



EMPOWERING FUTURE ENGLISH TEACHERS WITH AI LANGUAGE MODELS: ENHANCING TEACHING COMPETENCE AND LEARNER ENGAGEMENT

Murod Normuminov

Department of Foreign Languages, Kattakurgan Branch of
Samarkand State University - Samarkand, Uzbekistan

E-mail: normuminov@murodbek.uz

Abstract: As the demand for effective English language education grows, it is crucial to equip pre-service English teachers with the skills and tools necessary to facilitate meaningful learning experiences. This paper explores the potential of AI language models, such as Claude, to enhance the teaching competence of future English teachers by providing them with innovative, learner-centered teaching strategies and resources. By leveraging the advanced natural language processing capabilities of these models, pre-service teachers can engage in authentic, contextualized language interactions, develop a deeper understanding of learner needs, and create personalized, interactive learning experiences. The paper discusses the key principles of effective language teaching, including fostering learner autonomy, promoting authentic communication, and providing targeted feedback. It also addresses common challenges faced by novice English teachers and how AI language models can help them develop the skills and confidence needed to overcome these challenges. While the integration of AI in teacher education is still an emerging field, initial research suggests that it has the potential to significantly improve pre-service teachers' pedagogical knowledge, technological competence, and ability to engage diverse learners. The paper concludes by outlining future directions for the integration of AI language models in English teacher education and the importance of collaboration between teacher educators, researchers, and AI developers to ensure the effective and ethical implementation of these technologies.

Keywords: Pre-service English teachers, AI language models, teaching competence, learner engagement, personalized learning

Introduction

Effective English language teaching requires a complex set of skills, knowledge, and dispositions that enable teachers to facilitate meaningful learning experiences for diverse learners. However, many pre-service English teachers struggle to bridge the gap between theory and practice, often feeling underprepared to meet the challenges of real-world classrooms. Traditional teacher education programs may not adequately equip future



teachers with the skills and tools necessary to engage learners, differentiate instruction, and create inclusive, learner-centered environments.

The emergence of advanced AI language models, such as Claude, presents a unique opportunity to transform English teacher education by providing pre-service teachers with innovative, learner-centered teaching strategies and resources. These models, powered by deep learning and natural language processing, can engage in human-like conversations, answer questions, and provide explanations on a wide range of topics. By leveraging the capabilities of AI language models, pre-service teachers can access a powerful tool to enhance their pedagogical knowledge, technological competence, and ability to engage diverse learners.

Three Key Principles for Enhancing Teaching Competence with AI

To harness the potential of AI language models for English teacher education, it is crucial to understand and apply three key principles of effective language teaching.

1. Foster Learner Autonomy and Engagement

One of the primary goals of language teaching is to foster learner autonomy and encourage active engagement in the learning process. However, many novice teachers struggle to create learner-centered environments that promote self-directed learning and meaningful interaction. AI language models can help pre-service teachers develop strategies for promoting learner autonomy and engagement by providing them with interactive, personalized learning experiences.

By engaging in conversations with AI language models, pre-service teachers can explore diverse learner profiles, interests, and needs. They can practice creating open-ended questions, designing interactive tasks, and providing scaffolding and support to encourage learner participation. The models can also offer insights into learner motivation, learning styles, and cultural backgrounds, helping pre-service teachers develop a more nuanced understanding of their future students.

2. Promote Authentic Communication and Collaboration

Effective language learning requires opportunities for authentic communication and collaboration. However, pre-service teachers often lack experience in designing tasks and activities that promote meaningful language use and interaction. AI language models can serve as a valuable resource for pre-service teachers to practice creating authentic, context-rich learning experiences.



By collaborating with AI language models, pre-service teachers can simulate real-world language use scenarios, such as dialogues, debates, and problem-solving tasks. They can practice designing tasks that integrate language skills, foster critical thinking, and encourage learner collaboration. The models can also provide feedback and suggestions for improving task design, helping pre-service teachers refine their skills in creating engaging, communicative learning experiences.

3. Provide Targeted Feedback and Support

Providing targeted, constructive feedback is essential for supporting language learners' growth and development. However, many novice teachers struggle with providing timely, specific, and actionable feedback to their students. AI language models can help pre-service teachers develop their feedback skills by offering insights into learner performance, common errors, and strategies for improvement.

By analyzing learner language output, AI language models can identify patterns, strengths, and areas for growth. Pre-service teachers can use this information to practice providing targeted feedback, scaffolding instruction, and designing differentiated support for diverse learners. The models can also offer suggestions for effective feedback techniques, such as using positive reinforcement, providing examples, and encouraging self-reflection.

Addressing Challenges Faced by Novice English Teachers

Novice English teachers often face numerous challenges as they transition from pre-service to in-service roles. AI language models can help pre-service teachers develop the skills and confidence needed to overcome these challenges.

Classroom Management:

Managing a classroom effectively is a critical skill for novice teachers. AI language models can provide pre-service teachers with opportunities to practice creating positive learning environments, establishing routines and expectations, and responding to student behavior. By simulating diverse classroom scenarios, the models can help pre-service teachers develop strategies for promoting student engagement, preventing disruptions, and fostering a culture of respect and collaboration.

Differentiated Instruction:

Meeting the diverse needs of English language learners is a significant challenge for novice teachers. AI language models can help pre-service teachers practice differentiating instruction based on learners' proficiency levels, learning styles, and interests. By engaging in conversations with the models, pre-service teachers can explore strategies for adapting



content, providing scaffolding, and using multiple modalities to support learner understanding and participation.

Assessment and Evaluation:

Designing effective assessments and evaluating learner progress are essential skills for English teachers. AI language models can provide pre-service teachers with opportunities to practice creating formative and summative assessments, aligning assessments with learning objectives, and using assessment data to inform instruction. By analyzing learner language output, the models can also offer insights into learner progress, helping pre-service teachers develop skills in tracking and supporting learner growth over time.

Professional Development and Reflective Practice:

Ongoing professional development and reflective practice are crucial for novice teachers' growth and success. AI language models can serve as a resource for pre-service teachers to engage in self-directed learning, explore new teaching strategies, and reflect on their practice. By collaborating with the models, pre-service teachers can access a wealth of knowledge and expertise, stay current with emerging trends and research in language education, and develop a habit of continuous learning and improvement.

Future Directions and Conclusion

The integration of AI language models in English teacher education is a promising area for innovation and research. As these technologies continue to advance, there are numerous opportunities for collaboration between teacher educators, researchers, and AI developers to create more effective, learner-centered teacher preparation programs.

One key area for future development is the creation of specialized AI language models tailored to specific domains of language teaching, such as teaching English for academic purposes, content and language integrated learning (CLIL), or teaching young learners. These models could provide pre-service teachers with targeted practice and resources to help them develop expertise in specific areas of language education.

Another important consideration is the need for human-AI collaboration in teacher education. While AI language models can offer valuable support and resources, they should be used in conjunction with human expertise and guidance. Teacher educators can leverage AI tools to enhance their instruction, provide personalized feedback, and create more authentic, engaging learning experiences for pre-service teachers.

Finally, the ethical and responsible integration of AI language models in English teacher education is paramount. Researchers and developers must work together to ensure that these tools are designed to promote equity, inclusivity, and learner-centered pedagogy.



Pre-service teachers must also be prepared to critically evaluate and use AI technologies in ways that align with best practices in language education and support the diverse needs of their future students.

In conclusion, AI language models like Claude hold significant potential for enhancing the teaching competence of pre-service English teachers by providing them with innovative, learner-centered teaching strategies and resources. By fostering learner autonomy, promoting authentic communication, and providing targeted feedback, these technologies can help future teachers develop the skills and confidence needed to facilitate meaningful learning experiences for diverse learners. As the field continues to evolve, collaboration between teacher educators, researchers, and AI developers will be key to unlocking the full potential of AI-assisted teacher education and preparing a new generation of competent, adaptable English language educators.

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