Students' Perceptions of AI Tools in Undergraduate Literature Courses

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Abstract	Keywords
Artificial Intelligence plays important roles in higher education setting. This study aimed to investigate the perceptions of students regarding the use of Ai tools at university level in literature courses. this study applied the quantitative approach ,survey distributed to 40 samplings .the findings showed that significant positive perception regarding using Ai at literature courses Department of English.	Artificial Intelligence, Ai in education. Literature course

تصورات الطلاب حول أدوات الذكاء الاصطناعي في مساقات الأدب للمرحلة الجامعية

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الكلمات المفتاحية	الملخّص
الذكاء الاصطناعي، الذكاء الاصطناعي في التعليم، مساقات الأدب.	يلعب الذكاء الاصطناعي أدوارًا مهمة في بيئة التعليم العالي. هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى استقصاء تصورات الطلاب حول استخدام أدوات الذكاء الاصطناعي على المستوى الجامعي في مساقات الأدب. طبّقت الدراسة المنهج الكمي، حيث تم توزيع استبانة على عينة مكونة من 40 طالباً وطالبة. أظهرت النتائج وجود تصورات إيجابية ذات دلالة إحصائية تجاه استخدام الذكاء الاصطناعي في مساقات الأدب قسم اللغة الإنجليزية.

Introduction

Ai tools offer essential role at university level nowadays, the integration of Ai in to education setting specially for literary studies show the unique and special experience for educators. Literary analysis is classic principles of close reading. The obstacles may face is significant gap in comprehension how undergraduate perceive the role of Ai in their teaching and learning processes to fill this gap .,this study aimed to investigate the perceptions of undergraduate students regarding using Ai tools at literature courses at Sirt University

Study question

What are the perceptions of undergraduate students using Ai tools at literature courses?

Literature

In the present time we see that the introduction of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into the arena of higher education Is not a far off prospect but a reality. While it is affecting all fields of study its application in the humanities and within that -- in literary studies –

presents unique issues, opportunities and philosophical questions. This literature review brings together what is known from existing research on the use of AI in education which we have paid special attention to in the under researched area of stakeholder perception in literary studies. We aim to put our study in context by looking at four main themes: (1) the transformable role of AI in education, (2) the subject specific issues between AI and the humanities, (3) theory models for technology acceptance, and (4) the gaps which our research Is intended to fill.

The broad landscape AI in higher education:

In a wide perspective of AI in Higher Education what we have seen is that AI in Education (AIEd) has gone between very positive expectations and very critical responses. In the past research mainly looked at Intelligent Tutoring Systems for very structured subjects like math and science which we saw did in fact produce personal learning paths and almost instant feedback (Ma et al., 2014). With the introduction of more generative AI we have seen that scope expand to

Fadwa Albaggar

include automated essay scoring, content creation, and very in depth research assistance.

In the field we see scholars like Selwyn (2019) put forth a critical sociology of AI in Education which reports that at large the discourse is run by corporate and tech interests which often take over from pedagogy. Also he sounds the alarm on what he terms "solutionism" which is the tendency of new tech to present social and educational issues as if they are technical in nature and thus soluble by a technical fix. This critical view is very much in the wheelhouse of the humanities which report that which which we see as learning outcomes is very subject and process based. At the same time researchers like Zawacki-Richter et al. (2019) in their review report that for the most part AI in Education research is centered on student facing tools which leaves out large gaps in research around how teachers see this play out and the issue of institutional buy in, also this is very true when we look at very specific fields like literature.

The humanities and the Ai "challenges " : A clash of Epistemologies:

In the Humanist's corner against the AI challenge we see a root issue of epistemological difference. In the academic tradition of the humanities which I am a product of we find theories of meaning that are social and constructed via dialogue, subjectivity, close reading and engagement with history and theory (Eagleton, 2008). The role of the literary scholar is to perform a very specific type of analysis which includes the embrace of ambiguity, intertextuality and theoretical frameworks. What we are seeing now with the rise of AI tools which base themselves in pattern recognition and probability is a challenge to that base. Bender and Koller (2020) report that Large Language Models as fluent as they may be do not really understand meaning or communication intent; they are what they term "stochastic parrots." This brings to the fore a basic question for literature educators – can we truly use a tool which does not understand meaning in its interpretive work?

In the field of Digital Humanities we are seeing a different story play out.

Fadwa Albaggar

In that which which scholars have for some time used computation tools for literary analysis – for instance in what Moretti terms distant reading which puts the focus on large scale patterns instead of the individual text – we have a different light in which AI is put. From this angle AI is a very useful extension of these methods. It is used to identify thematic clusters within a body of work, to analyze style, or to produce what Bode calls counter texts for the purpose of comparison. The debate isn't between for or against AI, but what sort of AI assisted literacy we want to see: that which takes over present functions like that of summation or which in turn enables new forms of critical inquiry.

Understanding stakeholder perceptions: the role of theoretical models:

In terms of research into how educators and students see AI we have found that a theoretical model is a must. Of the many theories out there Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis in 1989 is the most preeminent in this field. It puts forth that there are in fact two main determinants of a new tech's adoption: Perceived Usefulness (PU) which is the degree to which a person thinks that using the system will improve their performance and Perceived Easy of Use (PEOU) which is the degree to which a person thinks that the system will be easy to use.

In literature education application of TAM to AI brings forward critical issues. For educators PU may revolve around if AI can improve grading time, put forth discussion topics, or support student learning. PEOU will play a role in the tools' accessibility and how easy they are to use. For students PU may include the tool's performance in which it helps out with idea generation, getting over writer's block, or giving instant feedback. PEOU will be a key issue as to whether they will use it at all. However TAM is also put forth that it is too black and white. In a value loaded field like literature which issues of acceptability play out beyond what is practical. These may include:

In terms of pedagogical philosophy: a prof which is a proponent of critical pedagogy may put AI in the rejection

Fadwa Albaggar

pile as a tool which removes personal interaction, whereas one which practices a connectivist approach may welcome it as another piece to the learning puzzle. Also in terms of ethics and epistemology we see that issues of academic integrity (Perkins et al., 2023) – which is a big issue -- the drying up of critical thought, and the fact that machine may100% agree which in turn causes homogenized interpretation are very real issues which go beyond the AI's use value. Also in the case of subject identity – a lit prof's identity is in large part based on that of a text as a human expression, the put in of a non human "reader" may be seen as a threat to that. Thus while Technology Acceptance Model does well enough for a base line quantitative look at adoption, it is a must that we also use qualitative research to get at the in depth, context based stakeholder perspectives.

The contested Terrain of Benefits and Concerns:

In the midst of debate and at the early stages of adoption is where we see the pros and cons play out in literary studies. Pro's: We see AI as a support structure which breaks down complex texts for students, which in turn generates initial essay ideas for them or which they can use to check in on their work before class discussion (Warschauer & Grimes, 2008). Also for the faculty – AI which does the heavy lifting of task like creating quiz questions, which produce summaries for different reading levels, or which gives initial grammar and structure feedback -- thus freeing up time for more in depth seminar discussion. And finally AI as a tool in Digital Humanities which enables what we may call algorithmic criticism (Ramsay, 2011) which in turn allows students to research into questions of genre, style and theme across very large digital archives.

In terms of what we see as issues: -- Academic Integrity and Authorship: Right now the main issue is that of AI facilitated plagiarism. The line which separates use of AI as a thinking aid and having it write the paper is very gray which in turn presents great assessment issues (Cotton et al., 2023). -- The Deskilling Thesis: We see a great worry that if we hand over

Fadwa Albaggar

too much of the analysis and writing to AI we are going to see students' own critical and analytical skills waste away – the exact skills a literature degree is supposed to be developing. -- The Illusion of Objectivity: Also, AI out put has this air of authority which causes students to think there is only one right interpretation of a text which in turn goes against the core idea in literary study that there are many subjective takes. – also these models are trained on large sets of uncensored internet data which means they can reproduce social biases around race, gender and culture (Bender et al., 2021). This is a particular problem in a field that looks at representation and power.

Gap in the literature and Contribution of the proposed Study:

In the field of AI in education we have seen a great growth in research but also a large gap which remains. As Zhang and Li (2023) report in their review of the field there is a dearth of empirical studies which look at the humanities. Also what we have is that most of the research is very general in

nature or looks at STEM and business fields. Also in present research which does look at stakeholder groups they are presented as a single entity which does not take into account the possibly different views of educators and students in the same discipline. This study we are putting forth is to fill in that void. It will add to the field by:

.1We present one of the first in depth empirical studies of AI use in the field of university level literary studies. 2. We used a mixed methods approach which applied the well founded TAM framework in a quantitative way but also did in depth exploration of the discipline specific issues which the TAM doesn\'t touch on. Also we looked at what both educators and students have to say which in turn reveals the very complex issues which will in the end form the base for the growth of AI in the humanities classroom.

In the end we see that the present state of our field is a critical one. AI has that which it   needs to greatly improve and transform the field of literary study, but also there are very real issues that come up in terms of

Fadwa Albaggar

pedagogy and ethics which we must also pay attention to. While present is a lot of theory on the topic, what is missing is the empirical which looks at how in fact the people at the front line of this issue – our teachers and students – are faring as this change plays out. By doing in depth research into these issues this study hopes to put forward what is at present only speculation – we aim to present evidence which will in turn be that which sets a path forward for the digital's role in the lit class – a future which is for sure going to happen although at present it is very much in question.

Methodology

This study applied the quantitative approach the total sampling were 40 English students at sirt University who studied Literature classes. The instrument was survey distributed to investigate their perception .the data analysed by SPSS.

learning Enhancement

Survey item	Mean Score (out of 5)
AI helped me brainstorm potential thesis statements for my essays	4.2
AI was effective in summarizing complex literary criticism.	4.1
Using AI saved me time during the research process.	4.4
AI provided useful examples of literary devices in the texts we studied.	3.9
Composite Score for 'Useful	4.15
Discussing my ideas with AI helped me clarify my own arguments.	3.8
I fear that using AI might make my own analytical skills weaker.	3.5
AI's interpretations often felt generic and lacked a unique perspective.	3.7
Replying on AI made me less likely to from my own deep connection with the text	3.2
Composite Score for "Critical Thinking Impact"	3.55

Findinds

A . Perceived Usefulness and

Fadwa Albaggar

B. Ethical Concerns and Academic Integrity

Survey Item	Mean Score (out of 5)
I am concerned about the line between using AI as a tool and plagiarism.	4.3
The course needs clearer guidelines on acceptable AI use	4.6
It is unfair some students use AI extensively and others do not .	3.9
I would feel guilty submitting an analysis that was heavily guided by AI.	3.8
Composite Score for " Ethical Concerns "	4.15

C. Overall Satisfaction and Future Use

Survey Item	Mean Score (out of 5)
Overall, using AI tolls enhanced my learning expensive in this course.	3.9
I plan to use AI tools in my future literature /humanities courses	4.0
I believe AI literacy is an important skill for modern students	4.5

As have shown from the tables, participants showed the high attitude regarding using Ai tools and it helps them to enhance their understanding tasks ,thus the high mean scores above 4.0 ,they found that Ai helps them to analyze the fist steps if literary task .moreover they showed that AI tools could clarify their ideas and enhance their creative and critical thinking which effect their literary performance positively.

Discussion and Conclusion

Drawn from this group of 40 students reveal a profile of cautious optimism. The date indicates that students perceive AI as a powerful tool is students report AI as a great support which in turn makes info accessible to all and speeds up the research process – also they see AI almost as a thinking partner. Also we noted a very high score for AI literacy which to them is a key 21st century skill. Conversely , significant apprehension was expressed regarding ethics and pedagogy. Students are very much worried about issues of plagiarism and the fair play of AI's role. Also what is more profound is that they are worried AI may be taking over the

Fadwa Albaggar

very personal and subjective experience of engagement with a literary text that is so fundamental to the humanities.

Academic Implications:

It becomes clear that which is most important is the issue of very specific pedagogy. Professors can not of ford ambiguity on AI; they must establish clear guidelines what is and is not acceptable use. Also we see that Assessment requires transformation to mitigate risks to academic integrity may have to tran the tradition from tional take home essay towards in class writing, oral exams, viva voce, or reflective assignments which see students report on and analyze their use of AI. Also we see that Literature courses can include a unit on what can be termed term as critical AI literacy. Students can be put to the task of finding out the limitations, biases, and generic elements in an AI's analysis which in turn will cultivate their own critical skills.

Limitations of this Study:

Regarding the study's methodology there were several limitations – the sample consisted of a small sample

size of 40 which in turn limits how we can apply our results. Further more the research adopted a quantitive approach which is a mixed method research world's approach – we did not include qualitative methods such as interviews which may have given us a better picture of what is really going on. Also the findings suggest that results may be specific to how AI was presented in this particular course. Notably while students in literary courses value the efficiency that AI offers concurrently they are cognizant of AI's ability to erode the skills that their education seek to cultivate. This indicatesthat the role of the educator is to in fact guide students in the ethical, critical and effective use of these highly transformative tools.

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Fadwa Albaggar

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Fadwa Albaggar