

Perceptions of chatGPT utility in education – a linguistic analysis of Facebook posts

The landscape of education has been undergoing rapid transformations, propelled by the swift integration of new technologies, especially artificial intelligence (AI). This shift is fostering an environment where human collaboration with machines, particularly in the form of chatGPT, has been reshaping the capabilities of education and learning. In my presentation, I endeavor to trace the evolving perceptions of the utility of chatGPT in education. This exploration spans several months in 2023, a time when the deployment of generative AI in various facets of our lives became a prominent social issue. The hypothesis that I aimed to verify was whether teachers' perceptions of ChatGPT utility in education would align with the Gartner hype cycle model for technology adoption. This model has been developed for quantitative analyses of a product popularity in business and marketing. My objective in this study was to show that a linguistic analysis of users' comments about the utility of the product can be successfully employed in such contexts.

To achieve this objective, I analyzed Facebook posts within a teacher virtual community in one-month cycles. The analysis was grounded in Michael Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), which conceptualizes our experiences as discrete units of change (figures) structured by the grammar of the clause. The clause (material, mental, relational), representing configurations of participants engaged in diverse processes within specific contexts, offers insights into the construal of our experiential world. A diachronic analysis of Facebook posts within SFG framework has unveiled shifts in how teachers construe their experiences with chatGPT. The interpretation of the findings through the lens of the Gartner model has shown that teachers' perceptions and utilization of chatGPT align with the phases of the hype cycle but the shift proceeds at a higher pace.