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Students' development of AI metacognitive awareness in an EAP course: A qualitative exploration through the Experiential Learning Theory

Saturday 17 May 2025 11:30 (1 minute)

TITLE

Students' development of AI metacognitive awareness in an EAP course

RELEVANT SIG

Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)

FORMAT

In-person interactive poster session

Short English description

KEYWORDS

artificial intelligence
student engagement
metacognitive awareness
experiential learning
language education

First-time presenter?

First-time presenter

ABSTRACT

The bulk of recent research on AI use in learning focused on students' cognitive, behavioural and emotional dimensions, and few investigated if and how students develop AI metacognitive awareness, which is vital for efficient use of AI. The present study examined this critical issue through collecting reflective journals and interview data from 23 students enrolled in an EAP course at a Chinese university. Drawing on the Experiential

Learning Theory, data analyses identified that students engaged in a dynamic and iterative process of using various AI tools to help complete assignments, critically evaluating AI-generated information via internal and external standards, reflecting on the effectiveness of specific tools and strategies, conceptualising the general utility of AI in providing different types of assistance, and actively experimenting with new AI and strategies. Such process helped them continuously update their metacognitive knowledge about AI use, leading to adapted regulation of AI behaviours. Meanwhile, the study disclosed a generally negative perceived impact of AI use on language development, indicating the detrimental effect of instrumental motivation for AI use. These findings highlight the importance of fostering intrinsic motivation for using AI in language tasks and the implementation of pedagogical activities to help students internalise AI-generated linguistic output.

Authors: LIU, Xiaohua (The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen); Prof. XIAO, Yangyu (The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen); Prof. YAO, Yao (The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen)

Presenters: LIU, Xiaohua (The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen); Prof. XIAO, Yangyu (The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen); Prof. YAO, Yao (The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen)

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