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The AI Catalyst: Enhancing Self-Efficacy and Research Efficiency in Doctoral Presentation Skills

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Abstract

In response to the rapid rise of Generative AI, this study investigated the integration of various AI tools across three groups of PhD students in a Presentation Skills course for research students at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The pilot tested a suite of tools categorized by function: Yoodli for oral communication, ChatGPT for linguistic refinement as well as research assistant tools such as Research Rabbit, Elicit, R Discovery and Connected Papers for literature mapping. Findings indicate that doctoral students highly value the “immediate feedback” provided by AI, utilizing it as a low-stakes pre-assessment tool. Results show a marked increase in student confidence regarding spoken assessments. Furthermore, the integration of research assistance tools significantly reduced the time spent on literature discovery. This presentation discusses how GenAI serves not as a replacement for critical thought but as a catalyst for efficiency and self-efficacy in high-level academic communication.

Keywords: Generative AI; PhD Education, Self-Efficacy; Research Efficiency; Tertiary Education