

Does using LLMs in daily life help or hinder learning a second language?

Wei Li

Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, United States

Andy Zhao

Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, United States

Adrian de Wynter

Microsoft Research, Seattle, Washington, United States

Si-Qing Chen

Microsoft Research, Seattle, Washington, United States

Paul Karimov

Microsoft Research, Seattle, Washington, United States

Joshua Hartshorne

Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, United States

Abstract

As AI tools become integral to daily life, evaluating their impact on human cognition and learning is essential. This study examines how AI-assisted writing (AIW) tools influence language development over six months. Participants were randomly assigned to either a control group, using basic auto-correction (e.g., Grammarly), or an experimental group, using dialog-based large language model (LLM) tools (e.g., ChatGPT). Each month, all participants will write an English essay and reported on tool usage frequency and strategies. Preliminary findings after 1 month suggest diverse usage behaviors with AIW tools which may lead to varied outcomes in linguistic performance. These results provide insights into AI's role in fostering language growth and inform strategies for effective AI-enhanced writing practices. In July, we will be able to report 6 months of data.