

Bridging The Gap: Language Teacher Understanding and Responsible AI Implementation in Schools. A Case Study of English Language Educators in Kubu Raya

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Abstract

This qualitative case study explores the perceptions and practices of English language educators regarding the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in educational settings. The study focuses on understanding how the utilization of AI impacts the professional development of language educators and how their perceptions of AI biases influence their willingness and capacity to advocate for responsible AI implementation. The study also examines the specific skill sets and knowledge domains required by language educators to effectively integrate AI tools into their pedagogical practices. Six English language educators, three high school teachers, and three lecturers in Kubu Raya, West Kalimantan, participated in the study. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. The findings suggest that while language educators recognize the potential benefits of AI in language learning, they have concerns about biases and ethical considerations. They also feel the need for additional training and support to effectively integrate AI tools into their teaching practices. The study contributes to our understanding of how language educators perceive and engage with AI in educational settings and provides insights for the responsible integration of AI tools in language education.

Keywords: Language Education, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Responsible AI Implementation, Professional Development, English Language Educators

Abstrak

Studi kasus kualitatif ini mengeksplorasi persepsi dan praktik pendidik bahasa Inggris mengenai integrasi alat kecerdasan buatan (AI) dalam lingkungan pendidikan. Studi ini berfokus pada pemahaman bagaimana pemanfaatan AI berdampak pada pengembangan profesional pendidik bahasa dan bagaimana persepsi mereka terhadap bias AI memengaruhi kemauan dan kapasitas mereka untuk mengadvokasi penerapan AI yang bertanggung jawab. Studi ini juga mengkaji keahlian khusus dan domain pengetahuan yang dibutuhkan oleh pendidik bahasa untuk secara efektif mengintegrasikan alat AI ke dalam praktik pedagogi mereka. Enam orang pendidik bahasa Inggris, tiga guru SMA, dan tiga dosen di Kubu Raya, Kalimantan Barat, ikut serta dalam penelitian tersebut. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi terstruktur, observasi kelas, dan analisis dokumen. Analisis tematik digunakan untuk menganalisis data. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa meskipun pendidik bahasa menyadari potensi manfaat AI dalam pembelajaran bahasa, mereka mempunyai kekhawatiran tentang bias dan pertimbangan etis. Mereka juga merasakan perlunya pelatihan dan dukungan tambahan untuk mengintegrasikan alat AI ke dalam praktik pengajaran mereka secara efektif. Studi ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman kita tentang bagaimana pendidik bahasa memandang dan terlibat dengan AI dalam lingkungan pendidikan dan memberikan wawasan tentang integrasi alat AI yang bertanggung jawab dalam pendidikan bahasa.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Bahasa, Kecerdasan Buatan, Implementasi AI yang Bertanggung Jawab, Pengembangan Profesi, Pendidik Bahasa Inggris

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Received 26 February 2024, Accepted 4 March 2024, Published 11 March 2024

INTRODUCTION

The educational landscape is undergoing a profound shift, driven by the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). While the potential of AI for personalized learning and educational efficiency is undeniable, its integration faces unique challenges, particularly in the realm

of language education. Understanding the perceptions and concerns of language educators - the human element crucial for successful learning - becomes paramount. This research delves into the perceptions of English language educators regarding AI, exploring their hopes, anxieties, and the knowledge gaps they identify for responsible integration.

Research suggests a dichotomy in language teacher perceptions of AI. Studies reveal excitement about AI's potential to personalize learning, offer data-driven insights, and automate repetitive tasks. Educators envision AI-powered tools assisting with grammar feedback, vocabulary acquisition, and individual learning pathways. According to Jones and Shao (2019), educators view AI as a means to provide personalized learning experiences and to support students with diverse learning needs. Additionally, AI is seen as a tool that can improve efficiency by automating administrative tasks and providing instant feedback on student work (Jones & Shao, 2019). However, these studies also unveil anxieties. Fears of AI replacing teachers, perpetuating biases in algorithms, and diminishing critical thinking skills are widely expressed. Interestingly, teachers with limited understanding of AI were more likely to hold negative perceptions, highlighting the need for knowledge-building to foster informed opinions. There is also a fear that AI might exacerbate existing inequalities in education, as access to AI tools and resources may be limited for some students.

The concerns and anxieties of English language educators regarding AI implementation primarily revolve around the potential biases within AI tools and the lack of knowledge and skills required for responsible AI integration. According to Johnson and Smith (2020), educators worry about the accuracy and fairness of AI algorithms, particularly in language assessment and grading. There is also a concern about the ethical implications of AI, including issues related to privacy, data security, and algorithmic bias (Huang, 2019). Educators fear that AI tools might perpetuate existing biases and stereotypes, disadvantaging certain student groups. Beyond general anxieties, specific concerns emerge related to language itself. Researchers point out how AI's dependence on data raises concerns about cultural and linguistic biases in algorithms, potentially misrepresenting diverse accents or dialects. The nuances of language, dependent on context and intention, pose challenges for AI to fully grasp. Moreover, educators report feeling inadequately equipped to utilize AI effectively. Studies highlight a lack of knowledge in areas like critical evaluation of AI tools, data literacy, and integrating AI pedagogically (Alhosban, 2021). The absence of training and support leaves them feeling unprepared to navigate the ethical and technical complexities of AI implementation.

English language educators feel they lack the knowledge and skills required for responsible AI integration. According to Smith and Brown (2018), educators express a need for training and professional development in AI technology. They feel ill-equipped to navigate the complexities of AI, including issues related to data privacy, algorithmic fairness, and the ethical use of AI tools in education. This complex tapestry of perceptions underscores the necessity for a nuanced approach to AI integration in language education. Fostering responsible implementation requires addressing various concerns. Transparency and Bias Education: Educators need transparent information about

data sources and algorithms to assess potential biases and ensure fair representation. Workshops and resources dedicated to critically evaluating AI tools can empower them to make informed decisions. Focus on Human-Centered Learning: AI should complement, not replace, the irreplaceable role of human educators. Integration must prioritize critical thinking, cultural understanding, and personalized guidance, leveraging AI's strengths for enhanced learning, not automation. Professional Development and Support: Targeted training programs equipping educators with technical skills, data literacy, and pedagogical methods for using AI ethically are crucial. Collaboration with developers and researchers can bridge the knowledge gap and create user-friendly, language-sensitive tools (Ali, 2020).

The key to successful AI integration lies in understanding its role as a powerful enhancer, not a replacement, for traditional teaching methods. Building on the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) Framework ((Mishra & Koehler, 2006), which emphasizes the integration of technology with pedagogical knowledge and content expertise, best practices include: Strategic Selection: Choosing AI tools aligned with specific learning objectives and educational aims, ensuring they complement and support teacher-led instruction. Human-Centered Integration: Using AI to facilitate interaction, personalized learning, and differentiated instruction, while prioritizing student agency, critical thinking, and human interaction. Continuous Reflection and Refinement: Regularly evaluating the impact of AI tools on student learning, assessing their effectiveness, and adjusting their use based on data and feedback, ensuring ethical considerations remain at the forefront. By embracing these practices, educators can harness the power of AI to create engaging, individualized learning experiences while preserving the irreplaceable value of human-centered teaching in language acquisition.

In conclusion, the integration of AI in language education holds immense potential, but it also poses unique challenges. Language educators express excitement about AI's ability to personalize learning and improve efficiency, but they also harbor anxieties about job displacement, biases in algorithms, and the lack of knowledge and skills required for responsible AI integration. Ethical considerations, particularly regarding fairness, transparency, and privacy, are paramount. Effective AI integration requires a nuanced approach, prioritizing transparency, human-centered learning, and ongoing professional development. By addressing these concerns and embracing best practices, educators can ensure that AI enhances language learning experiences while preserving the essential role of human educators. This research is valuable because it highlights the complexity and importance of responsible AI integration in language education, providing insights and guidance for educators and policymakers alike. The following research questions guide the inquiry:

1. To what extent does the utilization of artificial intelligence (AI) in educational settings impact the professional development of language educators?

2. In what manner do teachers' perceptions and understanding of potential biases within AI influence their willingness and capacity to advocate for the responsible implementation of AI tools within their respective schools and communities?
3. What specific skillsets and knowledge domains do language educators require to effectively integrate AI tools into their pedagogical practices and maintain their relevance in the digital era?"

METHOD

This qualitative research employs a descriptive approach to explore the perspectives and experiences of English language educators in Kubu Raya, Kalimantan Barat, Indonesia, regarding the implementation of AI in language teaching. The research methodology includes documentation analysis, classroom observations, and semi-structured interviews with six participants, consisting of three high school teachers and three English language lecturers. The documentation analysis involves reviewing relevant school policies, curriculum documents, and educational materials related to AI integration. Classroom observations provide insights into how AI tools are used in practice, while semi-structured interviews allow for in-depth exploration of participants' experiences, challenges, and ethical considerations.

Data Analysis

The data collected from documentation analysis, classroom observations, and interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. This involves identifying patterns, themes, and categories in the data to gain insights into the participants' perspectives and experiences. The analysis is iterative, involving constant comparison of data to refine themes and ensure the reliability and validity of the findings.

Ethical Considerations

The research in question follows ethical guidelines for conducting research with human participants and ensures their anonymity, confidentiality, and informed consent. Participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences. Data privacy and security, among other ethical issues of AI implementation, are explored in the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a ubiquitous presence in modern education, promising to revolutionize teaching and learning. Perceptions of AI Potential English language educators generally perceive AI as a promising tool that can enhance language learning experiences. According to Jones and Shao (2019), educators view AI as a means to provide personalized learning experiences and to support students with diverse learning needs. Additionally, AI is seen as a tool that can improve efficiency by automating administrative tasks and providing instant feedback on student work (Jones & Shao, 2019).

T1 expressed her opinion on the potential of AI

“After teaching for five years, I've learned a lot about how to teach languages and I really enjoy making my classes fun and interesting for my students. But I'll be honest with you - making a whole curriculum from scratch can be really hard! That's why I think AI could be really helpful for teachers like me who want to make sure that every student gets the best possible education.”

T2 agreed on the potential of AI as T2 refers it to be a “game changer”

“For me personally, AI presents exciting opportunities for professional development. Look what we have now..it is easy to have access to personalized learning platforms for educators.. In my writing class, I've use AI to check on my students' writing. This AI-powered feedback tools could illuminate my blind spots and provide data-driven insights into improving students' writing. Things I must say..I can't do all of that alone.. even if i try, I don't have enough time to do all of that.. You know..sometimes I am busy or sick at some days.. Just imagine..AI simulations that can offer safe spaces to practice new teaching methods and receive immediate feedback –it's a game-changer i must say.. for novice and veteran educators!

A relatively new teacher, T6, explores the idea of AI in classroom as follow:

“As a relatively new educator with two years under my belt, I've discovered the power of technology, particularly AI, in enhancing my teaching. From crafting modules to personalized content delivery, AI has been a valuable tool in my educational journey. AI offers educators like myself access to previously unimaginable resources. I remember the time I was student, it was difficult for sure.. But look what we have now..the vast libraries of relevant materials curated to specific learning objectives.. I can get access to all of that thanks to AI!! This saves me countless hours to get diverse, engaging content. Life becomes easier, I guess..”

However, there is also a fear and concerns of English language educators regarding AI implementation primarily revolve around the potential biases within AI tools and the lack of knowledge and skills required for responsible AI integration. According to Johnson and Smith (2020), educators worry about the accuracy and fairness of AI algorithms, particularly in language assessment and grading.

T3 delivered the ideas as follow:

“I've been a teacher for fifteen years now, and I've seen firsthand how important it is to connect with my students to help them learn. I've never been very interested in technology, especially AI, and to be honest, I'm not sure about it. My first thought is that AI might make it too easy for students to learn, and that could stop them from really understanding things. But I'm always ready to learn something new, even if it's something I'm not sure about. What I believe is that the most important part of learning is about more than just learning facts. It's about being curious, thinking carefully, and talking to other people. And that's something that only human teachers can do. I believe...”

T4 also agreed on the T3's idea, T4 said as follow:

“I've been teaching English for five years, and I've helped a lot of students learn about the beauty of the English language. But I'll be honest with you - using technology in class, especially something new like AI, isn't something I'm very good at. I'm not that old, but I do feel a bit nervous about it. I'm not sure how to use it in a way that helps my students learn without taking shortcuts.”

Among all the language educators, T5 express the most noticable doubts on the benefit and potential of AI use in classroom.

“I've never used AI in my classroom. From what I've seen, I think AI could make students

depend on it too much, so they might use it to find answers instead of really understanding the material. Some of my students have already started doing this. It's like AI is doing the work for them, instead of them doing it themselves. It's like it's making things too easy for them, and they're not really learning anything. That's why I'm not sure if I want to use AI in my classroom."

The utilization of artificial intelligence (AI) in educational settings has the potential to significantly impact the professional development of language educators. While AI-powered tools can offer personalized feedback, facilitate collaboration, and automate administrative tasks, there are also challenges and limitations that need to be addressed. By understanding the extent to which AI impacts the professional development of language educators, educators and policymakers can make informed decisions about the integration of AI in language education.

Freire's Critical Pedagogy, advocating for critical thinking and challenging power dynamics in education, encourages teachers to question technology and AI's role in society (Freire, 1970). Education, according to Freire (Giroux, 2004), should empower individuals to critique and transform oppressive systems. However, discussions about AI's impact on critical thinking skills, crucial for language learning and academic success, are scarce in the EFL context. EFL students and teachers may have varied responses to AI integration, ranging from excitement to skepticism (Alasadi & Baiz, 2023; DiGiacomo et al., 2023). Interviews with language educators reveal their hopes, concerns, and uncertainties surrounding the ethical use of AI tools.

T1 shares the opinion as below:

"I've been teaching for five years now, and I'm pretty comfortable with using technology. But when it comes to making the perfect lesson plan for each of my classes, it's still a bit tricky."

T2 adds his views on integrating technology in the classroom as below:

"I've been an English teacher for seven years, and I'm really excited about using technology to help my students learn. I've tried out different tools, and I think they make learning more fun and personal. But I'm also worried about how AI could be biased, and how that might affect how we use it in the classroom. It's important to think carefully about how we use AI, and how we talk about it with others."

A study by Rogers (2003) explains how teachers adopt new technologies based on perceived advantages, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. This theory can be used to understand how teachers' perceptions of AI biases might hinder or facilitate their adoption and advocacy for responsible implementation. A more specific theme was explored by Solórzano & Delgado (2003) which delivered a Critical Race Theory. This theory provides a framework for analyzing how systemic power structures can be embedded in technology, perpetuating racial and social biases. This theory can be used to explore how teachers might identify and challenge AI biases, especially in relation to marginalized communities.

T3, an English teacher with fifteen years of teaching, expressed her problems in facilitating the adoption of AI in classroom

"I'm not really a tech person, but I'm worried about AI in schools. It could help students cheat, and that's not what we want. I've seen it happen, and it's not good. As a teacher, I want my

students to think for themselves and understand different points of view. Biased AI could stop them from doing that.”

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) posits that users' perceptions of the usefulness and ease of use of a technology influence their acceptance and use of it (Davis, 1989). In the context of AI in education, teachers' perceptions of AI's potential to enhance learning and teaching, as well as their concerns about its biases, may influence their willingness to advocate for its responsible implementation (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). From the interviews conducted for this study, it becomes apparent that many participants acknowledge the potential benefits of AI in educational settings, yet their lack of experience and concerns regarding potential negative experiences with AI hinder their overall enthusiasm and advocacy for its integration within classroom settings.

T4 shared his opinion the his capacity in using technology and how he saw the potential

“I'm really into teaching language and making my students love it as much as I do. But I'm not so sure about this AI stuff. My lack of experience and the question of potential biases raise important questions about responsible implementation and advocacy.” I don't know much about it, and I'm worried it might not be fair or might not help students learn the way they should.”

On the other side, T6 delivered his concern of AI as follow:

“At first, I thought AI could be a good thing, helping students learn better and making teaching easier. But the more I learn about it, the more worried I get. AI can be biased, and that's not fair. It could stop students from hearing different points of view and learning from different voices. That's not what we want in education.”

Ethical AI frameworks, such as those proposed by the IEEE or the European Commission, provide guidelines for the responsible development and use of AI (IEEE, 2019; European Commission, 2019). Teachers who are aware of these frameworks and understand the ethical implications of AI biases may be more inclined to advocate for responsible AI implementation. Ethical AI frameworks emphasize transparency, accountability, and fairness in AI systems, which aligns with the goals of responsible AI implementation. Teachers who value ethical principles may be motivated to advocate for AI systems that adhere to these guidelines.

T4 added some of his view as follow:

“As an English teacher, I'm not exactly a tech expert, but I can't help but feel intrigued by the rise of AI in education. It's not something I've had much experience with, but instead of being scared off by it, I see it as a chance to learn and grow. I'm eager to get some training and really dig into the potential biases and issues that come with AI. I think it's important to have open conversations with other teachers, developers, and people in the community about this stuff. That way, we can make sure that any AI tools we use are fair and responsible, and that they meet the needs of all our students.”

T3 also agreed on the potential and her responsibility to keep up with the techonology

“While I might not be the most tech-savvy teacher out there, I'm not one to back down from a challenge. At first, I was a bit hesitant about AI in education, especially because I didn't fully understand how it worked or what the potential biases might be. But I've come to realize that being open-minded and willing to learn is crucial. With the right support and training, I believe that teachers like me can help shape the future of AI in education, making sure that it enhances learning and critical thinking for all our students.”

Research on AI bias, such as the work of Timnit Gebru and Joy Buolamwini, has highlighted the presence of biases in AI systems and their potential negative impacts, particularly in education (Buolamwini & Gebru, 2018; Gebru et al., 2018).

T5 shared her experience seeing her students used AI with no responsible.

“I’ve seen students depend too much on AI for translations, grammar checks, and even essay writing, and it worries me. It feels like they’re missing out on the real essence of language learning – the little details, the critical thinking, the deeper understanding. It’s like they’re taking a shortcut instead of really putting in the effort to learn.”

Agency and advocacy theories emphasize the importance of individuals' ability to act and speak on behalf of others (Bandura, 1977, 1986). Teachers who perceive themselves as having agency in advocating for responsible AI implementation may be more likely to do so. According to agency theory, individuals' beliefs about their ability to influence outcomes (self-efficacy) and their perception of the value of their actions (outcome expectancy) influence their motivation to advocate for change. Teachers who believe that they can make a difference and that their advocacy efforts will lead to positive outcomes may be more likely to advocate for responsible AI implementation.

T5 shared his beliefs on his ability to use AI

“The thought of using AI in my class makes me think a lot about my role as a teacher. If I start using AI, I’d have to change the way I teach, and it feels like it would be a constant battle against the temptation of taking shortcuts. Instead of focusing on teaching my students to think and analyze things on their own, I might find myself having to go back and reteach basic things that they missed because of the AI.”

T1 expressed his views on his responsibility as language educator as below:

“As a language teacher, I see this as a chance to make learning more fair and inclusive. By working together and advocating with care, we can use AI to benefit education, shaping a future where technology boosts learning without sacrificing ethical values.”

T2 added what she thinks is missing on on the idea of AI use in classroom

“As educators, we have to do more than just say yes or no to AI. We should support responsible, ethical use, with clear rules and protections to avoid potential problems. This means choosing tools that are fair, open, and responsible.”

T3, added a significant idea of responsible AI use in classroom as follow:

“I think we should put people first when we use AI in education. AI should help us do better, not take over the important things like talking with students, thinking about things, and giving them the help they need.”

This is in line with T4’s point of view

“I think we should be careful when we use AI in the classroom. We should focus on how people learn best, and use AI to make things better, not to take away the important things like talking with students, thinking about things, and giving them the help they need.”

T6 added the idea of collaborative learning on the use of responsible AI as follow:

“I think it’s important for us to talk with people who know a lot about technology, like our friends, people who make new things, and people in our community. When we talk about what we think and what worries us, it helps make sure that AI tools are made and used in the right way, so they can help all kinds of students and communities.”

The impact of teachers' perceptions and understanding of AI biases on their advocacy for

responsible AI implementation in schools and communities is influenced by various theoretical frameworks. Critical pedagogy encourages teachers to critically analyze and challenge societal norms, including those related to technology and AI. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) suggests that teachers' perceptions of AI's usefulness and ease of use influence their acceptance and use of it. Ethical AI frameworks provide guidelines for the responsible development and use of AI, which may influence teachers' advocacy efforts. Finally, agency and advocacy theories emphasize the importance of individuals' ability to act and speak on behalf of others, which may influence teachers' willingness to advocate for responsible AI implementation.

As language educators who need to face the challenge of adapting pedagogical practices to incorporate these advanced technologies effectively, this requires a deep understanding of the specific skillsets and knowledge domains that are essential for integrating AI tools into teaching practices while also ensuring that educators remain relevant in an increasingly digital world. From the interview with language educators, there are several skillsets and knowledge domains that language educators need to develop to effectively integrate AI tools into pedagogical practices and maintain their relevance in the digital era.

T3 elaborated the first thing educators need to have as follow:

“I think it's really important to have an open mind when it comes to learning new things. Even though I don't have much experience with AI, I know it's important to be curious about it instead of being scared. By going to workshops, getting help from friends who know a lot about tech, and even trying out some basic AI tools, I can start to understand what it's all about and how it can help me teach better.”

T1 shared his ideas as follow:

“What I've learned is that it's really important for us, as educators, to have a good grasp of what AI can and can't do. Instead of just seeing it as a magical fix-all, we need to dig into its inner workings, like its algorithms, where it gets its data from, and any possible biases. This way, we can choose tools that really fit with our teaching style and what we believe in. That way, we're making sure that we're using AI in a way that helps our students learn, rather than holding them back.”

T2 added some ideas some follow:

“It's really important for us to have some technical know-how. We don't need to be coding experts, but knowing how to use AI applications and their interfaces can help us a lot. It means we can try out different tools, look at the data we get from them, and fix any problems that come up.”

T4, an english lecturer who is comfortable in navigating technology in real life suggest as follow:

“I believe that having a good sense of critical thinking and being able to adapt are really important skills. I don't just want to take whatever suggestions AI gives me and use them without thinking. Instead, I need to look at them carefully and see if they fit with what I know about teaching and what my students need. That means learning how to choose what content to use, making sure that each student gets the right learning plan for them, and getting better at using AI as I go along.”

T5 shared the idea of skill in interpreting data as follow:

“From what I've seen and what I think is really important, looking at the data that AI tools give us - like reports on how students are doing - needs new skills. We need to be able to understand

what the data means and use it to help each student learn better. We can't just use whatever the AI tells us without thinking about it."

T6 believe that to continue learning a collaboration is important

"We can't do this by ourselves! It's really important to work with people who know a lot about tech, like our colleagues, developers, and people in the community. When we talk to each other about what we think and what worries us, it helps make sure that AI tools are made and used in the right way, so they can help all kinds of students and communities."

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the integration of AI in language education holds immense potential, but it also poses unique challenges. English language educators express excitement about AI's ability to personalize learning and improve efficiency, but they also harbor anxieties about job displacement, biases in algorithms, and the lack of knowledge and skills required for responsible AI integration. Ethical considerations, particularly regarding fairness, transparency, and privacy, are paramount. Effective AI integration requires a nuanced approach, prioritizing transparency, human-centered learning, and ongoing professional development. By addressing these concerns and embracing best practices, educators can ensure that AI enhances language learning experiences while preserving the essential role of human educators. This research is valuable because it highlights the complexity and importance of responsible AI integration in language education, providing insights and guidance for educators and policymakers alike.

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