

Review of Two conferences related to AI and education

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This review covers two conferences held in 2025 that explored the intersection of artificial intelligence (AI) and education. The first event, the Association of Hong Kong Language Centres (AHKLC) Symposium 2025, hosted by The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (HKPU) on 22-23 May, centred around the theme "Repositioning Language Education in the Age of AI." This symposium aimed to promote innovation and collaboration in education, drawing a lineup of plenary speakers including Prof. Dr. Takako Aikawa, Prof. Glenn Stockwell, Dr. Chao-Mei Tu, and Prof. Ursula Wingate. The second event, the HASALD Conference, took place on 7 June 2025, organized by The Hong Kong Association for Self-Access Learning and Development (HASALD) in collaboration with the Department of English and Communication at HKPU. While the AHKLC Symposium focused on language education, the HASALD Conference explored the future of education with its theme "The Future of Education: Past Lessons, Present Insights, and Future Trends." This conference featured keynote speakers such as Prof. Angel Lin, Prof. Xiangen Hu, and Prof. Irwin King. Both events gathered educators, researchers, and professionals from various sectors to engage in dynamic discussions, underscoring the transformative role of technology in language education.

The HASALD Conference 2025 set itself apart from other AI-focused conferences by offering a relevant and timely discussion on the evolving roles of language centres and educators within them, particularly as technology advances. The carefully selected themes addressed the ever-changing landscape faced by language educators. To ensure audience engagement, the symposium thoughtfully balanced the number of parallel sessions, running 3-4 simultaneously, each attracting 10-12 participants for a meaningful interaction. The overall quality of the parallel sessions was impressive, including those led by students, with notable achievements like a PhD student's publication in an SDI journal. The HASALD Conference successfully covered a wide range of projects and initiatives, focusing on AI's potential impact on the future of education.

One noteworthy aspect of the AHKLC Symposium was the limited number of workshops, designed to ensure that each presentation received adequate audience engagement. However, the arrangement of the workshops, each lasting an hour, could be refined for future events. Currently,

attending a workshop required participants to give up two shorter 30-minute presentations. This setup made it challenging for attendees to balance their interests effectively across different sessions.

There are several insights obtained from the conferences, both of which highlighted the potential challenges and opportunities presented by the integration of AI in education. For example, one workshop from the AHKLC Symposium illuminated the clever methods students might employ to manipulate AI Turnitin figures to zero percent, raising concerns about how educators' focus on these AI-generated scores might inadvertently shift students' objectives. This insight underscored the critical need for educators, especially in EAP courses, to refine assignment structures to avoid the circumvention of AI detectors when submitting AI-generated work.

Both events emphasized AI is not so much a replacement as an enhancement tool for educators. By effectively using AI, teachers can facilitate learning and save time that can be redirected towards providing feedback and developing teaching materials. At the HASALD Conference, Lin (2025), in her talk "Language learning in the age of AI: Reimagining the role of human teachers through the 4T lenses," emphasized that while AI is good at handling routine linguistic tasks, it falls short in engaging with the human, affective, and cultural aspects of language learning. To stay relevant, she suggested adopting the "4T Lenses" framework—Translanguaging, Trans-semiotizing, Transknowledging, and Transculturizing. These lenses support viewing language learning as a dynamic and embodied process that transcends linguistic boundaries, promoting transcultural exploration and diverse knowledge integration. This approach places emphasis on human affective engagement and creativity, proposing a new role for educators that goes beyond AI's capabilities. Her suggestions align with the mission of the Language Centre where I work at Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU), which is focused on advancing transdisciplinary communication and intercultural competence.

Another key insight is about developing an understanding among both students and teachers about the ethical use of AI. Organizing workshops to educate on how to embrace AI responsibly will help in integrating these powerful tools into the academic environment in a meaningful way, as suggested by Prof. Ursula Wingate in the symposium. Wingate (2025) recommended that, in designing

policies regarding the use of AI, the focus should be on leveraging the learning opportunities that Gen AI presents, rather than dwelling on potential misconduct. While it is inevitable that some students will cheat, and find ways to do so with Gen AI, teachers cannot assume that all students will engage in such behaviour. Therefore, policy implementation should align institutional and departmental strategies, providing sufficient information and support at the programme level. This requires the involvement of faculty who can offer advice and expertise within their programmes and departments. Furthermore, EAP specialists and learning developers should play a key role, as they understand the significance of Gen AI and the academic writing process, making them ideal candidates for supporting teacher education in this area. Ongoing guidance and support should be provided for both students and staff, and this can be achieved through regular Continuing Professional Development (CPD) events focusing on Gen AI. It is important to introduce guidance sessions for every program during induction week on an institution-wide basis. Gen AI should also be incorporated into all workshops related to academic assignment preparation.

During the HASALD conference, there were two keynote talks on the inevitability of change due to AI. King (2025) and Hu (2025) delivered compelling speeches on this topic, titled “The Critical Role of AI in Learning Analytics and Assessment in the Future of Education” and “Generative AI in Education: From Foundational Insights to the Socratic Playground for Learning,” respectively. Both speakers emphasized the necessity of adapting curricula and assessments to meet the challenges posed by the rise of AI. A significant point of discussion was the attributes or skills that graduates should possess in this AI-driven era. A new Bloom’s Taxonomy model was also introduced to demonstrate these required competencies. The message was clear: rather than avoiding AI, educators should develop these skills in students through teaching strategies and assessments to prepare them for the future.

The AHKLC Symposium 2025 and the HASALD Conference 2025 were commendable occasions for educators and researchers committed to advancing AI in education. Participants engaged in dynamic discussions and workshops that illuminated the challenges and possibilities of

integrating AI into academic frameworks. The conferences not only highlighted the need for innovative solutions to address potential misuse of AI tools but also celebrated the inspiring potential these technologies hold for enhancing educational experiences. Attendees of both events left with a renewed sense of purpose and actionable strategies, ready to implement AI in ways that align with pedagogical goals and ethical standards. Overall, the conferences were testaments to the collaborative spirit of the academic community and its dedication to using AI for the enhancement of learning environments.

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