

AI-RELATED TERMINOLOGY IN ENGLISH AS A REFLECTION OF AI APPLICATION IN BUSINESS – A CORPUS-DRIVEN STUDY

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A recent expansion of artificial intelligence (AI) has greatly shaped and impacted our lives, including organizations which use it in their business operations. It has also led to the emergence of AI-related terminology in English. Words such as AI-driven, AI-powered, AI-enabled, and AI-assisted used in business context indicate the complex and rapidly evolving role of AI in business. This study focuses on how these and similar phrases reflect the use of AI in business operations across a variety of industries and functional areas in business organisations. Adopting a corpus-driven approach, we analysed the frequency of selected AI-related phrases across different business sectors as presented in online media reports in English. Our findings show that AI has made its way into a vast range of business operations across different industries. Also, we highlight how these phrases, which may sometimes appear similar, reflect the functional diversity of AI applications. By analysing the scope of and the terminological distinctions between these phrases, our study adds to the clarification of the functions of AI in business and provides a precise vocabulary for discussing its many applications.

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1 Introduction

In recent years, a surge in artificial intelligence (AI) use has brought about profound changes in the way societies function. This also applies to the world of business, ranging from the entire economies to individual industry sectors and individual business organizations. Concerning the latter, the rapid expansion of AI has transformed operational processes at different levels. We may argue that there is hardly an industry sector today that has not yet been affected by or has not yet introduced the use of AI, or that AI has not yet made its way into business operations within various functional areas.

The increased use of AI in many spheres is also reflected in the English language with the emergence of AI-related adjectival phrases which indicate its various applications. Examples of such phrases are *AI-enabled 'X'*, *AI-powered 'X'*, *AI-generated 'X'*, *AI-driven 'X'*, *AI-based 'X'*, *AI-supported 'X'*. While these terms might appear similar at first glance, they nevertheless differ in the scope of AI engagement. Therefore, it is important to understand how these phrases are different from one another, i.e. what conceptual differences they express, as it points to the extent to which businesses and economies rely on AI or, in other words, the extent to which humans (still) control and manage business operations.

The aim of this contribution is to report on our analysis of the frequency of different AI-related phrases in media discourse in terms of various forms and levels of AI application in business contexts. We first give a brief foundation for the study by focusing on the use of AI in business. We also touch upon the grammatical category of 'ed-participles' in adjectival compounds functioning as premodifiers in noun phrases in English (i.e. the structures under investigation in the study). Next, we explain how the research was conducted. After that, we present and discuss our results. We conclude the paper by highlighting our key findings.

2 Theoretical framework

This section of the paper brings a brief overview of how AI is applied and used in today's business across different industries or functional areas and a short presentation of 'ed-participles' in adjectival compounds functioning as premodifiers in business-related noun phrases, which are the focus of our research.

2.1 AI use in business contexts

In recent years, AI has made its way into various industries and business operations at different degrees of integration from AI-supported processes to full integration of AI with AI-generated content. We may argue that today there is hardly any industry or business function that has not been impacted by AI, including marketing and advertising, finance and banking, supply chain management and logistics, human resources and recruitment, to name but a few. Table 1 shows examples of AI use or AI integration across these industries / business functions.

Table 1: The use / application of AI across industries or business functions

industry / business function	examples of ai use or ai integration
marketing / advertising	marketing-related decision-making, marketing-related operational efficiency, relationship marketing, marketing content creation, B2B marketing, branding, advertising design, virtual (AI) influencers, marketing automation, sales predictions, etc.
finance and banking (including insurance industry)	customer support chatbots in consumer banking, boosting financial performance of banks, financial security, capital markets, money transfers, insurance-related customer segmentation, premium calculations, claim settlements, personalized insurance products, etc.
supply chain management and logistics	inventory management, costs reduction, the minimization of the supply/demand mismatch, industry-related supply chain, country-related supply chain, etc.
human resource management and recruitment	overall recruitment practices, job postings, pre-screening processes, background investigation of candidates, ranking of the candidates, etc.

(Sources: Ali & Kallach, 2024; Ali et al., 2024; Anwar et al., 2023; Baffour Gyau et al., 2024; Bamberger et al., 2025; Bonechi et al., 2024; Corea, 2019a; Corea, 2019b; Deng et al., 2024; Ford et al., 2023; Gieselmann et al., 2025; Graham et al., 2025; Hartmann et al., 2025; Hendriksen, 2023; Jafar et al., 2023; Jorzik et al., 2024; Keegan et al., 2022; Kumar et al., 2024; Li et al., 2024; Manning et al., 2022; Mithas et al., 2022; Osadchaya et al., 2024; Praveen et al., 2019; Raab et al., 2025; Roumbanis, 2025; Roy et al., 2025; Sjödin et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2024; Yum et al., 2022).

2.2 Ed-participles in adjectival compounds functioning as premodifiers in noun phrases

Adjectives (and adjectival compounds) are words which attribute certain qualities or characteristics to nouns or noun phrases. In other words, they clearly identify them and provide descriptive details about them (Biber et al., 2021, p. 511). In this attributive function, they are positioned before the noun (or noun phrase) (e.g. *innovative* solutions, *analytical* approach). Formally, adjectival compounds take many

different forms (Biber et al., 2021, p. 530), and one of them is the form including the ‘ed-participle’ structure. The ed-participles are derived from verbs, e.g. *to assist* (verb) ® *assisted* (‘ed-participle’), *to produce* (verb) ® *produced* (‘ed-participle’), *to make* ® *made* (‘ed-participle’). Semantically, they express the same meaning as the corresponding verbs (as the words which describe some kind of action), and any verb can be used in the ‘ed-participle’ structure. In adjectival compounds, they function as suffixes, i.e. they come after the preceding word, and they show who or what carried out the action (e.g. *self-made*, *government-assisted*, *AI-driven*, *AI-supported*).

Adjectival compounds represent a compact, integrated form of expression and they are an efficient way of compressing information into two-word construction instead of longer expressions in the form of a clause which gives the same information, which is very common in news reports (e.g. The new *AI-based system* optimizes critical business operations. / The new system, *which is based on AI*, optimizes critical business operations.) (Biber et al., 2021, p. 532).

Based on the above foundations, we formulated the following research questions:

1. Which AI-related adjectival compounds (i.e. ‘*AI+ed-participle*’ structures) as premodifiers in noun phrases most frequently occur in media reports on the use of AI in the broad economic and business contexts?
2. How do AI-related adjectival compounds express the level of AI involvement in its use?

3 Methodology

To answer our research questions, we adopted a corpus-driven approach. As our aim was to analyse the occurrence of the AI-related phrases in online media reports, we used the NOW corpus as the basis for the study. The NOW corpus is an extensive online corpus with over billion words of data from online newspapers and magazines in English across the world from 2010 to the present time and is growing on daily basis (*English-Corpora: NOW*, n.d.). We approached the analysis in several steps, with each consecutive step building on the previous one and bringing more in-depth results.

We first created a list of words including ‘AI-’ (i.e. *AI-**). This output was then refined by manually extracting the phrases with the ‘*AI+ed-participle*’ structure (e.g. *AI-based*, *AI-driven*, *AI-informed*, *AI-produced*, *AI-optimized*). To limit our research, we extracted 50 most frequent structures (verbs) for further analysis. The second step was the categorization of the ‘*AI+ed-participle*’ structures into separate groups based on the scope of AI involvement in the processes. This was done by analysing the meanings of each ‘ed-participle’ (functioning as the adjective describing a state resulting from the verb the ‘ed-participle’ derives from, e.g. ‘*to optimise – optimised*’, ‘*to base – based*’, ‘*to generate – generated*’, ‘*to assist – assisted*’). To find different shades of meaning of each ‘ed-participle’ and its related verb, we consulted three online dictionaries, i.e. Cambridge English Dictionary (Cambridge University Press, 2024), Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford University Press, 2024), and Collins Dictionary (Collins Dictionary, 2024). After this stage was done, we categorized the established adjectival compounds into groups based on the level of AI involvement / integration. We used Microsoft Excel spreadsheets to manage the data. The results of our analysis are given next.

4 Results and discussion

In this section we present and discuss our findings for each research question separately.

4.1 Research question 1

The first research question addressed the frequency of adjectival phrases structured ‘*AI+ed-participle*’ functioning as premodifiers in noun phrases. As presented in the methods section, we focused on the most frequently occurring verbs as ‘ed-participles’. Figure 1 presents those which occurred more than five hundred times in the NOW corpus.

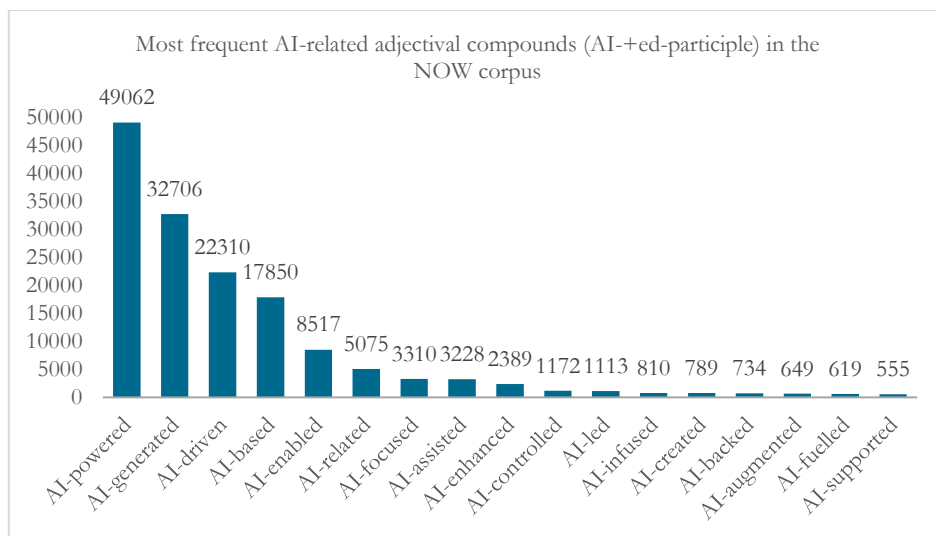


Figure 1: Most frequent AI-related adjectival compounds (AI+-ed-participle) in the NOW corpus.

The above Figure 1 shows a distinctive dominance of five verbs, which could be seen as a first potential indicator of the extent to which AI is integrated into various social, economic and business activities. That is, media reports most often address AI as being the tool which powers activities, generates various outputs, drives operations or activities or acts as their basis, makes some activities possible (i.e. it enables them), or AI helps or improves operations, tools, activities, etc.

Apart from the above most frequent verbs, the corpus included a number of those which were less frequent. Despite their lower frequency, they are nevertheless important as they show a variety of verbs that can be used to describe the applications of AI in the business context. Their frequencies are given in Figure 2 below.

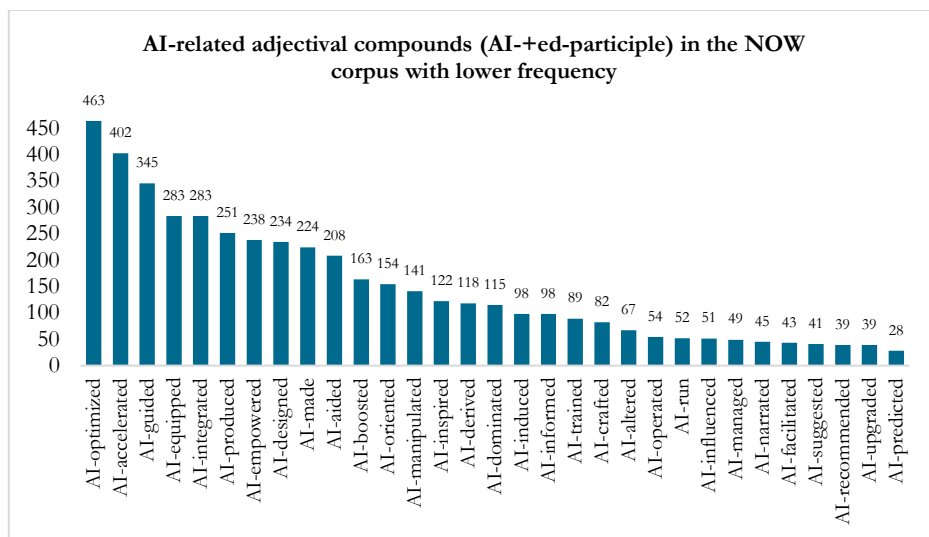


Figure 2: AI-related adjectival compounds (AI+ed-participle) in the NOW corpus with lower frequency.

4.3 Research question 2

The second research question was closely related to the first one, and it was aimed at categorizing the established adjectival compounds as premodifiers in noun phrases regarding the level of AI involvement from (almost) full AI control or autonomy over the processes to general association of AI with operations or activities. We established that AI usage ranges from AI as the autonomous creator to being a major tool and, on the other side of the scale, to being a supplementary tool in human decision-making. Apart from that, AI is presented as a contextual, underlying framework without explicit and direct involvement in operations.

We show these four categories in the descending order of AI control from its full control to its supplementary role with the lists of adjectival phrases given in alphabetical order.

A. Full control of AI, i.e. AI as autonomous creator

The first category comprises those adjectival compounds which show AI as the primary agent, i.e. as the driving force behind the processes where there is no human intervention or human intervention is minimal. The phrases found in the corpus are

AI-controlled, AI-crafted, AI-created, AI-designed, AI-dominated, AI-driven, AI-generated, AI-led, AI-made, AI-managed, AI-narrated, AI-operated, AI-produced, and AI-run.

To illustrate:

[1] *From interactive chatbots and augmented reality effects to AI-generated content, the AI features on Snapchat have increased, especially in recent days.* (GH (25-02-05))¹

[2] *Alinea Invest, a fintech app offering AI-powered wealth management aimed at Gen Z women, has \$3.4 million in seed funding ahead of the launch of a virtual AI assistant that will help users with their investing needs.* (US (24-01-24))

[3] *Over time, as the AIs continue to improve, hybrid subscription sites might emerge, with both human- and AI-produced content.* (ZA (24-04-07))

The common denominator of these adjectival compounds is creation and control. That is, they express AI's capacity for autonomous action or influence. As such, they show AI in the position of an active agent, i.e. something that is not passive but "has the ability to take action or to choose what action to take" (Cambridge University Press, 2024). Specifically, these terms show AI as something that can create, direct, or manage complex operations.

B. *Strong involvement of AI, i.e. AI as a significant contributor to human-led processes*

The second category of adjectival compounds includes those which point to AI as something that works together with humans or systems in a quite substantial way. The phrases found in the NOW corpus are *AI-accelerated, AI-altered, AI-augmented, AI-backed, AI-boosted, AI-empowered, AI-enhanced, AI-equipped, AI-fuelled, AI-guided, AI-infused, AI-integrated, AI-manipulated, AI-optimized, AI-powered, and AI-upgraded.*

We illustrate their use in business context with the following examples:

[4] *AI-accelerated organisations are also looking at benefits beyond productivity – operations- and process-level improvements, such as automating key business processes or redesigning roles to work with chatbots.* (ZA (24-11-05))

¹ The references in the brackets refer to concordance lines and sources in the NOW corpus (as accessed on 10th March 2025).

- [5] *But there's now also a new AI-backed tool to help business owners design their own visual asset [...] as well as a tool to help them write better email subject lines.* (US (20-09-22))
- [6] *These new AI-equipped products provide our consumers with a superior smart home experience and have received favorable market feedback and reviews.* (US (22-08-22))

Collectively, the phrases in this category express strong involvement of AI in (business) operations. That is, AI is seen as a significant and complementary tool, as something that substantially enhances human activities by being incorporated in these activities without replacing humans as the agents. Here, AI is not an independent agent, but it amplifies human-led processes and human abilities by, for example, improving efficiency and speed of operations, by optimizing, supporting and directing workflows, by providing support validation for human decisions, etc.

C. *Supportive role of AI, i.e. AI as a supplementary tool in human-led processes*

The third group of adjectival compounds in our analysis contains those which show AI as something that aids human activities, but not at the same extent and scope as was the case with the second category. Here, we find phrases such as *AI-assisted*, *AI-aided*, *AI-supported*, *AI-facilitated*, *AI-informed*, *AI-suggested*, *AI-recommended*, *AI-influenced*, and *AI-predicted*. The following examples from the NOW corpus show their use in context:

- [7] *The 2023 holiday shopping season saw the highest average discount rate since 2020 and an increase in AI-influenced purchases, according to new research by Salesforce.* (ZA (24-01-12))
- [8] *The OTAs are well prepared to make bookable any AI-suggested itinerary with their 2.5 million multi-room accommodation establishments.* (US (23-05-08))
- [9] *Meta's pivot towards AI-recommended content, which has received mixed feedback, may also be contributing to more time spent on the platform.* (SG (24-10-12))

Overall, the 'ed-participles' in the above adjectival compounds point to the AI having a supporting or assisting role or function and humans maintain primary control over the processes. That is, AI is a helpful tool which only supplements human work and does not fundamentally transform it. It helps individuals perform their tasks more effectively, it makes processes easier. Also, AI provides data-driven information, insights, options, and recommendations which humans may either accept or reject. In other words, humans retain agency when it comes to processes

and operations, i.e. they are in control, and they use AI selectively to improve specific aspects of their work-related processes.

D. AI as a framework, i.e. general reference to and broad association with AI

The last group of adjectival compounds in our analysis was the group which contained those cases that point to AI's principles or technology rather than its direct involvement in human-led operations. The phrases we found in the NOW corpus are *AI-based*, *AI-derived*, *AI-focused*, *AI-induced*, *AI-inspired*, *AI-oriented*, *AI-related*, and *AI-trained*. The examples below illustrate their use in business context:

[10] *India has been ranked 2nd on the Stanford AI Vibrancy Index primarily on account of its AI-trained workforce.* (IN (22-02-16))

[11] *Findings from Bain & Company revealed that AI-related job postings have surged by 21% annually since 2019, with compensation for such roles increasing 11% in the same period.* (SG (25-03-05))

[12] *AI interfaces and chatbots have redefined customer services, and its growing popularity will enable the AI-oriented fintech market to expand at a CAGR of 21.72% during the (2021-2026) period.* (IN (21-10-23))

The common denominator of adjectival compounds in this category is conceptual association. That is, they show different connections to AI in the sense that AI is the source of or the foundation for ideas, a point of reference. Further, they do not express the active role of AI in processes. In other words, AI is perceived as the context of and not as the agent in operations.

5 Conclusions

Our paper addressed the integration and use of AI in business from a linguistic perspective. That is, based on a corpus of online news and media reports in English regarding the use of AI in business, we examined specifics of AI-related terminology. Specifically, we focused on adjectival compounds structured as '*AI-+ed-participle*'. Our key takeaways from this linguistic study are the following.

First, there are many verbs in English which are associated with the application of AI. This is the primary indicator of its growing role in business and, consequently, economies around the world. Second, the spectrum of AI-related terminology in

English as researched in our study spans from AI being presented as having full autonomy (i.e. AI operates independently and generates or controls outputs) via strong integration of AI in human work (i.e. AI significantly optimizes or enhances business processes) to AI being only a supportive tool (i.e. AI assists human work, such as operations, decision-making), a source of information and insights. Apart from these three categories, AI serves as a conceptual framework rather than being directly involved in business operations.

Connecting the business aspect and the linguistic aspect, we can argue that understanding AI integration-related linguistic nuances as presented in this contribution may help in preparing further frameworks for addressing AI implementation in business and the economy. Our results may also serve as food for thought regarding the impact of AI on business practices and its (ethical) implications. From a purely linguistic perspective, we see that AI-related terminology is evolving and may predict that new English terms connected with its use will continue to emerge. Overall, our study adds to the understanding how language reflects the multifaceted relationship between AI and business operations in various industries.

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