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Lesson preparation with the help of AI. Are there any opportunities for LSP teachers?

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The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in language teaching is becoming increasingly commonplace as technology advances. AI-based technologies are enabling educators to shift from traditional methods of lesson preparation to a more efficient and effective approach. AI-based tools can help teachers to create engaging materials for their lessons, including audio and visual content. This allows teachers to provide a more stimulating learning experience for their students.

AI-based tools can also be used to automate tasks such as checking grammar and vocabulary. For example, AI can be used to detect errors in written texts and offer suggestions on how to correct them. This can save teachers time and effort, who may otherwise have to manually check and correct student work. AI can also be used to analyse student responses and generate personalized feedback. This ensures that students receive help and support tailored to their individual needs. [2]

AI can also be used to personalize lesson plans. By analysing data from student assessments, AI can create individualized learning paths for each student. This helps teachers to focus their attention on specific areas where students may need additional support. AI can also be used to recommend activities and resources that are tailored to each student's level of proficiency. [2]

AI can also be used to streamline administrative tasks. AI-powered software can be used to manage student records, track attendance, and generate reports. This makes it easier for teachers to stay organized and manage their workload. AI might also be used to automatically generate certificates and diplomas, which saves teachers time when it comes to recognizing student achievements. [2]

Researchers have identified some major on-line language learning challenges which might be overcome with the use of AI technologies, for example, a lack of motivation. Even highly motivated learners may get bored doing a long-term course. This problem might be solved by adding gamification and creating personalized learning paths. Gamification helps to build a competitive spirit and awards diligent learning. Through the personalization of learning paths, teachers would be able to offer students relevant learning material. [1]

To date, several applications have been created based on the gamification of the learning process, such as Duolingo, Memrise and others. Another example is the rather popular language learning application Rosetta Stone, created by the American EdTech company. This language learning application allows users to learn up to 30 languages. This app uses the TruAccent speech engine to ensure users practice the right articulation, and it uses images, texts, and sound to teach words and grammar using the Spaced Repetition method. The AI features used by Rosetta Stone are:

1) speech recognition to analyse learners' pronunciation of new words and provide instant feedback;
2) real-time objects recognition to detect objects around a learner, which helps them learn new words.

But what about language teachers, especially LSP teachers? Lesson preparation is one of the hardest and most time-consuming parts of a teacher's job. Teachers usually spend a lot of time trying to find appropriate resources, (e.g. articles/videos, etc) related to a chosen topic, but this is never enough material for a complete lesson; teachers also need activities to lead in, to pre-teach something, (e.g. target vocabulary), and to provide students with both controlled and freer practice. Even though there are lots of ready-made learning materials and lesson activities, they are mostly appropriate for General English purposes. LSP teachers usually spend a lot of time and effort on methodological work. AI can save educators a significant amount of time that would otherwise give them the opportunity to be more creative and flexible when preparing lessons. For example, there is a new application called Twee, that might tweak a lesson easily and quickly using the power of AI. It offers tools for building reading, speaking, vocabulary and grammar activities based on texts or videos. It even creates a short text on a given topic. I believe, such applications might be used in LSP lesson preparation. Of course, such programs will not do all the work for teachers, but will definitely make it easier.

In summary, AI can be used to facilitate lesson preparation and streamline administrative tasks. AI-based tools help teachers to create engaging materials, automate grammar and vocabulary checks, provide personalized feedback, and personalized lesson plans. AI may also be used to manage student records and generate certificates and diplomas. As technology continues to evolve, the use of AI in language teaching will become even more widespread. I believe, however, the main aim of AI is to make the work of educators easier, but not to replace us. [3]

References

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