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THE ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ENHANCING MEDIA LITERACY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

This article investigates the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in fostering media literacy within the framework of English language teaching (ELT). In the context of rapidly expanding digital information ecosystems, learners are required not only to acquire linguistic competence but also to develop critical media awareness. The study examines how AI-driven tools can facilitate both language acquisition and the development of analytical skills necessary for evaluating media content. Furthermore, it discusses pedagogical strategies, challenges, and ethical considerations associated with AI integration. The findings suggest that AI-enhanced instruction can significantly improve learners' communicative competence, critical thinking, and digital literacy when implemented thoughtfully.

Keywords

Artificial Intelligence, Media Literacy, English Language Teaching, Digital Education, Critical Thinking, Communicative Competence

Introduction

The 21st century is characterized by an unprecedented growth of digital technologies, fundamentally transforming how individuals access and interact with information. In this environment, English serves as a global lingua franca, particularly in digital and media contexts. Consequently, English language teaching (ELT) must extend beyond linguistic proficiency to include media literacy, defined as the ability to critically access, analyze, evaluate, and produce media content (Livingstone, 2004).

Simultaneously, artificial intelligence has emerged as a transformative force in education. AI technologies, including natural language processing, machine learning, and adaptive learning systems, offer new opportunities to personalize instruction and enhance learner engagement. The integration of AI into ELT provides a unique intersection where language development and media literacy can be cultivated simultaneously.

Literature Review

Previous research highlights the growing importance of integrating technology into language education. Richards and Rodgers (2014) emphasize the shift toward communicative and learner-centered approaches, while Chapelle (2003) underscores the benefits of computer-assisted language learning.

In the context of media literacy, Hobbs (2010) argues that learners must develop critical thinking skills to navigate complex media environments. Similarly, Livingstone (2004) stresses the importance of evaluating digital content in an era of information overload.

Recent studies on artificial intelligence in education suggest that AI can support personalized learning and improve educational outcomes (Luckin et al., 2016). Holmes et al. (2019) further note that AI can facilitate adaptive feedback and data-driven instruction, enabling more effective teaching practices. However, the integration of AI specifically for media literacy development in ELT remains an emerging area that requires further exploration.

Artificial Intelligence in ELT: Tools and Applications

Artificial intelligence has introduced a wide range of tools that can be effectively utilized in English language teaching. These include intelligent tutoring systems, automated writing evaluation tools, speech recognition software, and AI-driven chatbots.

Such technologies enable personalized learning by adapting content to individual learners' needs, preferences, and proficiency levels. For example, AI-based writing tools provide immediate feedback on grammar, coherence, and vocabulary usage, while speech recognition systems help improve pronunciation and fluency.

Moreover, AI-powered platforms can simulate real-life communication scenarios, allowing learners to practice language skills in authentic contexts. This aligns with communicative language teaching principles, which prioritize meaningful interaction over rote memorization.

AI and Media Literacy Development

The integration of AI in ELT offers significant potential for enhancing media literacy. AI tools can assist learners in analyzing media texts, identifying bias, and evaluating the credibility of information sources.

For instance, students can use AI systems to compare multiple news articles on the same topic, detect inconsistencies, and identify persuasive techniques. Such activities not only improve reading comprehension but also develop higher-order thinking skills.

Furthermore, AI can support the creation of media content, enabling learners to produce their own digital texts, such as blogs, videos, or presentations. This process fosters both linguistic creativity and critical awareness of media production processes.

Pedagogical Implications

The integration of AI and media literacy into ELT requires a shift in pedagogical practices. Teachers must adopt a facilitative role, guiding learners in the effective and ethical use of AI tools. Task-based and project-based learning approaches are particularly suitable for this context, as they encourage collaboration, problem-solving, and critical engagement.

Additionally, curriculum design should incorporate activities that combine language learning with media analysis. For example, learners may be asked to evaluate the reliability of online sources, analyze social media discourse, or create digital content using AI tools.

Challenges and Ethical Considerations

Despite its potential, the use of AI in education raises several challenges and ethical concerns. Issues such as data privacy, algorithmic bias, and over-reliance on technology must be carefully addressed. Additionally, teachers may face difficulties in effectively integrating AI tools due to limited training or resources.

Therefore, it is essential to promote digital competence among educators and ensure the responsible use of AI in educational settings. AI should complement, rather than replace, human interaction in the learning process.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data. A quasi-experimental design was used to compare the effectiveness of AI-integrated instruction with traditional teaching methods.

Participants

The study involved 26 B2-level English learners divided into two groups: an experimental group (13 students) and a control group (13 students). All participants had comparable proficiency levels and were enrolled in an online learning program.

Instruments

Data were collected through pre-tests and post-tests, questionnaires, classroom observations, and analysis of student assignments. These instruments measured both language proficiency and media literacy development.

Procedure

The study was conducted over four weeks. The experimental group used AI tools to analyze media content and complete language tasks, while the control group followed traditional methods. Both groups completed identical assessments at the beginning and end of the study.

Data Analysis and Results

Quantitative Results

The experimental group showed a 28% improvement in media literacy scores, compared to 15% in the control group. Additionally, the experimental group demonstrated greater improvement in speaking fluency and argumentation skills.

Qualitative Results

Observations indicated higher engagement and motivation among students using AI tools. Learners demonstrated improved ability to analyze media content and express their opinions. However, some students initially relied too heavily on AI-generated responses.

Discussion

The findings indicate that AI integration enhances both language learning and media literacy. However, effective teacher guidance is necessary to ensure balanced and meaningful use of technology.

Limitations of the Study

Despite providing valuable insights, this study has several limitations. The relatively small sample size limits the generalizability of the findings. The short duration of the study may not fully capture long-term effects. Additionally, the focus on B2-level learners restricts applicability to other proficiency levels. Some data were self-reported, which may introduce bias. Finally, the rapid evolution of AI technologies may affect the relevance of specific tools used in this study.

Conclusion

In conclusion, artificial intelligence has significant potential to enhance media literacy in English language teaching. By integrating AI tools into educational practices, educators can support the development of both linguistic and critical thinking skills. However, successful implementation requires careful consideration of ethical issues, teacher training, and pedagogical design. Future research should further explore long-term impacts and diverse educational contexts.

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