Trendy but Risky? Teachers'Concerns about AI-Generated Identity Artifacts in TESOL Practice

As AI tools gain popularity among educators, many English language teachers have embraced a new wave of identity-based digital artifacts—miniature figurines, blister card visuals, and AI-generated avatars showcasing their face, voice, profession, or hometown. Commonly created using tools like ChatGPT's image generation, FaceSwap, or Hedra, these artifacts are widely shared across teacher communities on social media, often framed as classroom motivation or digital badges of identity.

This brief report examines a growing tension: the enthusiastic uptake of these tools—often inspired by trends and peer sharing—is followed by a delayed but significant wave of ethical concerns. Drawing on observations from teacher communities of practice and a small-scale survey of in-service educators, the report explores emerging discomfort related to data privacy, visual ownership, student safety, and pressure to participate in "AI performance"online.

Additionally, the practice of using student images in these AI-enhanced materials as a replacement for traditional rewards like stickers raises questions about informed consent, especially in contexts with limited digital literacy or institutional policy.

This paper contributes a critical lens on how adaptive, personalized AI tools intersect with teacher agency, social validation, and privacy ethics. It argues for a more reflective integration of visual/voice AI tools in teacher training and professional development, rather than trend-driven adoption without pedagogical safeguards.

Keywords: AI in TESOL, teacher identity, visual artifacts, ethical use of AI, student privacy

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