

Integrating AI technology in ESL instruction to foster self-regulated learning: Teachers' perceptions

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The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) technology in English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction has gained increasing attention as a means of fostering self-regulated learning (SRL) among students. This study attempts to explore the perceptions of ESL instructors at state universities in Sri Lanka. A mixed-methods approach incorporating questionnaires and semi-structured interviews was employed to gather data from a sample of ESL instructors from eight state universities in Sri Lanka, after obtaining their consent. The questionnaire assessed ESL instructors' familiarity with and usage of AI technology in their instructional practices, as well as their beliefs and attitudes towards the integration of AI for SRL, whereas semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain in-depth insights into their experiences and challenges. In addition, recommendations for effectively incorporating AI technology into ESL instruction in order to enhance SRL among ESL learners were also obtained. Findings revealed that while ESL instructors exhibited varying levels of familiarity with AI technology, there was a general recognition of its potential benefits in promoting SRL. They acknowledged the ability of AI tools to provide personalised feedback, facilitate autonomous learning, and foster self-assessment skills. However, concerns were also expressed about technical barriers and ethical considerations associated with AI systems, including fear that the technology would replace human interaction. The need for professional development and support in utilising AI tools was also highlighted. These findings will contribute to the development of strategies and policies that promote the successful integration of AI technology in ESL instruction, ultimately enhancing students' self-regulated learning experiences.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, ESL instruction, self-regulated learning, teachers' perceptions