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Exploring faculty perceptions of AI in ELT at the University of Hail in the context of Saudi Vision 2030

Saleh Hammad A. Al Azmi [1, 2, *], Naif Shalan S. Al Shammari [1, 2], Mustafa A. Thabet [3]

[1]*Department of English, College of Arts, University of Hail, Hail, Saudi Arabia*
[2]*Humanities Research Centre, University of Hail, Hail 55476, Saudi Arabia*
[3]*Faculty of Language Studies, Arab Open University, Saudi Arabia*

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ABSTRACT

This study explores faculty members' awareness of, perceived benefits of, and challenges associated with the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in English language teaching (ELT) at the University of Hail, within the context of Saudi Vision 2030 and its goals for digital transformation and educational development. It examines whether perceptions differ by academic rank and investigates the relationships between EFL faculty members' awareness of AI and their perceptions of its benefits and challenges in language teaching and learning, with the aim of informing the effective integration of AI into Saudi higher education. To achieve these objectives, questionnaire data were collected from 81 faculty members in the English Department. The results showed that faculty members had a high level of awareness of AI and positive perceptions of its importance in ELT, in line with the educational objectives of Vision 2030, with no statistically significant differences across academic ranks. However, academic rank was significantly correlated with awareness, suggesting that faculty members with higher academic ranks had greater awareness of AI. The findings also revealed a strong positive correlation between EFL faculty members' awareness and their perceptions of AI's role in enhancing ELT, as well as moderate positive correlations between awareness and perceived challenges and between perceived benefits and challenges. The thematic analysis of follow-up interviews identified four main challenges: the lack of clear institutional policies governing AI use, students' over-reliance on AI at the expense of deeper learning, difficulties in distinguishing AI-generated content from student-authored work, and ethical concerns, including plagiarism and reduced student effort.

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1. Introduction

There is no doubt that Saudi Vision 2030 is highly important for developing education in Saudi Arabia. As we all know, higher education plays a vital role in advancing Saudi development plans, considering Vision 2030. English language proficiency is a key factor for educational progress, academic achievement, and research advancement. Using AI has become essential in English Language Teaching (ELT) in Saudi Arabia, especially as the country attempts to achieve the goals of Saudi Vision 2030 in education. The University of Hail is one of the Saudi universities that have made great efforts in utilizing AI to help support fulfilling these significant goals.

Apart from the importance of using AI in English language teaching, its significant usefulness in developing the teaching process is undeniable. There is no doubt that one of the most important advantages of using AI in ELT is that it makes teaching more engaging, easier, and enjoyable. At the institutional level, the University of Hail can serve as an illustrative example of how Vision 2030's goals can be operationalized through AI in higher education. The university is highly committed to international academic standards, which makes it a suitable case study for this study. However, it should be taken into consideration that the implementation of AI in education must be monitored and guided by the educational authority concerned to ensure that it serves as an assistive factor for the teacher and does not replace the human factor in education.

The adoption of AI technology creates a straight path that leads to sustainable development and

* Corresponding Author.
Email Address: s.alazmi@uoh.edu.sa (S. H. A. Al Azmi)
https://doi.org/10.21833/ijaas.2026.09.008
Corresponding author's ORCID profile:
https://orcid.org/0009-0002-2573-9832
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progress in all fields, including education. Mohiuddin et al. (2023) confirmed that the higher education sector in Saudi Arabia underwent a fast transformation during 2023 because it needed to match its operational methods with Vision 2030 objectives. They further emphasized that education functions as an empowerment tool for social and economic sustainability.

In brief, the intersection of AI, English language learning and teaching, and Vision 2030 is a game-changer for Saudi higher education. Based on this idea, the current study discusses how the University of Hail can make use of AI to lead national visions of development, innovation, and excellence in education. The incorporation of AI in ELT not only enhances language proficiency but also creates a creative generation of learners who are able to deal with the AI revolution in all aspects of life. As Vision 2030 continues to guide the Kingdom's educational renewal, the role of AI in higher education, and more particularly in English language teaching, is essential in achieving a sustainable, knowledge-based future. The AI system at the University of Hail should enable English program graduates to become competent workers who succeed in domestic and worldwide professional settings.

In Saudi Arabia, universities started to incorporate AI tools to meet the goals of the Saudi Vision 2030. However, there is a lack of systematic investigation into how faculty members at the University of Hail perceive the use of AI tools in universities and their willingness to integrate AI tools in their teaching. Recent studies often address the issue of using AI in education independently and not in alignment with Saudi Vision 2030. Previous studies (Alothma, 2025; Al Saiari et al., 2025) found that AI tools can be used to improve English language teaching in Saudi Arabia. These tools can improve learner engagement, autonomy, and language outcomes. However, the relationship between AI integration and the Saudi Vision 2030 is not examined. This gap highlights the need for studies that examine the relationship between AI in education and the Saudi Vision 2030. This study, therefore, explores the relationship between using AI in language teaching and the goals of the Saudi Vision 2030 at the University of Hail. The aim of the current study is to explore the perceptions of the faculty members at the University of Hail about the benefits and challenges in teaching the English language in their classes. This study tries to answer these questions:

RQ1. What is the level of awareness among EFL faculty members at the University of Hail regarding the use of Artificial Intelligence in English Language Teaching, based on their academic rank?
RQ2. How do EFL faculty members perceive the role of AI in enhancing English language teaching in light of Vision 2030?
RQ3. What challenges do EFL faculty members face in using Artificial Intelligence in English Language Teaching at the University of Hail?
RQ4. Is there a statistically significant correlation between EFL faculty members' academic level and their responses to the questionnaire constructs: awareness, perceived benefits, and challenges?

2. Literature review

2.1. Using AI in EFL education

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a driving force of educational change worldwide, and in Saudi Arabia, it is not only used to develop education but also to realize the national aspirations represented in Vision 2030. Admittedly, higher education in Saudi Arabia plays a vital role in achieving Vision 2030 goals. As a matter of fact, the key factor of the vision is education, and universities lie at the heart of this factor. English Language Teaching (ELT) has special importance here, as proficiency in the English language makes it easier for Saudi learners to access knowledge, communicate globally, and keep up with the latest developments in various sciences.

These studies focused on different aspects. First, some studies examined the reform and its alignment with national goals. For example, the alignment between higher education curricula and labor market needs in Saudi Arabia within the framework of Vision 2030 and the National Transformation Program (NTP) was examined. The study identified gaps in current curricula and teaching methods. Focusing on employment demands linked to national giga-projects, the findings highlighted mismatches between graduates' skills and market requirements. Also, Alothma (2025) reported a more idealized view of AI-powered universities as already capable of producing highly skilled graduates.

Second, some studies (Al Saiari et al., 2025; Alshaie et al., 2025) explored the importance of teachers' readiness and the institutional capacity to implement AI tools. Al Saiari et al. (2025) found that the Saudi government had invested widely in AI-based education to cope with developments happening around the world in this field. However, the study acknowledged that there were some challenges facing these efforts, such as limited teacher AI training, the absence of technological cooperation between institutions, and the lack of ethical standards guiding both the teachers and learners to enable them to use AI applications responsibly. Alshaie et al. (2025) examined the relationship between English as a foreign language instructors' artificial intelligence knowledge and the quality of the education provided in English at the University of Hail. The study found a high level of AI competence among instructors, with a moderate positive association with the quality of the educational environment. Several obstacles were identified as hindering the quality of English education in the study. However, AI tools have a moderate impact on education quality; there are some obstacles. These obstacles include low motivation and organizational limitations. Third, the benefits of using AI in learning are examined in some

studies (AlGhamdi, 2022; Singh, 2026). AlGhamdi (2022) confirmed that AI is a very effective tool in teaching and learning development. He further emphasized that AI could make learning more interesting, more effective, and more productive. AI tools help students to do self-learning activities and help them improve their skills. For teachers, AI can effectively help with decision-making and provide useful guidance for enhancing the teaching process. All these advantages help in achieving the goals of Vision 2030, particularly in fostering students' creativity and teachers' instructional skills. Also, Singh (2026) investigated the influence that AI has on academic excellence at the University of Hail, Saudi Arabia, with particular emphasis on the moderating role of digital learning. This study used structural equation modelling to examine the relationships among factors such as AI and artificial life, deep learning, and anxiety experienced by university students, as found in the results of a survey. The results found that the perceived usefulness and ease of use of the system, along with a personalization service provided by the AI, all had a significant and very positive influence on the users' acceptance. The study found that digital learning has a significant impact on the relationship between AI tools and student engagement. Higher education could benefit from combining the use of artificial intelligence with digital learning methods to achieve better results.

Finally, ethical and practical concerns are examined in some studies (Aljabr and Al-Ahdal, 2024). Aljabr and Al-Ahdal (2024) investigated the ethical and pedagogical implications of artificial intelligence (AI) integration in EFL education at Hail University, Saudi Arabia. Fifty EFL teachers took part in this study, submitting questionnaires which were subsequently followed up with in-depth interviews. Both teachers' understanding of the benefits of teaching and the moral implications of using AI in the classroom were found to be quite high. While instructors valued AI for teaching personalization, administrative support, and provision of feedback, they highlighted institutional preparedness, data protection, and academic honesty concerns. There is a need for comprehensive guidelines, professional teacher development, and balanced integration to ensure that AI technology is properly and ethically employed in the EFL context.

Globally, teachers' perceptions of AI in language learning have been widely examined across different countries. These studies show that teachers generally hold positive views about AI's potential to enhance teaching, learning, and personalization, but their actual knowledge and classroom use remain limited. For instance, Arslan (2025) found that EFL teachers recognize the benefits of AI but lack sufficient training and practical skills for effective integration. Similarly, Alwaqdani (2025) reported that university professors value AI as an educational tool but express concerns about technical complexity, privacy, and its impact on teaching roles. Suharno et al. (2025) also highlighted both perceived benefits and concerns regarding ethical and contextual issues.

2.2. Saudi Vision 2030

Saudi Vision 2030 is an ambitious plan launched by Muhammed bin Salman on 25 April 2016 to develop the country's different sectors and make the country the "heart of the Arab and Islamic worlds." It envisions a shift from oil to a knowledge-based global economy (Al-Mwzaiji and Muhammad, 2023). Saudi Vision 2030 mainly focuses on economic, business, and cultural reforms. However, quality education is a fundamental part of the Vision, as it includes several goals and objectives related to developing all types of education in the country (Albiladi, 2022). Studies on Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 have covered several aspects of the Vision since it came into effect. These studies have enlightened the various aspects of the education system (Allmnakrah and Evers, 2020), such as human development, growth in higher education (Ghulam and Mousa, 2019), and Saudi universities aligned with the Vision (Dhawi et al., 2017).

EFL learning is influenced positively by Saudi Vision 2030. The role of EFL learning in fulfilling Saudi Vision 2030 is examined in several studies. Almegren (2022) argued that Saudi Vision 2030 has become a principal motivator among Saudi citizens to learn English following its announcement. The study has established that Saudi Vision 2030 is a significant political intervention in EFL learning, as it generates an instrumental motivation for the participants. There is an intrinsic link between EFL learning and Saudi Vision 2030. The link is established by the goals of economic diversification and social development. Education is the ground where both goals can be fulfilled. Without qualitative education, the achievement of SV2030 reforms would be impossible (Yusuf, 2017).

3. Methodology

3.1. Study design

The study adopted a descriptive quantitative approach to explore Saudi EFL faculty members' perceived awareness, benefits, and challenges of using artificial intelligence. Having a pioneer in digital transformation, such as the University of Hail, on board as its case study allowed the research to evaluate its implementation of these policies.

3.2. Participants

The study's sample included 81 EFL teaching staff from the Department of English at the University of Hail. The study followed a purposeful sampling method. The participants were selected from the targeted population, who were lecturers of English at the University of Hail. The participants were from three different academic ranks: lecturers (N = 18, M

= 22.2%), assistant professors (N = 48, M = 59.3%), and teaching assistants (N = 15, M = 18.5%). A research approach involving various teaching staff across different levels provided the researchers with a comprehensive understanding of the participants' attitudes and perceptions toward Vision 2030 and artificial intelligence. Regarding their gender, 37 of them were female, and 30 were male. All of them were English major teaching staff. To determine an appropriate sample size, the researchers referred to Cochran's sample size formula for finite populations. Based on an estimated population size (97), the minimum required sample size is 78. In this study, a total of 81 participants were selected as a representative sample of the population. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants who met specific inclusion criteria, namely: (a) being actively engaged in teaching English courses, and (b) having potential exposure to or experience with AI tools in educational contexts. This approach ensured that the data collected would be relevant to the study objectives. In addition, of the 81 faculty members who completed the questionnaire, 30 were invited to participate in the follow-up interviews, of whom 20 agreed to take part, yielding a response rate of 66.7%.

3.3. Instrument

The data were collected by a self-administered questionnaire designed by the researchers, drawing on themes of previous studies. The development of the instrument was guided by key constructs identified in previous studies (e.g., awareness, perceived usefulness, and implementation challenges), ensuring alignment with established research in the field. The research instrument was divided into three major categories, which were aimed at satisfying the objectives of the study. The first part was about EFL faculty members' awareness of Artificial Intelligence in English Language Teaching (10 items). The second part was about the role of AI in the improvement of the teaching of the English language in accordance with Vision 2030 (10 items). The second part was about the Challenges of the Application of Artificial Intelligence in English Language Instruction (10 items). All items were measured on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating strongly disagree and 5 indicating strongly agree. To establish content validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by a panel of experts in educational technology and applied linguistics. Their feedback focused on item clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study constructs. Based on their comments, several items were rewritten for clarity, and redundant items were removed to improve the overall structure of the instrument.

A pilot test was conducted with a small population of faculty members to verify the reliability and validity of the items. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency reliability of the final tool, yielding a coefficient of 0.87, which suggests high reliability.

To find out more about the challenges of using AI in ELT, an open-ended interview was used. The questions of the interview were adapted from Novawan et al. (2024). These questions encouraged participants to share insights and elaborate on their views. The questions were about challenges encountered while integrating AI into language teaching. The responses to the interview were transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis. The questions were as follows:

1. What roles do institutional policies or guidelines play in how teachers approach AI use in the classroom?
2. How does AI use, with or without guidance, influence students' learning experiences and outcomes?
3. What experiences have teachers had with students using AI independently, and how has this affected teaching or assessment practices?
4. What effects, both positive and negative, has AI had on student effort, motivation, and academic integrity?
5. What support, training, or guidance could help teachers and students make effective use of AI in language learning?

3.4. Data collection procedures

Data were collected electronically from Google Forms and sent to members of the faculty by their institution's email addresses. Participants were informed of the purpose behind the research and guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. They took part in the questionnaire voluntarily, and their responses were used solely for purposes of academic research. The collection of data was done over two weeks during the second semester of the 2024–2025 academic year.

3.5. Data analysis

Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to determine levels of perceived awareness, benefits, and challenges. To use suitable tests, parametric or non-parametric tests, normal distribution tests were calculated. The data are not fully normally distributed, as normality is generally met for Teaching Assistants and mostly for Lecturers but is violated for Assistant Professors across all measures according to the Shapiro–Wilk test. Therefore, the Kruskal–Wallis test was used to explore whether there were statistically significant differences in perceptions among the three academic ranks. Effect sizes were calculated using eta-squared (η^2) as per Cohen's (2013) standards to determine the magnitude of the differences. To address the third research question about the challenges of using AI in ELT, an interview was used. The responses to the open-ended questions of the interview were analyzed using thematic analysis. To address the fourth research question, Spearman correlation analysis was performed to examine relationships

between participants' academic rank and the main study variables, as well as relationships among the constructs themselves. All statistical tests were conducted at a significance level of $p < 0.05$. In addition, Spearman Correlations of the questionnaire construct and the level of the participants were analyzed. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 26.

4. Results

To answer RQ1, which examined the level of awareness among EFL faculty members regarding the use of Artificial Intelligence in English Language Teaching based on academic rank, both descriptive and inferential statistics were analyzed. An independent-samples Kruskal–Wallis test, as shown in Table 1, indicated no statistically significant differences in Awareness across levels = 4.97, p = 0.83, indicating that Awareness scores did not significantly vary among the three groups. These results are shown in Fig. 1.

Table 1: Awareness across levels

Total N	81
Test statistic	4.972[a, b]
Degree of freedom	2
Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)	0.083

a. The test statistic is adjusted for ties; b. Multiple comparisons are not performed because the overall test does not show significant differences across samples

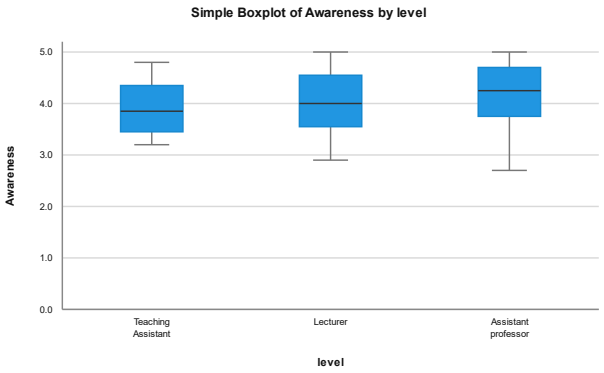


Fig. 1: Awareness across levels

To answer RQ2, which examined the perceptions of EFL faculty members regarding the use of Artificial Intelligence in English Language Teaching based on academic rank, both descriptive and inferential statistics were analyzed. An independent-samples Kruskal–Wallis test, as shown in Table 2, indicated no statistically significant differences in using Artificial Intelligence in English Language Teaching across levels = 2.32, p = 0.313, indicating that using Artificial Intelligence in English Language Teaching did not significantly vary among the three groups. These results are shown in Fig. 2.

An independent-samples Kruskal–Wallis test showed no statistically significant differences in Challenges across levels, = 2.76, p = 0.25, indicating that perceived challenges did not significantly differ among the three groups. The results are shown in Table 3 and Fig. 3.

To know more about the challenges of using Artificial Intelligence in ELT at the University of Hail, a thematic analysis of responses was conducted. The thematic analysis of the 20 follow-up structured interviews identified four recurring themes that align closely with the challenges teachers and students face when integrating AI into language teaching without institutional guidance. These themes were generated through an iterative coding process, in which transcripts were read repeatedly, initial codes were assigned to recurring ideas, and related codes were grouped into broader thematic categories corresponding to the interview questions. Table 4 presents each theme alongside a brief description and illustrative quotations drawn directly from participant responses, demonstrating how the qualitative data informed and substantiated the findings reported in this section.

Table 2: Artificial intelligence in English language teaching across teachers' level

Total N	81
Test statistic	2.326[a,b]
Degree of freedom	2
Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)	0.313

a. The test statistic is adjusted for ties; b. Multiple comparisons are not performed because the overall test does not show significant differences across samples

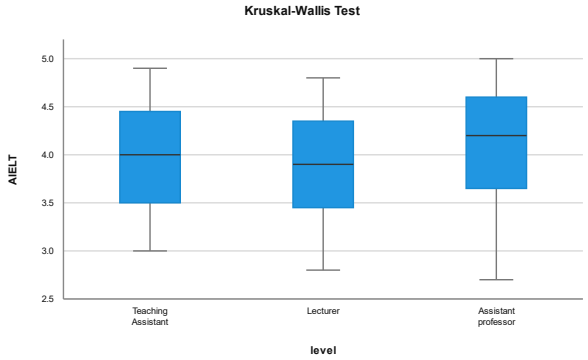


Fig. 2: Artificial intelligence in English language teaching across levels

Table 3: Independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis test

Total N	81
Test statistic	2.761[a,b]
Degree of freedom	2
Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)	0.251

a. The test statistic is adjusted for ties; b. Multiple comparisons are not performed because the overall test does not show significant differences across samples

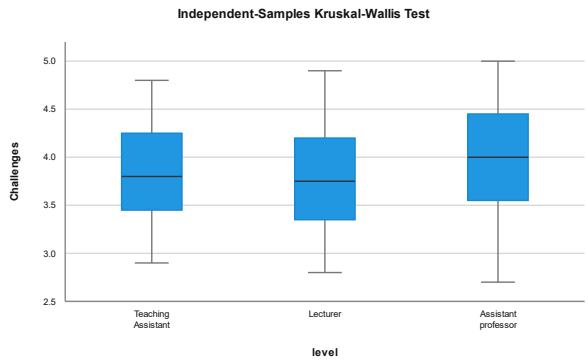


Fig. 3: Challenges across levels

Table 5 presents the Spearman correlation coefficients examining the relationships between participants' academic level and the questionnaire constructs: Awareness, Artificial Intelligence in Enhancing English Language Teaching (AIELT), and

Challenges. The correlation analysis showed that participant level was significantly and positively associated with Awareness (r = 0.249, p = 0.025), indicating that higher academic levels tended to be associated with greater awareness. However, participant level was not significantly associated with AIELT (r = 0.170, p = 0.129) or Challenges (r = −0.037, p = 0.740). Significant positive relationships were also found among the three questionnaire constructs. Awareness showed a strong positive correlation with AIELT (r = 0.719, p < 0.001) and a moderate positive correlation with Challenges (r = 0.438, p < 0.001). In addition, AIELT was positively correlated with Challenges (r = 0.546, p < 0.001). These findings suggest that participants had higher awareness of artificial intelligence.

Table 4: Thematic analysis of the interview

Theme	Description	Example participant quote
Absence of clear institutional policy	The lack of clear institutional guidelines created uncertainty, leading teachers to rely on personal judgment and resulting in inconsistent practices across classrooms. This absence of guidance also contributed to hesitation among some educators, who feared potential misuse of AI tools.	"There's no policy from the university, so I just decide for myself what's okay — but I know other teachers do it completely differently." (Participant 3) "Honestly, I'm cautious about even mentioning AI in class because I'm not sure how it might be misused." (Participant 9)
Student over-reliance on AI	Teachers observed that students tend to rely heavily on AI, often seeking quick answers rather than engaging in deeper learning processes, which weakens their language development and critical thinking skills.	"They just want the answer fast — they're not trying to actually understand the grammar or think it through themselves." (Participant 11)
Difficulty assessing student work	Participants highlighted significant difficulties in assessing student work, as it becomes increasingly challenging to distinguish between original student output and AI-generated content, raising concerns about fairness and validity in evaluation.	"Sometimes I read an essay, and I genuinely can't tell if the student wrote it or AI did — and that makes grading feel unfair." (Participant 7)
Ethical concerns: Plagiarism and reduced effort	Participants frequently reported ethical issues such as plagiarism, academic dishonesty, and a noticeable decline in student effort linked to AI use.	"Some students just submit AI-generated work as their own — it's plagiarism, but they don't even see it that way." (Participant 15)

Table 5: Correlations between the level of the participants and the survey constructs

Study variables	Statistical measures	Level	Awareness	AIELT	Challenges
Level	Correlation coefficient		0.249*	0.170	-0.037
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.025	0.129	0.740
	N		81	81	81
Awareness	Correlation coefficient	0.249*		0.719**	0.438**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.025		0.000	0.000
	N	81		81	81
AIELT	Correlation coefficient	0.170	0.719**		0.546**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.129	0.000		0.000
	N	81	81		81
Challenges	Correlation coefficient	-0.037	0.438**	0.546**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.740	0.000	0.000	
	N	81	81	81	

*: Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); **: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); AIELT: Artificial intelligence in enhancing english language teaching

5. Discussion

The study aims to explore the perception of EFL faculty members at the University of Hail about using AI in language teaching and learning. To address this aim, the study answers four research questions. The first research question is about the level of awareness among faculty members at the University of Hail based on their academic rank and the use of AI in English Language Teaching. The findings indicate that the EFL faculty members at the University of Hail show a high level of awareness about using AI tools in language learning, with no statistically significant difference in this awareness among the participants based on their academic rank. This suggests that almost all the EFL faculty members, regardless of their academic rank (i.e., teaching assistants, lecturers, and assistant professors), perceive that AI tools are effective when they are used in language learning. This finding supports the findings of previous studies (Al Saiari et al., 2025; Alshaie et al., 2025) that reported a high level of agreement that AI tools are useful in learning. These studies highlight the issue that using AI tools in education has become an important aspect of many educational institutions.

The second research question aims to report the perceptions of EFL faculty members at the University of Hail about the role of AI in enhancing English language teaching in light of Vision 2030. The results indicate a strong positive attitude towards the role of AI in enhancing language learning. This attitude is the same across all three academic ranks. No significant difference based on academic rank. All the participants agreed that AI tools have an important role in language learning. This finding is in line with previous studies (AlGhamdi, 2022; Singh, 2026) that reported positive attitudes among the participants in their studies about using AI tools in education.

The third research question investigates the challenges that faculty members face in using AI in English Language Teaching at the University of Hail. The results show that the participants reported some difficulties that they faced while they integrated AI tools in teaching. These challenges are expressed by most of the participants regardless of their academic rank. These challenges likely include issues such as limited training, insufficient infrastructure, and lack of institutional support, which are consistent with the obstacles identified in previous research (Aljabr and Al-Ahdal, 2024; Al Saiari et al., 2025). In addition, qualitative findings further emphasized concerns related to unclear institutional policies, overreliance on AI by students, and difficulties in assessment, particularly in distinguishing between original and AI-generated

work. This issue needs more investigation using different data collection tools, such as interviews and observations.

The fourth research question is about the correlation between faculty members' academic rank and their responses to the three questionnaire constructs. The results indicate that there is no significant positive correlation between the faculty's academic ranks and their perceptions towards the benefits and challenges of using AI tools in language learning. This further confirms that faculty responses are consistent across different professional levels. However, the results show that there is a significant positive correlation between awareness and perceptions, as well as between perceptions and challenges. This suggests that faculty members who are more aware of AI also tend to recognize both its benefits and its associated challenges. These findings indicate that faculty members at the University of Hail demonstrate a generally high level of awareness, positive perceptions, and shared concerns regarding AI integration in English language learning. This pattern is consistent with the findings of previous studies emphasizing both the opportunities (AlGhamdi, 2022; Singh, 2026) and challenges (Aljabr and Al-Ahdal, 2024) of AI integration in education.

Although this study primarily examines faculty members' awareness, perceptions of Artificial Intelligence in Enhancing English Language Teaching, and the challenges associated with its implementation, these variables are directly aligned with the broader objectives of Saudi Vision 2030 in the field of education. Vision 2030 emphasizes digital transformation, innovation in teaching practices, and the integration of advanced technologies to improve learning outcomes. More specifically, Vision 2030 highlights the strengthening of digital transformation governance through national coordination mechanisms and the development of robust digital infrastructure in partnership with key stakeholders in the telecommunications and information technology sectors.

On page 40 in Saudi Vision 2030, it is stated that "we will prepare a modern curriculum focused on rigorous standards in literacy, numeracy, skills and character development. We will track progress and publish a sophisticated range of education outcomes, showing year-on-year improvements." These priorities underscore the importance of institutional readiness for AI integration in education. In addition, the Vision places strong emphasis on investing in education and training to prepare students for future labor market demands, improving curriculum quality, and ensuring alignment between educational outcomes and the skills required by various economic sectors. It also calls for enhanced collaboration with the private sector, expansion of vocational training, and the establishment of sector-based skills councils to define job-specific competencies. In this context, faculty awareness and perceptions of AI represent critical prerequisites for successful adoption, while the identification of challenges provides insight into barriers that may hinder progress toward these national goals. Therefore, by investigating these factors, the present study offers an indirect yet meaningful evaluation of the readiness of English language programs at the University of Hail to contribute to the realization of Vision 2030. This alignment ensures that the study not only assesses current perceptions but also highlights areas requiring institutional support to facilitate effective AI integration in line with national educational priorities.

6. Conclusion

This study examined faculty members' awareness, perceptions, and reported challenges regarding the use of artificial intelligence in enhancing English language teaching at the University of Hail. The findings revealed a high level of awareness and consistently positive perceptions of AI across all academic ranks, with no statistically significant differences based on faculty position. In addition, faculty members reported a shared recognition of challenges related to training, infrastructure, and institutional support.

These findings contribute to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence from the Saudi higher education context, particularly within English language teaching, showing that awareness and acceptance of AI are widespread but accompanied by practical implementation concerns. The study also highlights that faculty members who are more aware of AI tend to recognize both its potential benefits and its associated challenges, reflecting a balanced and informed perspective.

The results suggest the need for institutional strategies that focus on continuous professional development, improved technological infrastructure, and clear guidelines for AI integration in teaching. Such measures are essential to support effective and sustainable implementation.

7. Limitations of the study

This study has some limitations that should be considered. First, it was conducted at only one university, which limits the ability to generalize the results to other institutions. Second, the study depended on questionnaire responses, which may not fully reflect actual teaching practices. Specifically, the answer to the third research question about challenges that faculty members face in using Artificial Intelligence in English Language Teaching at Hail University can be better answered using interviews along with a questionnaire. Thus, future research should incorporate qualitative methods, such as interviews, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how AI is implemented in English language teaching contexts. Third, only faculty members participated in the study, and students' views were not included. Finally, the sample size is relatively small and

unevenly distributed across academic ranks, reflecting the actual staff composition at the university. This imbalance may limit the robustness of statistical comparisons between groups. Future research could include more universities, student perspectives, and qualitative methods such as interviews or classroom observations.

List of abbreviations

AI	Artificial intelligence
AIELT	Artificial intelligence in enhancing English language teaching
EFL	English as a foreign language
ELT	English language teaching
NTP	National Transformation Program
RQ	Research question
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SV2030	Saudi Vision 2030

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Compliance with ethical standards

Ethical considerations

All participants provided informed consent prior to participation. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed of their right to withdraw at any stage without any consequences. Given the sensitive nature of the study, appropriate measures were taken to ensure participants' safety, privacy, and emotional well-being. All data were anonymized and treated with strict confidentiality in accordance with ethical research standards and the Declaration of Helsinki. Ethical approval was obtained from the University of Hail Institutional Review Board (IRB Approval Number: H-2025-397, Date: October 27, 2025).

Conflict of interest

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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