

Mutual Engagement in Virtual Spaces: Unveiling the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Shaping Teaching Practices

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Abstract

This qualitative case study investigates the mutual engagement of English language teachers in Virtual Communities of Practice (VCoPs) when discussing the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in English Language Teaching (ELT). After an analysis of 235 initial posts and 1,712 responses from six open Facebook groups, it is clear that these online communities play a crucial role in supporting Teacher Professional Development (TPD) and enhancing teachers' engagement with AI in ELT. The study reveals how teachers actively engage in discussions, share resources, and collaboratively navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by AI in education. The findings further demonstrate that mutual engagement in these groups extends beyond simple information exchange, fostering collaborative learning and reflective practice among teachers. While the study does not directly examine the effectiveness of AI implementation in teaching contexts, it highlights the significance of online teacher communities in deepening understanding and engagement with AI technologies in ELT. Acknowledging its focused approach, the study suggests future research avenues, such as exploring a broader range of online communities and conducting longitudinal studies, to further assess AI's long-term impacts on ELT.

Keywords: mutual engagement; virtual communities of practice; artificial intelligence; teacher professional development; Facebook

Introduction

The emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the realm of education, specifically in the context of English Language Teaching (ELT), represents a significant and impactful change. Several studies highlight the increasing significance of artificial intelligence (AI) in different areas, such as the handling of administrative tasks, evaluation of student performance data, and the creation of personalized learning resources to meet students' individual needs. In the field of English Language Teaching (ELT), AI tools are designed to meet various learning needs, resulting in improved student performance in areas such as vocabulary development, comprehension skills, and pronunciation. These tools are also helpful for teachers in managing administrative tasks as well as fulfilling their pedagogical responsibilities.

As teachers continue to explore the potential of AI in language teaching, a critical question arises: how do teachers view these cutting-edge technologies? Understanding teacher perceptions is vital as the perspectives not only shape the adoption and impact of AI in teaching, but also guide how these tools are incorporated into the learning environment. After all, teachers are the key facilitators of students' learning experiences, and their attitudes towards AI can either facilitate a seamless transition to technology-driven education or hinder its progress.

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Declaration of Possible Conflict of Interest

There is no possible conflict of interest that may arise.