

10 Pros And Cons Of AI In Education

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AI has made such a fuss in media lately. Personally, I see lots of news about it every day. Some of them are highly positive — the power of technology is used to save lives, teach people, and give us help when needed.

Others were slightly frightening: machines are becoming self-aware by learning way faster than we do, robots are taking over people, and the human race will be extremely lucky to not get swept out by 4th industrial revolution.

Same happens when there's a talk about AI in education. While some people say: we want more tech at schools, let's make education more comfortable, others are seriously concerned. Research implies that by helping us outsource tasks to a machine, technology makes people dumber. So, if that's true, maybe tech-savvy schools will do more harm than good?

It's very hard to get an opinion regarding AI in education. That's why I hit the books, dived into the research to find out all the possible pros and cons of machine learning in our schools and colleges.

1. Personalization and customization. AI lets a kid choose literally everything: the learning pace, the curriculum, the form of education, and the educator. Teachers, on the other hand, can collect insights about every student they teach, develop an individualized approach, and handle even the toughest kids easier.

2. It's possible to create adapted groups. Let's imagine that a professor teaches a class for 4 classes of students. Among this group, there are more and less academically inclined kids. If a teacher wants to gather kids to perform a difficult task, he can analyze all classes, find those students whose skills and motivation match the project, and work with them.

3. Objectivity and equality. Making errors is an essence of human nature. Even if we'd like to escape it, it's impossible. However, one hardly wants mistakes and errors in his education. From that standpoint, robots are perfect. They are not prone to human error, hence the knowledge they share is right.

4. 24/7 response. Every person has a biorhythm — some of us are working better in the morning, other's brain needs time and get up to speed in the evening. In terms of standard education system, we're not free to contact teachers whenever we need an answer to a question or suddenly "feel like studying". AI doesn't need to take breaks, it doesn't get annoyed because someone called at 1 am. Therefore, every student can contact a virtual

tutor whenever he needs academical assistance.

5. VR-learning possibilities. One of the biggest achievements of technology is providing people with experiences they didn't have a chance to try before. Virtual reality-technologies give us a chance to visit places we've never been to and do something we've never done. For education, virtual reality is more than just a tool of entertainment. Students will have a chance to get closer to things they learn about — space and nature, complex projects and concepts.

6. Saving time by outsourcing repetitive tasks. For instance, teachers don't need to grade assignments anymore, now there are apps to do it. Students can avoid writing summaries, outsourcing it to a bot.

7. Game-learning. Who said that education should be boring? When we watch a movie or play a game, we can also get useful knowledge and information, but those activities are rather pleasant than boring. The deal is in experiences we get. So, with the use of bots and AI-technology, learning can turn into a fun and engaging experience.

8. Better inclusive education. AI offers few possibilities that can make the education of disabled students easier. From virtual presence devices that can let a kid attend the classroom to virtual classroom and teachers that create a unique studying experience — now the world of knowledge can be brought everywhere.

9. Increasing tech experience for students. These days, technology is needed in every professional activity. So it's better that kids learn to use it as early as possible. The use of artificial intelligence shows the power of tech and coding and might encourage kids to learn STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math).

10. Bringing down the language gap for foreign students. Sometimes, the challenge of education is extremely tough for the kids of emigrants. Not only there's a new community to adjust to, a lifestyle to catch up on — a lot of things teachers say in the classroom could simply be misunderstood because of a language gap. Artificial intelligence is a way to resolve the issue and translate the words of the teacher to a foreigner in a real-time mode.

1. Quantity doesn't become quality. When humans do a certain task for multiple times, they eventually become better at it. So, if a teacher has spent years teaching a class, he will get better at his job every day. Robots work by the algorithm that is not influenced by the repetition of the task. Therefore, their experience doesn't matter and doesn't make them any better.

2. AI can stimulate technology addiction. A school is traditionally a place where a kid has to dump his mobile phone and get to open a same old book. With tech implemented in every classroom, kids won't be able to imagine their lives without it. As a result, in a few decades, we'll get a bunch of socially-unadapted technology-addicted adults.

3. The high cost of power. Our houses on their own are already the reason we are charged massive electricity bills. If every school gets a robot, the amount of power it has to use will increase. Altogether, countries will have to spend more budget to cover the expenses, not to mention the fact that electrical power is a non-renewable resource.

4. Unemployment. Teaching is one of the biggest professional branches — there are over 3,000,000 educators in the USA alone. One can only imagine how the replacement of teachers by robots would be met by all the instructors. Like during an industrial revolution when people were replaced by machines with same functions there were strikes and wars, teachers can also start movements and protests.

5. Lack of personal engagement. For starters, by replacing teachers with robots, we let students get all the necessary knowledge, robbing them, however, of the personal interaction with a teacher. Educators are not just “knowledge packs”, they offer personal guidance, make an influence, and lead by example.

6. The power of AI in the hands of those who rule it. Therefore, if someone was to hack the code, he would gain the power of spreading violent, inappropriate information and propaganda.

7. The attention and the ability to multitask reduces. We use so much help from machines that our own abilities shrink. So, there’s a risk that we will use machines not because it’s more convenient, but because we can’t do it the other way.

8. No alternative teaching methods. A good teacher can offer several ways to solve a particular problem. If a student can use one approach, a teacher will come up with an alternative one. It develops the flexibility of a student’s mind. A robot, however, will offer a standard solution with no alternative variants.

9. Widens the rich-poor gap. Bots and other AI learning tools will require a student to have a tablet or a laptop. However, not every student has these gadget. As soon as the government doesn’t fund all the technological implementations.

10. Kids’ ability to learn from a virtual assistant is still unclear. It yet remains a question whether students will be invested in education and motivated enough to study when teachers are not there to supervise. Sometimes it’s the wish to impress a particular teacher that makes a kid eager to prepare for the lesson. Will the excitement remain with a robot as an assistant? That’s yet for us to find out.

As you can see, there are plenty of statements both pro- and against AI in education. However, it’s for you to decide which of these sound more convincing.