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CAWANGAN NEGERI SEMBILAN
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Integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools with Flipped Learning in Higher Education: Prospects and Challenges

RUHIL NADIAH ABU BAKAR & NOOR SHAHARIAH SALEH
UiTM CAWANGAN NEGERI SEMBILAN KAMPUS SEREMBAN

Introduction

Flipped learning, also referred to as a flipped classroom, is a teaching approach in which students study newly acquired knowledge (such as lectures) outside of class and then apply it in class under the guidance of the teacher. It is a form of blended learning that changes the traditional roles of teacher and student. It represents a transformative model in higher education by shifting direct instruction outside the classroom and using in-class time for deeper cognitive engagement (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). While this approach increases student participation and accountability, it also poses new challenges, specifically in providing personalised feedback and supporting students during their self-paced learning. Artificial intelligence (AI), especially with the rise of large language models and adaptive learning systems, offers significant potential to address these challenges. Integrating AI tools into flipped learning can enhance learning instruction, facilitate continuous assessment, and provide active student support.

AI Integration in Flipped Classrooms

AI tools in flipped learning environments serve various functions, from personalised content recommendations to automated feedback systems. For instance, generative AI applications such as ChatGPT are being used by students for content summarisation, clarification, and practice, which enhances comprehension of pre-class materials (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2023). Adaptive video platforms, such as Edpuzzle, powered by AI, analyse learner behaviour to adjust pacing, suggest supplementary resources, and identify knowledge gaps (Kwon et al., 2023).

Furthermore, AI-enhanced flipped classrooms also benefit from intelligent tutoring systems (ITS) and AI-powered chatbots. These tools provide real-time support and simulate human tutoring by answering questions and guiding learners through problems (Lee & Kim, 2023). Additionally, AI-based learning analytics tools provide instructors with data dashboards that track student engagement, identify at-risk learners, and inform timely interventions (Zhou et al., 2024).

Benefits of AI in Flipped Learning

The integration of AI into flipped learning environments presents multiple pedagogical advantages. Firstly, it promotes **personalised learning**, where all students typically engage with the same materials regardless of individual readiness. AI tools can create resources and shape instructional content based on a student's learning profile (Wang et al., 2023). Secondly, AI enables **accessible formative assessment**. Generative AI systems can evaluate student input, including open-ended responses, and provide real-time, detailed feedback. This instant response capability helps students to rectify misconceptions before class, ensuring more meaningful participation during synchronous activities (Chen et al., 2023). Thirdly, AI encourages **greater student engagement**. Conversational instruments and intelligent tutoring systems transform the often-passive nature of pre-class

activities into dynamic, interactive experiences. As reported in a study by Chen et al. (2023), university students engaging with AI-supported flipped modules demonstrated significantly higher motivation and self-efficacy.

Challenges and Ethical Considerations

Despite its potential, integrating AI into flipped learning comes with challenges. A major concern is **equity of access**. Students from marginalised backgrounds may lack access to the high-speed Internet or modern devices required for AI-supported platforms, exacerbating the digital divide. Moreover, **data privacy and algorithmic transparency** also pose significant ethical problems. Many AI systems rely on large-scale data collection and obscure decision-making processes. There is growing concern about how these systems handle sensitive student information, prompting a call for clear institutional policies and ethical guidelines (Lopez et al., 2024). Additionally, the **faculty's readiness** remains a barrier. Successful integration of AI into pedagogy requires instructors to understand both the technical and pedagogical affordances of AI tools. Faculty development programs are essential to equip educators with the skills necessary to design, implement, and evaluate AI-supported flipped learning (Lopez et al., 2024).

Future Directions

The future of AI in flipped learning lies in creating more immersive, context-aware, and equitable learning environments. Emerging technologies such as em**otion-aware AI**, **multimodal learning analytics**, and **AI-generated personalised video content** may further enhance the flipped learning experience. However, further empirical research is needed to assess the long-term effects of these tools on learning outcomes, student satisfaction, and teaching practices. Collaborative design approaches, involving students, instructors, and AI developers, are recommended to align technological innovations with ethical educational goals.

Conclusion

In conclusion, artificial intelligence offers transformative opportunities for enhancing flipped learning in higher education by fostering personalised learning experiences, facilitating real-time feedback, and increasing student engagement. However, successful integration requires addressing challenges related to equity, data privacy, and faculty training. With thorough implementation, AI-enhanced flipped classrooms can contribute significantly to more effective and comprehensive tertiary education.

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