

# The potential of artificial intelligence in the improvement of student learning and well-being: innovative pedagogical practices from an educational neuroscience perspective

## *El potencial de la inteligencia artificial en la mejora del aprendizaje y bienestar estudiantil: prácticas pedagógicas innovadoras desde una neurociencia educativa*

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### Abstract

Artificial intelligence represents a cutting-edge technological system that is expected to transform the contemporary educational landscape. In this sense, the analysis of how the brain processes information to learn represents a starting point for the configuration of this technology in education. To really understand how artificial intelligence is being integrated into the educational context and the role of educational neurosciences in it, a documentary review was carried out that studied 89 empirical investigations published in Scopus between 2019 and 2024 in English. The result was that this technological advance constitutes an unprecedented advantage for the personalization of learning based on the individual needs of students. Even so, it is important to take into account the ethical challenges inherent in the use of technologies. Considerations on data protection and information security must be taken into account for its implementation. Overall, this research offers an analysis of the possibilities of implementing these technologies in education to improve student learning and well-being.

**Keywords:** artificial intelligence, learning, well-being, education, neurosciences.

### Resumen

La inteligencia artificial representa un sistema tecnológico de vanguardia que se espera transforme el panorama educacional contemporáneo. En este sentido, el análisis de cómo el cerebro procesa la información para aprender representa un punto de partida para la configuración de esta tecnología en la educación. Para conocer realmente cómo se está integrando la inteligencia artificial en el contexto educativo y la función de las neurociencias educacionales en ello, se realizó una revisión documental que estudió 89 investigaciones empíricas publicadas en Scopus entre 2019 y 2024 en idioma inglés. Se obtuvo como resultado que este avance tecnológico constituye una ventaja sin precedente para la personalización del aprendizaje en función de las necesidades individuales de los estudiantes. Aun así, es importante tener en cuenta los desafíos éticos inherentes al empleo de tecnologías. Consideraciones sobre la protección de datos y seguridad de la información deben tenerse en cuenta para su implementación. En conjunto, esta investigación ofrece un análisis de las posibilidades de implementación de estas tecnologías en la educación para la mejora del aprendizaje y bienestar estudiantil.

**Palabras clave:** inteligencia artificial, aprendizaje, bienestar, educación, neurociencias.

## INTRODUCTION

According to Posso-Pacheco *et al.* (2024), education is undergoing a remarkable transformation, which, Valencia Celis *et al.* (2023) emphasize, is increasingly associated with the development of new teaching methods. From the perspective of neurosciences applied to education, Yin (2022) and Yue *et al.* (2022) emphasize the need for a neuropsychology adapted to technological advances to improve the educational process, especially with the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (*Artificial Intelligence*, AI, for its commonly used abbreviation).

In this context, the study of education from neuroscience focuses on understanding the brain mechanisms underlying learning and, based on these data, as Ruiz Díaz De Salvioni (2023) points out, developing strategies to facilitate academic performance in students. Following this line focused on the analysis of academic performance and its study from neuroscience, Boussouf *et al.* (2024) suggest that the capacity of AI to analyze information in detail should not be disregarded in the design of strategies to improve student learning. This idea is corroborated by Chen *et al.* (2020), who predict that the combination of technologies and the brain principles of learning facilitate the acquisition of knowledge. Going further, Xuan *et al.* (2021) also emphasize the potential of these two disciplines to foster an educational environment focused on the needs of each student.

Following this line of ideas, integrating educational neuroscience and AI improves the two essential aspects in the pedagogical context: learning and student well-being (Del Campo Saltos *et al.*, 2023). Although it is important to point out, in order to avoid theoretical reductionism, that the integration of these two components includes addressing crucial aspects for adequate student development and, therefore, integrates the study of motivation, self-esteem and resilience (Dubinsky *et al.*, 2019; Schwartz *et al.*, 2019; Mykhaylenko *et al.*, 2024).

Now, the interest of this research in offering considerations on the importance of understanding how the brain processes, interprets, and ultimately enables learning focuses on the validity of studies that point to the importance of this body

of knowledge for designers of AI systems (S-AI), for example, to develop effective systems to improve the well-being and learning process of students (Baena-Navarro *et al.*, 2024; Holzer *et al.*, 2021; Immordino-Yang *et al.*, 2019). In this sense, Gama Espinosa *et al.* (2024) emphasize that systems based on the use of AI have been shown to adapt learning content more dynamically according to the neurotypical particularities of students (Amaya Amado *et al.*, 2024; Hamal *et al.*, 2022; Wei *et al.*, 2021).

This research is justified in that, although several investigations highlight the importance of the integration of neurosciences and AI in education, it is not clear from the literature in which scenarios this complementation can be best exploited to improve the teaching/learning process. Thus, this study aims to analyze recent contributions in the literature to identify the main educational contexts that can benefit from the use of AI from a neuroscience-based approach.

## METHOD

### Type of study

A qualitative, documentary review approach was used, in accordance with the specifications of Wilson & Anagnostopoulos (2021). In order to comply with the objectives set, the research was structured in three stages focused on clearly defining the scope of the study, the methodology for the search and selection of information, and the process of analysis and synthesis of the texts.

According to Furlong and Lester (2022) this is the appropriate structure for a qualitative documentary review study.

### Stage 1: Definition of the scope of the investigation

Clear criteria were established for the selection of sources. They considered the relevance, methodological quality and timeliness of the studies. The inclusion and exclusion criteria for this research are shown in Table 1. To ensure that the results of this research were based on research of high scientific rigor, no opinion texts or non-academic sources were selected.

**Table 1**  
*Criteria for selection of bibliographic sources*

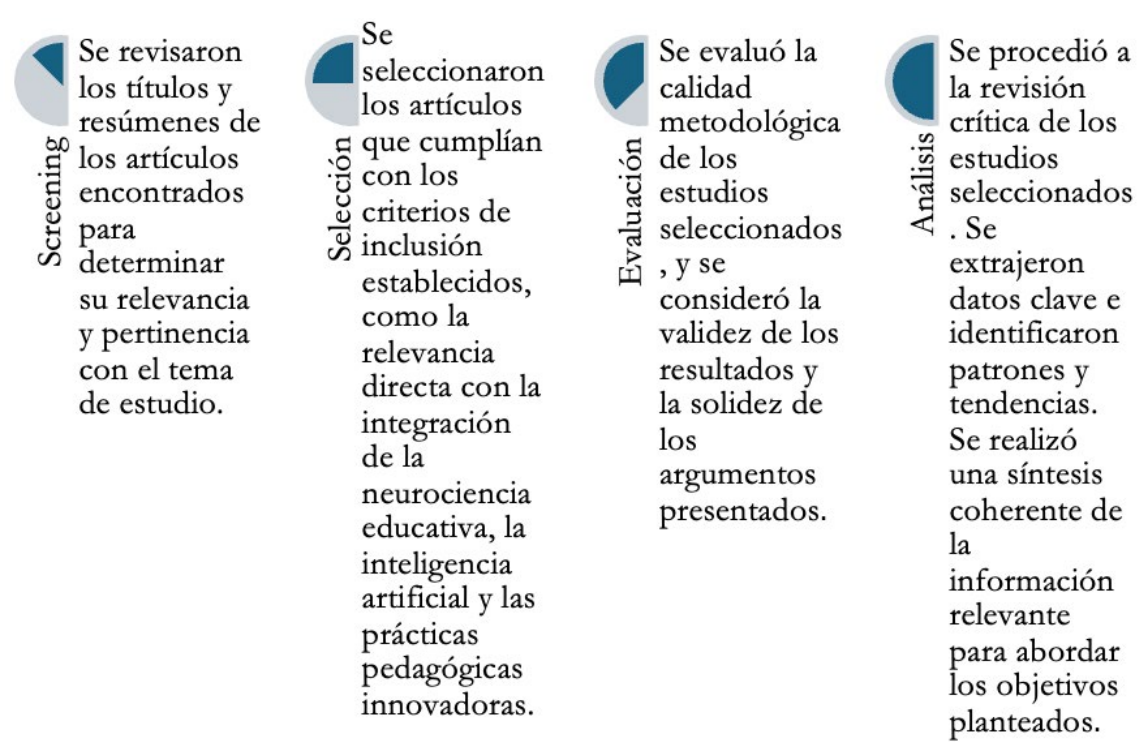
| Criteria               | Content                                                                                    |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Relevance              | Research directly addressing the integration of educational neuroscience and AI            |
| Methodological quality | Original research, review or meta-analysis with methodological soundness in their results. |
| Actuality              | Articles published between 2019 and 2024 in English                                        |

Source. Prepared by the authors.

**Stage 2: Process of search and selection of bibliographic sources**

The search for bibliographic sources was carried out in the Scopus database by combining keywords and content and temporality filters reflected in the information search formula: (TITLE-ABS-KEY (“artificial intelligence” AND “enhancing learning”) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY (“student well-being” AND “innovative pedagogical practices”) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY (“educational neuroscience”)) AND PUBYEAR > 2019-2024 AND LANGUAGE(“English”). As can be seen, Boolean operators and date and language filters were used to identify research in a precise way, and a structured selection process was used to identify relevant content as suggested by Furlong and Lester (2022) (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1**  
*Proceso de selección de fuentes*



Source. Prepared by the authors.

As suggested by Wilson & Anagnostopoulos (2021), the content analysis methodology was used to identify the main units of analysis in the literature consulted. The coding method selected was the open coding method of Siddaway et al. (2019) whereby a previously defined code is assigned to the data to identify the units of analysis by keywords. After identifying the units of analysis by keywords in the ATLAS.ti software, they were grouped into thematic content units as suggested by Furlong & Lester (2022) to achieve a thematic synthesis consistent with the search results. Finally, 89 articles were selected for this research.

The units of analysis by keywords subtracted from the 89 selected articles allowed the elaboration of thematic units of content (see Figure 2). Precisely according to these units, this section was structured.

[illegible]

However, when interpreting the key words, it was observed as a limitation that they did not clearly reflect the main application scenarios of AI in pedagogy, nor its relationship with educational neuroscience. To address this limitation, a manual coding of the content was carried out in a mind map format (see Figure 2). This mind map sought to reflect the theoretical organization necessary for the elaboration of the thematic content units and to understand the theoretical interconnection among the selected investigations.

**Figure 3**  
*Thematic units of content*



Source. Prepared by the authors

**Integration of AI and educational neuroscience in pedagogy**

As a starting point, it is important to clarify that learning is a complex cognitive process that involves the interconnection of cognitive, emotional and contextual factors. On this basis, the joint papers by Feng & Law (2021) and Nazari *et al.* (2021) highlight that the integration of educational neuroscience and AI offers remarkable advantages for improving learning and, ultimately, the education system in general.

Primeramente, esta interacción permitió personalizar el sistema de enseñanza-aprendizaje. Esto fue posible gracias a que los sistemas tecnológicos que usa AI demostraron la capacidad de analizar los patrones cognitivos de aprendizaje de los estudiantes y ajustar el contenido a sus particularidades personales (Maghsudi *et al.*, 2021; Murtaza *et al.*, 2022).

Secondly, the capacity of the AI to provide instant feedback was shown in the study by Cañón Solano *et al.* (2024) to allow students to identify their strengths and weaknesses in the

study, as well as to receive recommendations for improvement. Another similar study conducted by Zhang *et al.* (2021) showed its predictive power in relation to academic performance as a function of information processing, as well as the possibility of suggesting preventive measures.

Despite these benefits, one cannot fail to mention the ethical and privacy issues inherent in the use of AI. In this regard, Bozkurt *et al.* (2021) warns of the importance of protecting students' personal data. In parallel, Zapata Muriel *et al.* (2024) point out that the S-AI used should be designed based on scientific evidence and used ethically because of the information handling involved.

Although these ethical challenges raise issues of concern to say the least, it cannot be ignored that this integration implies an advance in the educational process by generating personalized learning systems and improving decision making (Zapata Muriel *et al.*, 2024). As Acuña Mendoza and Torres Brugués (2024) excellently remark, educators can make these systems an unsurpassed tool for developing more efficient learning strategies. In this line of thought, Ahmad *et al.* (2021) and Tapalova *et al.* (2022) mention that they also allow the creation of more flexible learning scenarios, which in their studies proved to increase the inclusion and equity of the educational system.

Based on this synthesis, it is the opinion of the author of this text that the educational system should not depend only on the personalization of these technologies, which would lead to the suppression of the role of the educational counselor. Rather, the importance of human interaction in the pedagogical process and the value of the joint work of technology/human is emphasized. To substantiate this assertion, Tymoshenko *et al.* (2024) emphasize that AI should not replace the affective/emotional/social connection that teachers establish with their students. Ultimately, the use of AI should only occur in an environment where the holistic well-being and development of the students who benefit from this technology is prioritized (Pérez Gamboa *et al.*, 2022).

### **Improved student learning and well-being**

This thematic unit of content is focused on continuing the aspects addressed in the previous section, but from the perspective of improving learning and well-being through the use of AI as

adequately remarked by Kumar *et al.* (2023). In this sense, Dignum (2021) speaks of AI facilitating teachers and counselors to identify difficulties in student performance from an unprejudiced conception (García-Martínez *et al.*, 2023).

From a neuropsychological perspective, AI can leverage the executive functioning capacity of the students to improve their ability to adopt content and adjust the pace of learning to their needs. To give an example, it has been shown that these technological systems can analyze cortical activation patterns in areas associated with executive functioning with an emphasis on the neuropsychological particularities of each learner. This, as demonstrated by Nadji-Tehrani and Eslami (2020) and Richards *et al.* (2019), can improve the retention and comprehension abilities of the students.

According to the information processing theory, which establishes that the brain processes information sequentially, Kim *et al.* (2023) found that S-AI when analyzing learning patterns in students favored the improvement of executive functions such as self-regulation and autonomy when studying. In parallel, Iterbeke *et al.* (2020) and Miranda-Moreno & Sandoval-Obando (2024) state that this is due to the fact that instantaneous feedback significantly consolidates memory and learning.

Another important point to be addressed is neurodiversity in education. In this order of ideas, the AI proved in the study by Jiménez-Pitre *et al.* (2023) to facilitate educational accessibility and inclusion by offering learning opportunities adapted to the needs of the students. This allowed greater inclusion in students with disabilities or special needs (Salas-Pilco *et al.*, 2022; Srivastava *et al.*, 2021).

The analysis of emotional response patterns in students was another key element highlighted in studies such as those of Klos *et al.* (2021) and Pal *et al.* (2022), from which it was possible to develop strategies for the reduction of academic stress and anxiety. In addition, this pattern identification evidenced to predict mental health problems (Machuca-Contreras *et al.*, 2024; Pérez Valdivia *et al.*, 2024) and to offer suggestions for more efficient student support (Barrera León *et al.*, 2024; Li *et al.*, 2022; Liu & Wang, 2022).

As noted in the previous section, it is essential that system developers and educators work

together to address the ethical challenges involved in the use of AI in education (Noroña González *et al.*, 2023). For this reason, López González (2023) emphasizes that only an ethical and responsible approach will ensure that these technologies contribute positively to the well-being of students and to the educational process.

### **Challenges in the implementation of AI in education**

One of the main challenges in the implementation of AI-based teaching practices, as noted above, is how to ensure that educational data obtained from students are handled with privacy and security (Araujo Inastrilla, 2023; Cabuquin *et al.*, 2024; Gonzalez-Argote, Alonso-Galbán, *et al.*, 2023; Luan *et al.*, 2020; Zhan *et al.*, 2022). Based on this concern, Chavez *et al.* (2023) and Yi & Li (2022) warn about the need for educational policies and regulations that guarantee the protection of these personal data in students as a starting point for the use of these technologies in this context (Ogolodom *et al.*, 2023; Velásquez Castro & Paredes-Águila, 2024).

While, on the one hand, the need for the human factor in the implementation of S-AI has been advocated, on the other hand, the biases and prejudices inherent to human beings are not ruled out. In this sense, Baker and Hawn (2021) emphasize that this can lead to unfair and discriminatory outcomes, mainly in socially disadvantaged groups (Chen *et al.*, 2020; Palomino Quispe *et al.*, 2024; Sahlgren, 2021; Zafari *et al.*, 2022). Additionally, for educators to use AI in personalizing learning requires that they have an understanding of the principles of educational neuropsychology (Sanchez Cabezas *et al.*, 2024). For this reason, Chen *et al.* (2020) and Maghsudi *et al.* (2021) note the need for them to understand how the brain processes information to support learning based on the neuroplasticity theory.

Transparency is another key factor to take into account for the implementation of educational practices based on AI and emerges as a determining factor in the presence or not of the discriminatory biases addressed in the previous paragraph (Buiten, 2019). In this sense, it is well noted by Pagano *et al.* (2023) that transparency will also be necessary for educators and students to understand the decision-making process behind the data generated. Furthermore, in order to be able to adapt to the particularities

of the student body, the design of S-AI must be sensitive to curricular changes (Chiu, 2021; Dai *et al.*, 2022; Gonzalez-Argote, Lepez, *et al.*, 2023).

Another challenge that should not be overlooked in this analysis is related to the acquisition of competencies based on the development obtained in experience (Estrada-Araoz *et al.*, 2024). From this point of view, education transcends the mere acquisition of knowledge by contributing to the acquisition of social skills and critical thinking, according to Cantón Balcázar (2024) and Junco Luna (2023). Therefore, it is worth noting that the AI can replace the human role in some tasks, but should never under any circumstances bypass human interaction and the emotional factor as essential elements for learning and development (Anderson *et al.*, 2022; Cope *et al.*, 2020; Dai *et al.*, 2022; Ninaus & Sailer, 2022; Oladokun *et al.*, 2024). For this worrying situation to be avoided, Abramowitz & Antonenko (2022) point out that teachers must possess skills in using these technologies effectively, as well as manage to efficiently interpret the data generated and offer support networks to their students in their learning process (Ayouni *et al.*, 2021; Dai *et al.*, 2022; Chen *et al.*, 2020; MacCann *et al.*, 2019; Olusegun Oyetola *et al.*, 2024; Rozov, 2020).

## **CONCLUSIONS**

This study evidenced the role of AI integration in education. In this context, the technology behind this advance appears as an unprecedented personalization of teaching by adapting to the need of each student. However, it should be noted that there are still a number of concerns or ethical considerations to be taken into account to ensure its proper implementation in educational settings.

It is essential to guarantee the transparency and security of the data, as well as the protection and security of the information handled by the S-AI. For these technologies to be applied efficiently in the educational context, it is necessary to take into account the particularities of learning of each student, in this sense, educational neurosciences provide a unique point of view by analyzing the particularities of student development and how the brain processes information to learn. Finally,

another essential element is the training of teachers on the use of AI, which will guarantee an efficient application and an open mentality in the face of the emerging boom of these technologies.

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#### Rol de los autores / Authors Roles:

**DDDG:** Design conception, analysis of results and review..

**Competing interests:** The author declares under oath not to have incurred in any conflict of interest in the preparation of this paper.

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