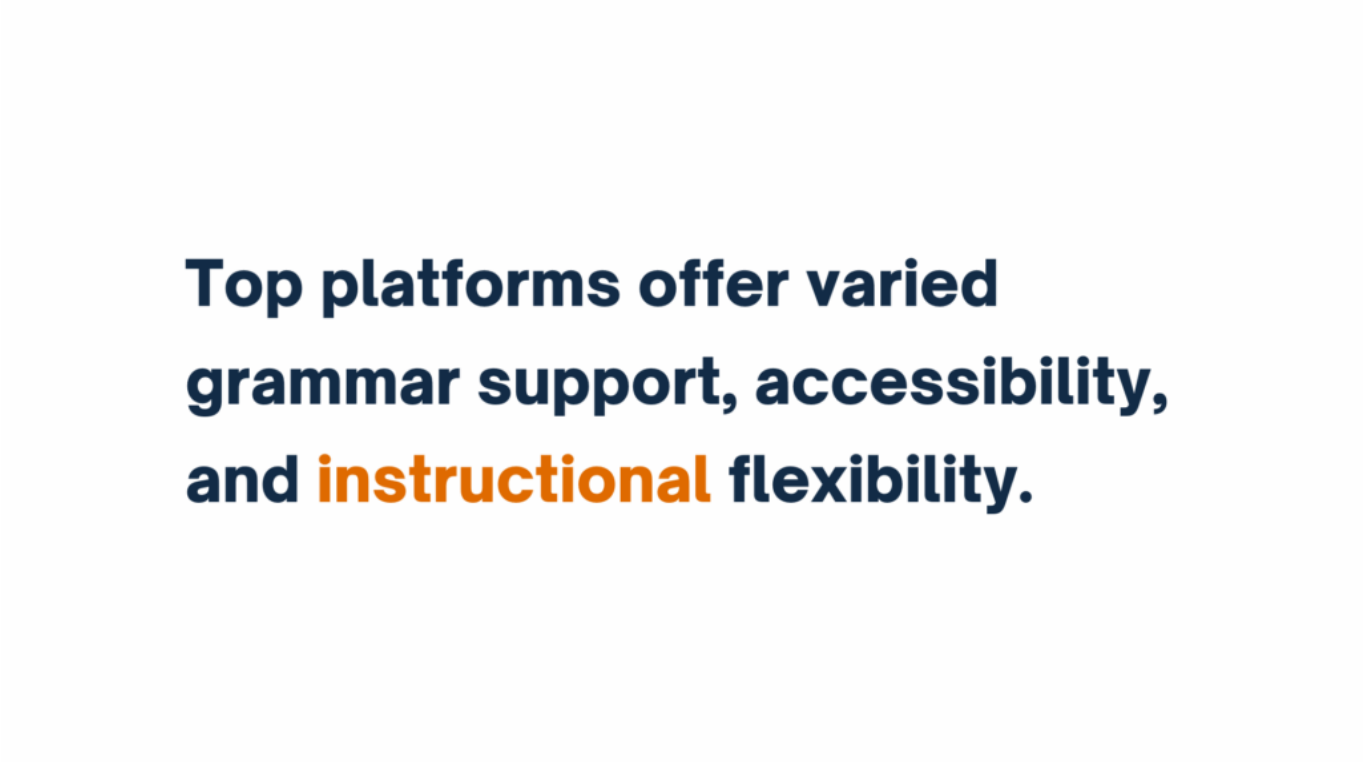
Overview of top AI tools for ESL grammar instruction

AI technologies have become increasingly prominent in English language teaching, particularly for grammar instruction. These tools are designed to offer learners tailored feedback, dynamic content, and opportunities for practice across different modalities. Their real-time capabilities and data-driven design allow for a level of personalization and responsiveness that traditional resources often cannot provide.

Some of the most widely used AI tools in ESL grammar instruction include ChatGPT, Grammarly, Quillionz, Write & Improve, ELSA, and Twinkl. Each tool serves different instructional purposes and varies in terms of complexity, feedback precision, and integration with teaching goals. Teachers choosing between these tools must consider both pedagogical fit and practical factors, such as ease of use, pricing, and technological access.

As noted by Burstein et al. (2018), the effectiveness of automated grammar feedback depends

significantly on the tool's underlying algorithms, the granularity of its error detection, and the quality of its explanatory feedback. AI tools have advanced in these areas, offering grammar instruction that is increasingly accurate and pedagogically sound.



Feature comparison: ChatGPT, Grammarly, Quillionz, Write & Improve, ELSA, Twinkl

ChatGPT

ChatGPT is a generative language model developed by OpenAI, capable of simulating conversation, answering questions, and providing contextual examples of grammar use. For ESL instruction, it can be used to model sentence structures, generate grammar explanations, or conduct written dialogues with learners. One of its strengths lies in adaptability—teachers and learners can tailor prompts to focus on specific grammar points or interaction styles.

Grammarly

Grammarly is an AI-powered writing assistant that provides real-time grammar, spelling, punctuation, and style feedback. It is particularly useful for improving learners' written grammar in academic or formal contexts. The platform provides immediate correction suggestions with brief explanations, helping learners understand both errors and alternatives.

Quillionz

Quillionz assists educators in generating quiz questions and comprehension tasks based on user-provided texts. While not a grammar correction tool per se, it helps teachers create grammar-

focused activities efficiently. This tool is particularly useful in lesson planning, allowing teachers to automate part of the assessment creation process.

Write & Improve

Write & Improve, developed by Cambridge English, allows learners to submit writing tasks and receive automated feedback categorized by grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and coherence. It is designed specifically for English learners and aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), allowing learners to track progress at different proficiency levels.

ELSA

ELSA (English Language Speech Assistant) is a mobile application focused on pronunciation and speaking accuracy, using AI-driven speech recognition to analyze learners' spoken language. While its primary focus is on oral skills, it supports grammar development indirectly through feedback on sentence-level accuracy and fluency.

Twinkl

Twinkl is an educational platform offering a vast library of teacher-created resources, including interactive grammar worksheets, grammar games, and digital lesson plans. While not an AI tool in the strictest sense, Twinkl has integrated smart search algorithms and adaptive resource suggestions based on teacher preferences and usage patterns. The platform's Twinkl PlanIt and Twinkl Go! features offer interactive grammar lessons that can be delivered digitally or printed, allowing educators to tailor activities to individual or class needs. These tools promote scaffolded learning and can be especially useful for building blended grammar instruction frameworks.

Twinkl's ease of navigation, breadth of content, and focus on curriculum alignment make it highly adaptable for institutional or freelance teaching contexts. Its grammar-focused resources are particularly beneficial for younger learners or beginner-level ESL students who benefit from visual support and task repetition. Twinkl's built-in tracking features for lesson planning also support consistent instructional design.

Licensing, costs, and accessibility considerations

The effectiveness of AI tools in grammar instruction is not only determined by their features but also by their accessibility and cost. Teachers working in institutions with technological support may have access to premium versions of these tools, while freelance or part-time instructors must often rely on free versions with limited functionality.

Grammarly offers both free and premium tiers. The free version includes basic grammar and spelling checks, while the premium version provides advanced stylistic and grammatical feedback.

ChatGPT is available for free through OpenAI, though its more advanced version (ChatGPT Plus) requires a subscription. Its accessibility via web browsers and mobile apps makes it widely usable.

Quillionz offers basic quiz generation features for free with additional features under paid plans,

primarily aimed at educators for lesson planning.

Write & Improve is largely free and accessible, making it ideal for learners preparing for English language proficiency exams.

ELSA provides both free and premium versions. The paid version offers more detailed phonetic feedback and expanded speaking practice.

Twinkl operates on a subscription basis, with different plans tailored for individual teachers, schools, and institutions. The platform also offers trial periods and promotional access for specific resource bundles. Though not AI in the technical sense, Twinkl's intelligent design and user-adaptive features make it a scalable option for supporting grammar instruction in hybrid classrooms.

Ultimately, choosing the right platform depends on the teaching context, student proficiency levels, lesson objectives, and available resources. By understanding the capabilities and constraints of each tool, educators can make informed decisions that optimize grammar learning outcomes.

Challenges and Ethical Considerations

Data privacy and student safety

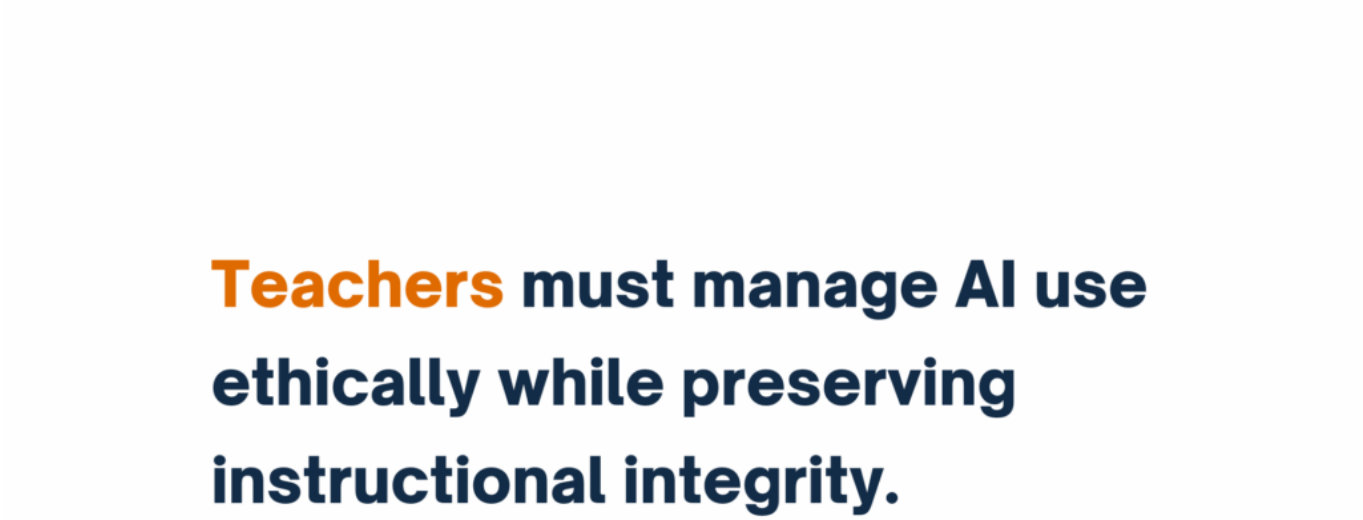
As AI tools become increasingly embedded in ESL instruction, concerns around data privacy and student safety have come to the forefront. Most AI platforms used in grammar teaching, such as Grammarly, Write & Improve, and ChatGPT, rely on user-generated input to deliver personalized feedback. This means that learner data, including written submissions and interaction patterns, are often collected, stored, and processed by third-party providers.

The ethical handling of such data is crucial. According to Tsai and Gasevic (2017), while learning analytics and AI technologies can provide valuable insights into student behavior, they also raise significant privacy concerns. These concerns are magnified when learners are unaware of how their data is being used or when data is stored in systems lacking robust security protocols. Teachers and institutions have a responsibility to ensure that any AI tools they introduce are compliant with legal standards such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) or equivalent national frameworks.

For teachers operating in freelance or low-regulation environments, this becomes even more critical. It is important to vet platforms for transparency in data handling policies and to inform students about what data is being collected and for what purposes. Minimizing the collection of personally identifiable information and using anonymous or pseudonymized accounts when possible can further reduce risks.

Holmes et al. (2021) caution that student safety extends beyond data privacy to include psychological safety. AI tools that generate negative or incorrect feedback without pedagogical sensitivity may inadvertently discourage learners. This is particularly problematic in grammar instruction, where accuracy-focused tasks can already heighten learner anxiety. Teachers must therefore monitor how AI feedback is framed and ensure it is presented as a guide for improvement

rather than a judgment on ability.



Maintaining teacher roles in AI-supported classrooms

While AI technologies offer significant pedagogical benefits, they should not displace the essential role of teachers in the learning process. One of the main concerns articulated by Selwyn (2019) is that increasing reliance on automation might lead to a diminished perception of the teacher's role, reducing educators to facilitators of technology rather than professionals responsible for instructional design and critical decision-making.

Teachers bring to the classroom a nuanced understanding of learner needs, emotional intelligence, cultural context, and adaptive instructional strategies—qualities that AI tools do not possess. In grammar instruction, where subtle distinctions in form, register, and meaning often require guided explanation and tailored support, the teacher's interpretive role is irreplaceable.

Luckin et al. (2016) argue for the concept of the "orchestrating teacher," who uses AI tools to support but not supplant the learning process. In this model, AI serves as a co-agent in the classroom, providing input, feedback, and practice opportunities, while the teacher curates content, interprets student progress, and addresses misunderstandings. For example, a writing platform like Write & Improve may flag errors in article usage, but it is the teacher who can contextualize these errors within broader patterns and adjust instruction accordingly.

The risk of marginalizing the teacher is heightened when institutions adopt AI solutions without adequate professional development or integration plans. Educators must be trained not only in the technical operation of these tools but also in how to align them with curriculum goals and pedagogical principles. Without this foundation, AI becomes a disconnected feature rather than a

purposeful component of the instructional framework.

Avoiding overreliance on automated feedback

Automated feedback is one of the most celebrated features of AI in language education. Its immediacy and scalability offer clear advantages in time-limited and large-class environments. However, an overreliance on such feedback can limit learners' critical thinking, reduce metacognitive awareness, and potentially foster dependency.

One challenge is that many AI systems provide corrective suggestions without fully explaining the reasoning behind them. This can lead to superficial learning, where students accept changes without understanding the underlying grammatical rules. As noted by Holmes et al. (2021), effective learning involves reflection and self-regulation—processes that are undermined when learners passively accept corrections.

In the context of ESL grammar, students must not only recognize that an error occurred but also understand why and how to correct it. This requires scaffolding that automated systems alone often do not provide. Teachers should, therefore, frame AI feedback as a starting point for discussion, revision, and inquiry rather than a definitive answer.

Another concern is that automated systems, while improving, are not infallible. They may miss subtle errors, misclassify learner input, or generate inappropriate feedback. When students trust these systems uncritically, there is a risk of internalizing incorrect information. Selwyn (2019) emphasizes that learners need guidance in evaluating the accuracy and relevance of AI-generated feedback. Teachers play a crucial role in cultivating this discernment.

Furthermore, exclusive reliance on digital tools can result in reduced learner interaction with peers and instructors, key components of language acquisition. Grammar, as both a rule-based and usage-based system, benefits from social negotiation and collaborative learning. Overuse of AI tools may limit opportunities for discussion, clarification, and creative exploration.

To avoid these pitfalls, grammar instruction should incorporate AI feedback as part of a broader pedagogical sequence. For example, teachers might assign a writing task through Write & Improve, review the automated feedback in class, and then facilitate peer-review sessions where students apply and discuss corrections collaboratively. This layered approach helps learners process grammar not just as a set of correct forms, but as part of meaningful communication.

AI can support grammar learning effectively when its role is clearly defined, its limitations are acknowledged, and it is integrated within a teacher-led instructional design. By balancing automation with human insight, educators can foster both efficiency and depth in grammar instruction.

Strategies for Teacher Training and Professional

Development

Integrating AI tools into teacher education

As AI continues to reshape the landscape of ESL instruction, it is imperative that teacher education programs evolve to prepare educators for tech-enhanced classrooms. The integration of AI tools into pre-service and in-service training is no longer optional; it is essential to ensure that teachers are capable of using digital platforms to enhance language learning effectively and responsibly.

According to Kessler (2018), teacher education must go beyond introducing specific tools and focus instead on developing the underlying competencies required to evaluate, implement, and adapt technology in pedagogically sound ways. For AI integration, this includes training in digital literacy, familiarity with natural language processing applications, and understanding the ethical implications of data-driven instruction.

Teacher training programs should embed hands-on experiences with AI platforms commonly used in ESL instruction, such as Grammarly, ChatGPT, Write & Improve, and Quillionz. This involves not only technical orientation but also guided reflection on how these tools align with communicative language teaching principles. For instance, trainees might compare the output of two AI grammar checkers, evaluate their feedback quality, and discuss the implications for learner development.

Curricula must also encourage critical engagement with AI, promoting awareness of both its benefits and limitations. As Hubbard (2013) notes, technology in teacher education should be framed within broader pedagogical goals rather than treated as an add-on or a technical skillset. The objective is to cultivate adaptive, reflective practitioners who can use AI strategically in various instructional contexts.

Continuous learning opportunities for ESL professionals

Given the rapid pace of technological change, continuous professional development is vital for ESL educators. Teachers need ongoing access to learning opportunities that allow them to update their skills, explore new tools, and refine their practice based on emerging research and classroom experience.

Online courses and certifications focused on educational technology and AI in language learning provide flexible options for teachers at different stages of their careers. Platforms such as Coursera, FutureLearn, and edX offer modules on integrating AI in education, often with a focus on ethical use, adaptive learning systems, and instructional design. Some programs specifically address the needs of language teachers, enabling focused professional growth.

Webinars, virtual workshops, and conference presentations hosted by TESOL associations and applied linguistics organizations also serve as important channels for knowledge sharing. These events allow educators to learn from early adopters, observe classroom applications, and engage in discussions about practical challenges and pedagogical implications.

Peer-led communities of practice further enhance continuous learning. Through online forums, social media groups, and collaborative platforms, ESL teachers can share experiences, co-develop lesson plans, and provide mutual support. This bottom-up approach to professional development fosters innovation and ensures that training remains grounded in real-world classroom needs (Comas-Quinn, 2011).

Institutions can support continuous development by allocating time and resources for training, incentivizing innovation, and recognizing the pedagogical value of technological experimentation.

When schools cultivate a culture of professional growth, teachers are more likely to engage with AI tools not only as users but also as evaluators and developers of best practices.

Fostering confidence in tech-enhanced instruction

Confidence is a critical factor in whether and how teachers adopt AI in their grammar instruction. Many educators express concerns about technological complexity, fear of making mistakes, or uncertainty about the pedagogical value of digital tools. Addressing these concerns requires structured support that combines technical training with pedagogical mentoring.

Initial exposure to AI tools should occur in low-stakes environments where teachers can experiment without fear of judgment. Sandbox environments, demonstration lessons, and collaborative planning sessions provide safe spaces for exploration. Hampel and Stickler (2015) argue that teacher confidence grows not simply through tool mastery but through reflective practice and peer feedback. Teachers must be encouraged to assess what works, adapt based on learner responses, and share insights with colleagues.

Building confidence also means recognizing and validating the role of teacher judgment in technology use. AI platforms may offer suggestions, but it is the teacher who determines which corrections are appropriate, when to override automated feedback, and how to adapt tasks to learners' needs. Professional development should reinforce the teacher's expertise and emphasize that AI is a tool to enhance, not replace, pedagogical decision-making.

Mentorship programs, whether formal or informal, can also help less experienced teachers gain confidence. Pairing novice teachers with colleagues who are comfortable using AI in grammar instruction allows for modeling, support, and constructive dialogue. This relational approach to learning reinforces that professional growth is a collaborative process, not a solitary challenge.

Finally, integrating success stories and examples of effective AI use into training sessions can inspire teachers and demonstrate the tangible benefits of technology-enhanced grammar teaching. Seeing how AI tools can reduce administrative workload, support individual learner needs, and improve learning outcomes can motivate educators to engage more actively with available technologies.

As AI continues to evolve, the professional development of ESL teachers must remain agile, reflective, and informed. By investing in targeted training, facilitating ongoing learning, and promoting confidence through supportive structures, institutions and educators can ensure that AI becomes a constructive part of grammar instruction, empowering teachers and enhancing student learning.

Conclusion

Integrating Artificial Intelligence into ESL grammar instruction represents a significant advancement in language education. AI tools offer teachers and learners powerful opportunities to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and engagement of grammar learning. Through features such as real-time feedback, adaptive content, and interactive learning environments, these technologies

can help address many of the traditional challenges associated with grammar instruction, including lack of personalization, limited feedback, and learner disengagement.

As explored throughout this article, platforms like ChatGPT, Grammarly, Write & Improve, Quillionz, and ELSA each bring unique strengths to the grammar classroom. When used thoughtfully, these tools can support both inductive and deductive approaches, provide targeted grammar practice, and encourage learner autonomy. They also facilitate access to individualized learning support, particularly in settings with large classes or limited instructional time.

However, with these benefits come important responsibilities. Teachers must remain at the center of the instructional process, using their professional judgment to evaluate when and how AI should be applied. Automated feedback should be seen as a supplement, not a substitute, for pedagogical insight and human interaction. Moreover, careful attention must be given to data privacy, ethical use, and the long-term development of learners' critical thinking and language awareness.

Effective integration of AI also depends on well-designed professional development. Teachers need training that goes beyond technical proficiency to include pedagogical strategies, curriculum alignment, and reflective practice. Institutions play a crucial role in supporting this process by fostering an environment of continuous learning and innovation.

Ultimately, the goal of incorporating AI in grammar instruction is not to automate education but to enrich it. By leveraging AI to enhance engagement, personalize learning, and support informed decision-making, teachers can create grammar lessons that are both rigorous and responsive. When implemented with care and purpose, AI becomes a valuable partner in helping learners build grammatical competence in ways that are meaningful, motivating, and sustainable.

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