
Stop talking about generative AI – Let's build more resilient higher education

Author(s) (presenter)

Inger-Marie Falgren Christensen, SDU

Program text

Why digital competences more broadly, rather than AI, should be in focus when formulating learning objectives and updating curricula. What can the concept of resilience teach us about responsiveness?

Abstract

Introduction

AI technologies and their implications for higher education are currently the focus of theoretical and empirical studies. Existing approaches to teaching and assessment are analysed to identify opportunities and challenges and to help stakeholders navigate. For this purpose, policies and guidelines are being developed. Likewise, investigations are undertaken to identify the competences needed for the informed use of AI technologies by students and teachers. These efforts have resulted in conceptualisations such as AI literacy and AI competence frameworks.

But is this an optimal approach, and what will happen when new technologies become available? Can the concept of resilience from ecology show us how to build capacity to respond more smoothly to new digital challenges? Resilience is the capacity to absorb disturbance and reorganise when undergoing change to preserve function and identity. In this context, it could involve a common understanding of digital competences that is broad enough to capture categories of needed competences but would not have to be adjusted with the advent of new types of technology. Could the Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DigComp 2.2.) help build this common understanding?

Methods

Existing literature on AI competences was reviewed and the identified competences were mapped to the five competence areas outlined in DigComp 2.2.: information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content production, safety, and problem solving.

Results

The proposed competences in relation to AI can be linked to the five competence areas in a way that captures important nuances in competence demands. Furthermore, the result points to competences that are needed for the constructive, creative, ethical, reflected and reflexive use of AI technology.

Discussion

The pros and cons of using DigComp 2.2. to build a common understanding of digital competences are discussed as well as the helpfulness of the concept of resilience.

Literature

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