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THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE UNIVERSITY TEACHER'S ROLE IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: FROM KNOWLEDGE PROVIDER TO LEARNING FACILITATOR

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Abstract

The rapid development of artificial intelligence (AI), particularly generative AI, is reshaping higher education and challenging traditional understandings of university teaching. This article critically examines the transformation of the university teacher's role through three connected perspectives: the transition from knowledge provider to learning facilitator, the emergence of AI-supported pedagogy, and the continuing importance of the human dimension of education. The study employs a critical-integrative review of selected academic publications and international policy documents on AI in education. The analysis indicates that AI can support instructional planning, resource development, formative feedback and independent learning. However, these opportunities do not remove the need for teachers' professional judgement, critical evaluation of generated information and ethical responsibility. The article argues that the teacher's contribution increasingly lies in guiding students to assess information, construct independent arguments and use technology responsibly. It concludes that AI should complement human pedagogical expertise rather than replace the university teacher.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, higher education, university teacher, learning facilitation, AI-supported pedagogy, human-centred education.

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Introduction

ТРАНСФОРМАЦИЯ РОЛИ ПРЕПОДАВАТЕЛЯ УНИВЕРСИТЕТА В ЭПОХУ ИСКУССТВЕННОГО ИНТЕЛЛЕКТА: ОТ ПОСТАВЩИКА ЗНАНИЙ К ФАСИЛИТАТОРУ ОБУЧЕНИЯ

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Аннотация

Стремительное развитие искусственного интеллекта, особенно генеративных систем, меняет высшее образование и ставит под вопрос традиционные представления о преподавании в университете. В статье критически рассматривается трансформация роли преподавателя по трём взаимосвязанным направлениям: переход от поставщика знаний к фасилитатору обучения, становление педагогики с поддержкой искусственного интеллекта и сохранение человеческого измерения образования. Исследование основано на критико-интегративном анализе избранных научных публикаций и международных документов по применению искусственного интеллекта в образовании. Анализ показывает, что ИИ может помогать в планировании занятий, подготовке учебных материалов, формирующем оценивании и самостоятельном обучении. Вместе с тем эти возможности не отменяют необходимости профессионального суждения преподавателя, критической проверки сгенерированной информации и этической ответственности. Обосновывается, что роль преподавателя всё больше связана с развитием самостоятельного мышления студентов, оценкой информации и ответственным использованием технологий. Делается вывод о том, что искусственный интеллект должен дополнять педагогическую экспертизу человека, а не заменять преподавателя.

Ключевые слова: искусственный интеллект, высшее образование, преподаватель университета, фасилитация обучения, педагогика с поддержкой ИИ, человекоцентричное образование.

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SUN'IY INTELLEKT DAVRIDA UNIVERSITET ÖQITUVÇISI ROLINING TRANSFORMATSIYASI: BILIM BERUVÇIDAN TA'LIM JARAYONI FASILITATORIGA AYLANISH

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Annotatsiya

Sun'iy intellekt, xususan generativ sun'iy intellektning jadal rivojlanişi oliy ta'lim mazmuni va universitet öqituvçisining an'anaviy faoliyatiga yangiça talablarni yuzaga keltirmoqda. Mazkur maqolada universitet öqituvchisi rolining transformatsiyasi uç özaro boğliq yönalish asosida tanqidiy tahlil qilinadi: bilim beruvçidan ta'lim jarayoni fasilitatoriga aylaniş, sun'iy intellekt bilan qöllab-quvvatlanadigan pedagogikaning şakllanişi hamda ta'limdagi insoniy omilning ahamiyati. Tadqiqot sun'iy intellekt va oliy ta'limga oid tanlangan ilmiy naşrlar hamda xalqaro me'yoriy-uslubiy hujjatlarning tanqidiy-integrativ şarhiga asoslanadi. Tahlil AI vositalari darsni rejalashtiriş, öquv materiallarini tayyorlaş, joriy fikr-mulohaza beriş va mustaqil ta'limni qöllab-quvvatlaş imkoniyatiga ega ekanini körsatadi. Biroq bu imkoniyatlar öqituvçining kasbiy mulohazasi, yaratilgan axborotni tanqidiy tekshirişi va axloqiy mas'uliyatini almaştirmaydi. Maqolada sun'iy intellekt öqituvçini almashtiruvchi emas, balki uning pedagogik salohiyatini töldiruvçi vosita bölişi lozimligi asoslanadi.

Kalit sözlar: sun'iy intellekt, oliy ta'lim, universitet öqituvçisi, ta'lim fasilitatsiyasi, AI-pedagogika, inson markazidagi ta'lim.

1. Introduction

The rapid development of artificial intelligence (AI) has become one of the most consequential technological changes affecting contemporary higher education. AI-based applications are increasingly used to search for information, generate texts, explain concepts, translate materials, provide feedback and support academic work. The emergence of generative AI has made these functions more

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accessible to students and teachers, bringing the relationship between technology, knowledge and teaching into sharper focus.

These developments challenge a traditional understanding of the university teacher as the principal source and transmitter of subject knowledge. When students can obtain explanations and examples from digital systems at any time, the teacher's contribution cannot be defined solely by the amount of information delivered during a lecture. Access to information, however, should not be confused with understanding. Students still need guidance to assess the accuracy of information, recognise unsupported claims, compare perspectives and apply knowledge to unfamiliar problems.

The central issue is therefore not whether artificial intelligence will simply replace university teachers, but how it changes the purposes and practices of teaching. The teacher's role increasingly includes designing meaningful learning experiences, facilitating inquiry, supporting critical judgement and ensuring that the use of technology remains educationally appropriate and ethically responsible. Selwyn (2019) cautions against treating the automation of teaching as a purely technical matter, since education also involves social relationships, values and professional judgement.

This article examines the transformation of the university teacher's role through three connected perspectives: the movement from knowledge provider to learning facilitator; the development of AI-supported pedagogy; and the continuing importance of the human dimension of teaching. Its purpose is to provide a critical synthesis of relevant academic and policy perspectives and to identify implications for university teaching and teacher development.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Artificial intelligence and the changing role of the university teacher

Research on AI in higher education initially concentrated on applications such as intelligent tutoring systems, automated assessment, student profiling, prediction and adaptive learning. Zawacki-Richter et al. (2019), in their systematic review, identified these as prominent areas of AI application and raised an important question about the limited involvement of educators in the research landscape. Their review remains significant because it directs attention from technological

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functionality towards the pedagogical knowledge needed to make AI meaningful in educational settings.

The expansion of generative AI has broadened this discussion. Unlike earlier systems designed for relatively specific tasks, generative tools can produce extended explanations, draft texts, formulate questions and interact with users through natural language. Miao and Holmes (2023) note that these developments create opportunities for curriculum design, teaching, learning and research, while also raising concerns about privacy, inclusion, safety and educational quality. The availability of such tools makes it necessary to reconsider what teachers do and what kinds of expertise remain distinctly important.

UNESCO's AI Competency Framework for Teachers identifies five dimensions of teacher competence: a human-centred mindset, ethics of AI, AI foundations and applications, AI pedagogy, and AI for professional learning (Miao & Cukurova, 2024). The framework is particularly relevant because it does not reduce teacher preparation to technical operation. It places human agency, ethical understanding and pedagogical application alongside knowledge of AI systems.

2.2. From knowledge transmission to learning facilitation

The traditional lecture-based model has often positioned the teacher as the central authority responsible for selecting, explaining and delivering disciplinary information. This approach can still be useful for introducing complex concepts and establishing foundational knowledge. Nevertheless, it becomes insufficient when students are expected to interpret abundant information, solve open-ended problems and transfer knowledge to new contexts.

In an AI-rich environment, the teacher's role increasingly involves helping students turn information into reasoned understanding. Learning facilitation includes identifying learning needs, framing productive questions, organising dialogue, supporting inquiry and encouraging students to justify their conclusions. The facilitator does not merely provide ready-made answers; rather, the teacher creates conditions in which students learn how to ask better questions, evaluate evidence and develop their own arguments.

This shift does not imply that subject expertise has become less important. On the contrary, teachers need strong disciplinary knowledge to recognise inaccuracies, identify conceptual gaps and select appropriate learning resources. What changes

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is the way expertise is used: it is mobilised not only to explain content but also to guide students' intellectual work and evaluate the quality of their reasoning.

2.3. AI-supported pedagogy in higher education

AI-supported pedagogy refers to the purposeful use of AI applications to support clearly defined educational objectives. Potential applications include generating preliminary examples, adapting the complexity of texts, preparing discussion prompts, supporting formative feedback and helping students explore alternative explanations. These functions may save time on some preparatory tasks and provide additional opportunities for independent practice.

However, technological availability does not guarantee pedagogical value. AI-generated responses may contain factual errors, biased assumptions, fabricated references or explanations that are too general for a particular disciplinary context. Miao and Holmes (2023) therefore emphasise the need for human-centred governance and pedagogical design. The European Commission (2022) likewise highlights the importance of helping educators engage with AI and educational data critically and ethically.

Teachers must consequently retain responsibility for checking AI-generated materials, adapting them to course outcomes and deciding whether a tool is appropriate for a particular task. They should also explain to students that AI outputs require verification against reliable sources. In this sense, AI-supported pedagogy is not the delegation of teaching to a machine; it is the careful integration of technological assistance into a teacher-directed educational process.

2.4. The human dimension of university teaching

University teaching is a social and ethical activity as well as an intellectual one. Teachers interpret students' needs, respond to uncertainty, encourage participation and establish an environment in which learners can take intellectual risks. Such work involves contextual judgement and interpersonal sensitivity. Selwyn (2019) argues that the social, emotional and cognitive qualities associated with human teachers cannot be understood solely through the technical capabilities of automated systems.

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Human interaction is also central to the development of communication, cooperation and professional identity. Through seminars, consultations, debates and collaborative projects, students learn to express disagreement constructively, defend claims and take responsibility for their contributions. AI may provide prompts or feedback that support these activities, but it does not remove the need for teachers to cultivate respectful dialogue and academic community.

The human dimension is particularly important when ethical questions arise. Students need to understand authorship, transparency, privacy, intellectual responsibility and the limits of automated assistance. Teachers contribute to this understanding through explicit guidance and through their own academic practice. UNESCO's guidance on generative AI stresses the importance of protecting human agency and ensuring that educational uses remain safe, equitable and meaningful (Miao & Holmes, 2023).

3. Research Methodology

The article employs a qualitative critical-integrative literature review. The material considered includes peer-reviewed research on AI applications in higher education, studies of educators' perspectives on generative AI, scholarly analysis of the social implications of educational automation, and international policy documents addressing AI competencies and ethical use in education.

The literature was considered in relation to three analytical themes: (1) changes in the teacher's role and responsibilities; (2) pedagogical opportunities and limitations associated with AI-supported teaching; and (3) the continuing importance of human interaction and professional judgement. The analysis involved thematic comparison and critical interpretation of the selected sources, with attention to points of convergence and differences in emphasis.

The review is not presented as an exhaustive systematic review. No claim is made that all available publications were identified or screened through a registered protocol. Instead, the method is intended to synthesise selected, relevant sources in order to clarify conceptual and pedagogical implications for university teaching. This scope should be considered when interpreting the conclusions.

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4. Results and Discussion

4.1. The teacher as a learning facilitator rather than a sole source of knowledge

The literature suggests that one important consequence of AI availability is a redistribution of educational activity. Students can now obtain preliminary explanations and examples without waiting for a teacher-led presentation. Yet the quality of these explanations varies, and students may not have sufficient disciplinary knowledge to recognise errors. The teacher's role therefore becomes more closely associated with helping learners evaluate, contextualise and use information.

For example, students may ask a generative AI system to explain a theoretical concept and then compare the response with a textbook or peer-reviewed article. The teacher can guide them to identify omissions, check terminology, examine the evidence and explain which interpretation is more convincing. This activity transforms AI use into an opportunity for critical reading rather than passive acceptance.

The shift towards facilitation also has implications for classroom organisation. Teachers may devote more time to case analysis, structured discussion, collaborative problem-solving and reflective tasks. These activities require students to articulate their reasoning and respond to alternative views. The teacher remains an expert, but expertise is expressed through the design and guidance of intellectual activity rather than through information delivery alone.

4.2. AI-supported pedagogy and professional responsibility

AI applications can assist teachers with the preparation of learning materials, the generation of illustrative examples and the provision of preliminary feedback. Lee et al. (2024), in a study of educators' perspectives at an Australian university, reported varied views about generative AI and identified a need for further institutional support and professional development. Their findings indicate that the adoption of AI is not simply a matter of individual choice; it is also shaped by institutional readiness, assessment practices and shared expectations.

An important implication is that teachers need opportunities to develop AI literacy as part of continuing professional learning. This includes understanding the basic capabilities and limitations of AI systems, recognising potential bias and

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inaccuracy, protecting student data and selecting tools that are appropriate to educational aims. UNESCO's framework places AI pedagogy and professional learning within a wider human-centred and ethical orientation (Miao & Cukurova, 2024).

Assessment is another area requiring professional judgement. If students can use AI to produce fluent answers, assessment tasks need to make learning processes and individual understanding more visible. Teachers can ask students to explain decisions, discuss sources, reflect on revisions or apply concepts to specific cases. Such approaches do not necessarily prohibit AI use; rather, they make expectations transparent and keep responsibility for learning with the student.

4.3. The irreplaceable human dimension of teaching

The continuing importance of human teaching becomes especially visible in situations that require responsiveness to individual learners. Students differ in prior knowledge, confidence, motivation and personal circumstances. A teacher may notice hesitation, confusion or disengagement and respond through clarification, encouragement or a change in instructional strategy. These decisions depend on an understanding of context, not merely on the production of a correct answer.

Human interaction also contributes to students' social and professional development. Academic dialogue provides opportunities to listen carefully, negotiate meaning, consider opposing arguments and practise respectful disagreement. These experiences are integral to higher education because graduates are expected to work with others and make decisions in complex professional environments.

Finally, teachers have an important role in modelling academic integrity. They can demonstrate how to acknowledge sources, distinguish one's own contribution from generated material and take responsibility for submitted work. AI tools may support information processing, but ethical judgement and accountability must remain part of the educational relationship. This is consistent with the human-centred approach advocated in UNESCO's guidance (Miao & Holmes, 2023).

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4.4. Balancing technological assistance and pedagogical judgement

The three perspectives considered in this article point to a need for balance. First, educational objectives should determine the selection of AI tools, not the novelty of the technology itself. Second, AI-generated information should be checked and contextualised before it is used in teaching or assessment. Third, direct communication and opportunities for individual support should be protected. Finally, institutions should provide clear guidance on transparency, privacy, academic integrity and acceptable uses of AI.

This balance is not achieved by either uncritical adoption or blanket rejection. Uncritical adoption risks allowing technical convenience to determine educational practice, while blanket rejection may prevent students from developing the critical AI literacy needed in contemporary professional life. A pedagogically responsible approach requires teachers and institutions to make informed decisions about when AI adds value, when it introduces risk and when human interaction is indispensable.

5. Pedagogical Implications

First, universities should include AI literacy in continuing professional development for academic staff. Training should address not only the operation of tools but also the evaluation of outputs, data protection, bias, copyright and the relationship between AI use and learning outcomes.

Second, teachers should design learning activities that require students to analyse and verify information. Comparing AI-generated explanations with scholarly sources, identifying unsupported claims and defending interpretations can help students develop critical judgement.

Third, assessment should make students' reasoning and individual understanding visible. Oral explanations, reflective commentaries, case-based tasks and staged assignments can complement conventional written products. Where AI use is permitted, expectations about disclosure and acknowledgement should be communicated clearly.

Fourth, institutional policies should be understandable, consistent and proportionate. Students and teachers need guidance on privacy, academic integrity, authorship and the appropriate use of AI-generated content. Such policies should be reviewed as technologies and educational practices evolve.

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Fifth, universities should preserve the interpersonal dimension of teaching. Technology should create more opportunities for meaningful interaction, not reduce teaching to automated exchanges. Consultation, dialogue, mentoring and collaborative learning remain essential components of higher education.

6. Conclusion

The development of artificial intelligence is changing the conditions in which university teaching takes place. As students gain access to AI-generated explanations and resources, the teacher's role can no longer be defined primarily as the delivery of information. The analysis in this article indicates a movement towards learning facilitation, the purposeful use of AI-supported pedagogy and the protection of the human dimension of education.

AI can assist with instructional planning, material preparation and formative feedback, but its outputs require critical evaluation and pedagogical adaptation. Teachers remain responsible for the accuracy, relevance and ethical appropriateness of learning activities. Their professional contribution increasingly involves helping students assess information, develop independent arguments and use technological resources responsibly.

At the same time, the social and ethical purposes of higher education depend on human relationships. Empathy, encouragement, dialogue, contextual judgement and the modelling of academic integrity remain essential. These qualities demonstrate why technological assistance should complement rather than replace the teacher.

The central conclusion is that the future of university teaching does not lie in a competition between human educators and artificial intelligence. It lies in the responsible integration of technological capabilities with disciplinary expertise, professional judgement and human-centred pedagogical values. The university teacher is therefore not becoming less important; the nature of the teacher's contribution is changing.

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