Designing AI-Focused Communities of Practice For Teacher Educators

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Today’s agenda

- What is a Community of Practice (CoP)?
- Why do we need CoPs in the context of AI?
- What are the key design principles?
- “AI Roundtable for Teacher Educators”

Dr Şirin Soyöz Yılmaz | Türkiye

teacher-research consultants

- British Council teacher educator
- Teacher Educator Community Coordinator
- Pre-service teacher educator at Yeditepe University
- Founder of Teacher-Research Consultants

My research interest

- Doctoral research:
  “**An Investigation of Shared Metacognition and The Community of Inquiry in an AI-focused Community of Practice for Teacher Educators**”

- My intervention:
  “**AI Roundtable for Teacher Educators**”

A quick show of hands

- How many **teacher educators?**
- How many of you are part of a group where you regularly discuss **AI in practice?**
- How many are thinking of **starting one?**

Thinking questions

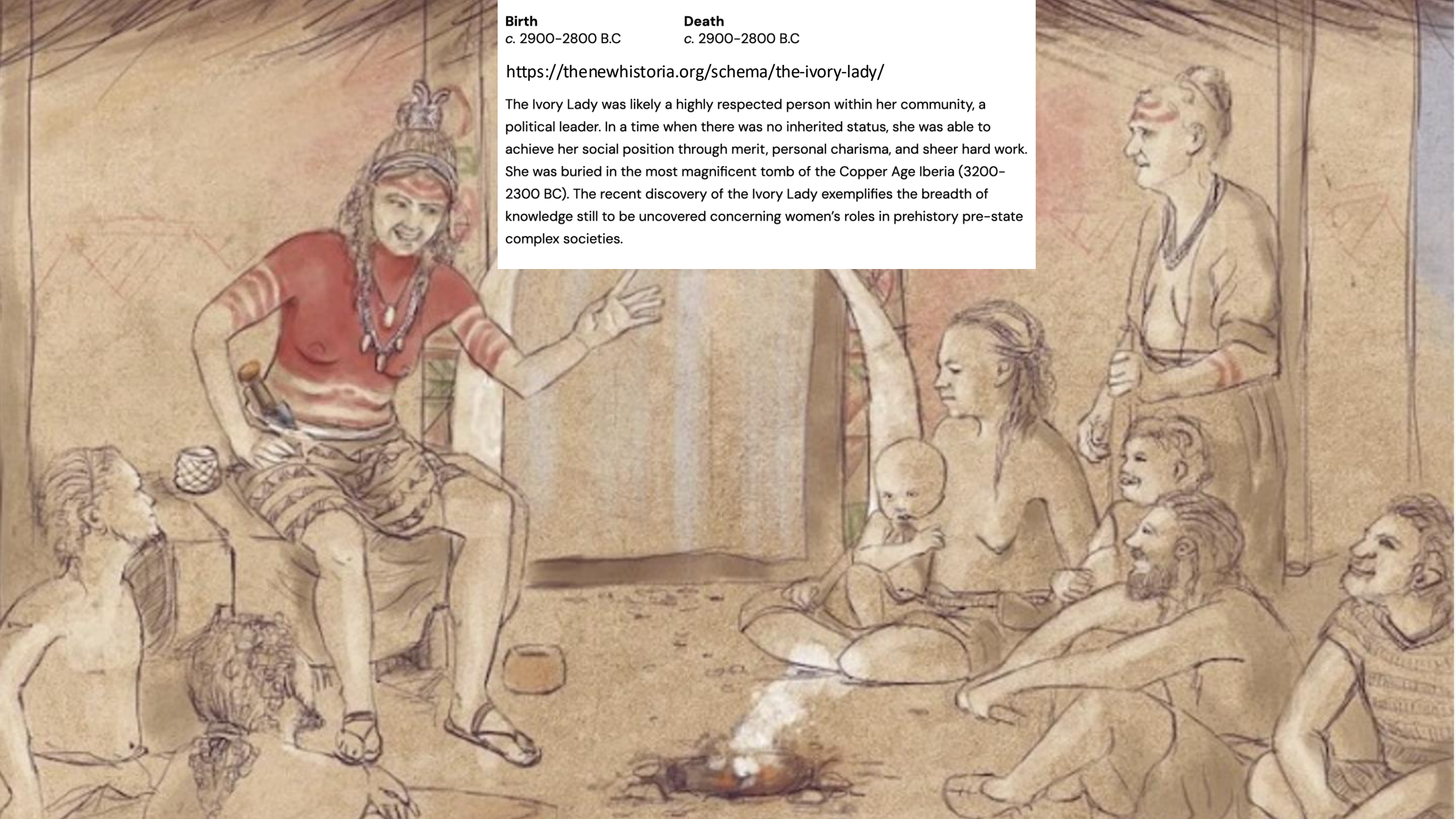
- What do you think are the **key challenges for educators in learning about AI?**

- What do you think are the **main challenges in sustaining a successful CoP?**

What is a Community of Practice (CoP)?

What is a Community of Practice?

"**A community of practice** is a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do, and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly"
(Wenger, 1991).



Birth
c. 2900–2800 B.C

Death
c. 2900–2800 B.C

https://thenewhistoria.org/schema/the-ivory-lady/

The Ivory Lady was likely a highly respected person within her community, a political leader. In a time when there was no inherited status, she was able to achieve her social position through merit, personal charisma, and sheer hard work. She was buried in the most magnificent tomb of the Copper Age Iberia (3200-2300 BC). The recent discovery of the Ivory Lady exemplifies the breadth of knowledge still to be uncovered concerning women's roles in prehistory pre-state complex societies.


“Social fabric of knowledge”(Wenger, 2004)
”Social learning system” (Wenger, 2000)

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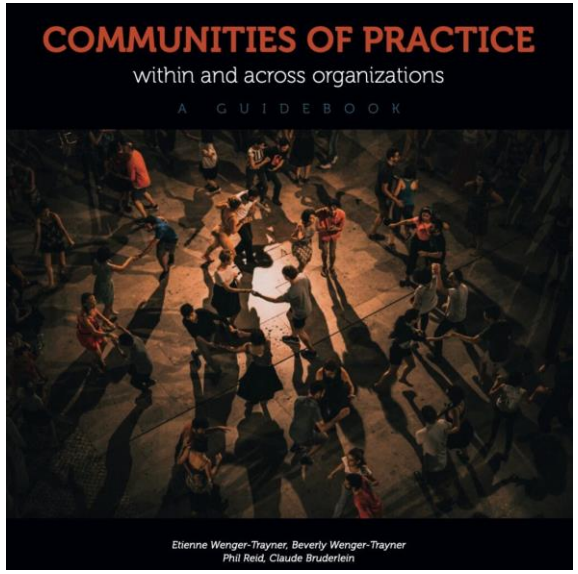
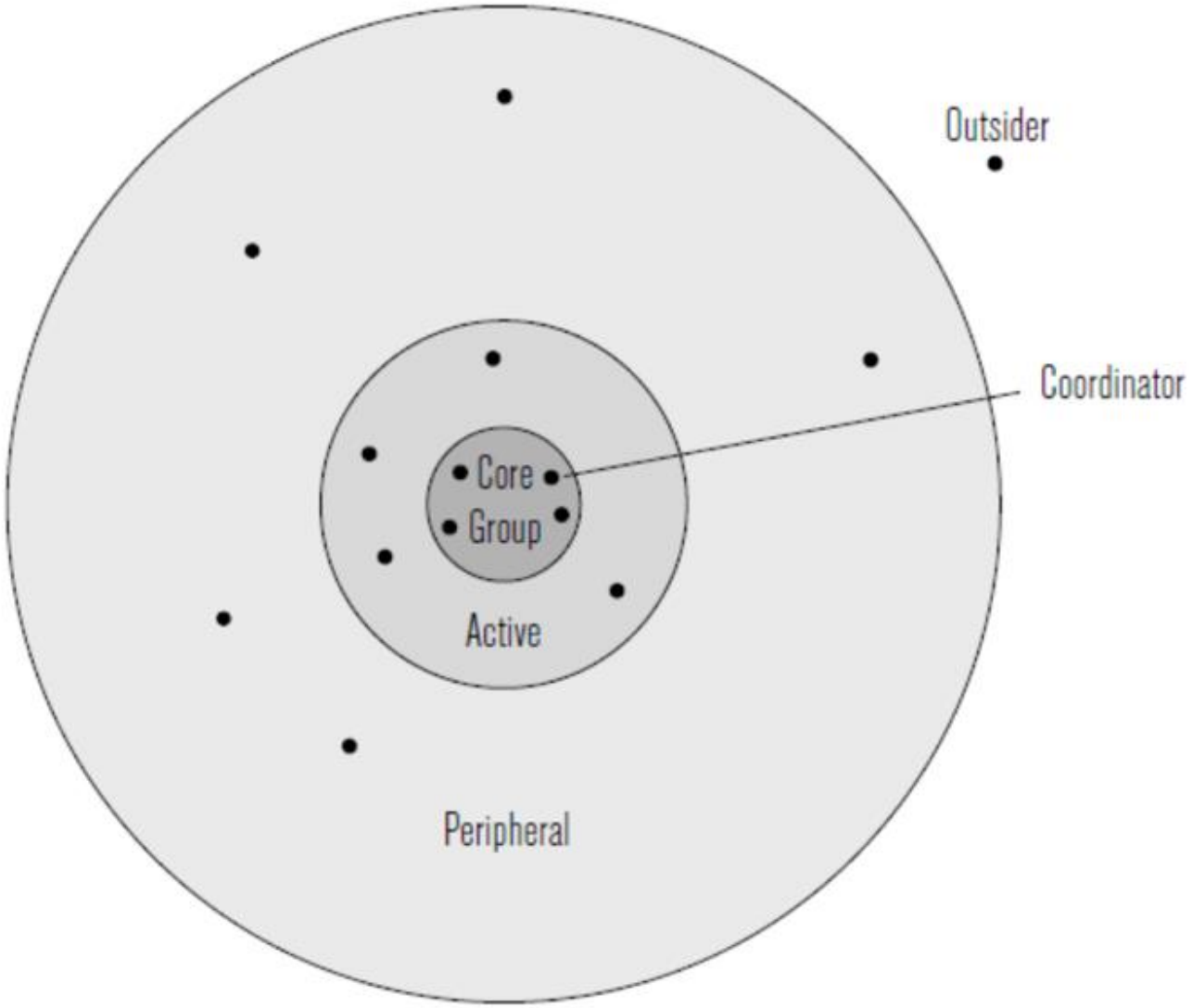
Training vs CoP

Training	CoP
Pre-defined curriculum set by experts	Practitioners in the driver's seat
Time-bound learning events	Ongoing learning loops over time
May or may not be relevant to practice	Directly relevant to practice

(Wenger, 2023)



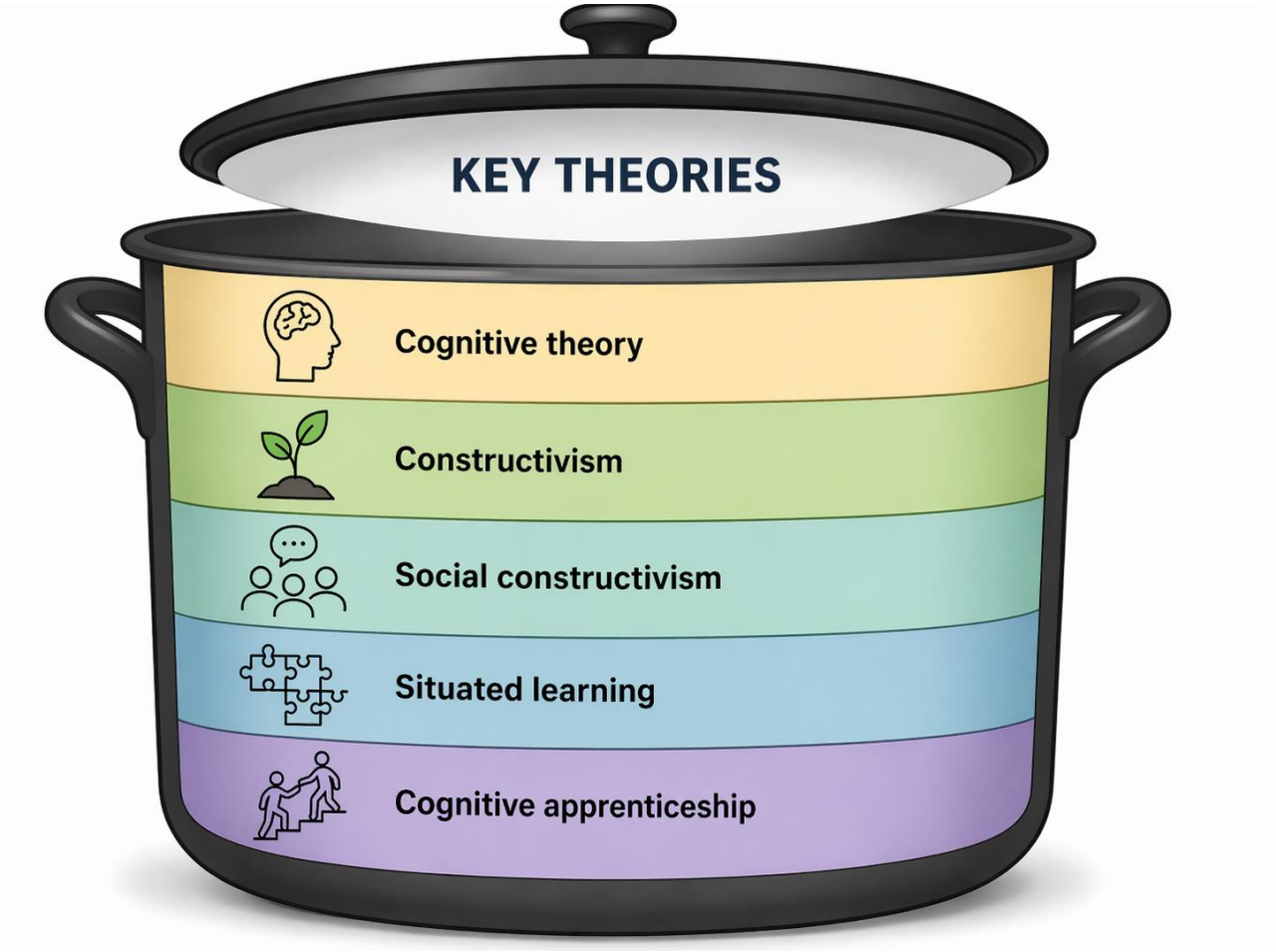
Degrees of CoP participation



Wenger et al., 2002

Background theories of CoPs

(Johnson, 2005)



Why is a CoP necessary (not optional) for AI literacy?

We need to learn AI

- AI systems
- pedagogy and implications
- ethics and responsibility
- critical AI literacy

How are we learning it?

AI learning

At the moment, most AI learning looks like this:

- tool-focused
- fragmented
- one-off
- individual

(Sperling et al., 2024; Tan et al., 2025)

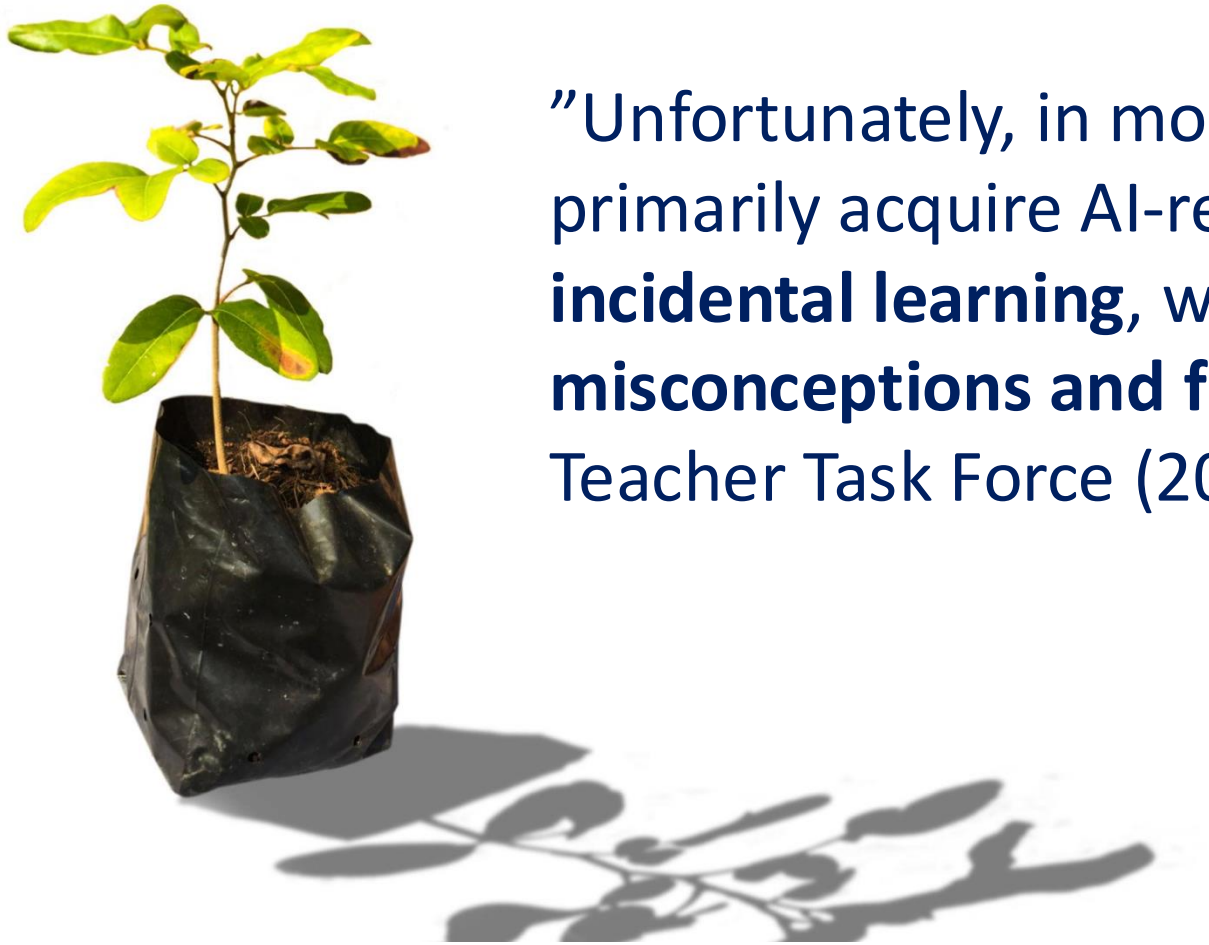
Gaps in AI professional learning

“Most studies focus **on short-term professional development programmes**, with limited evaluation of their long-term impact” (Tan et al., 2025).

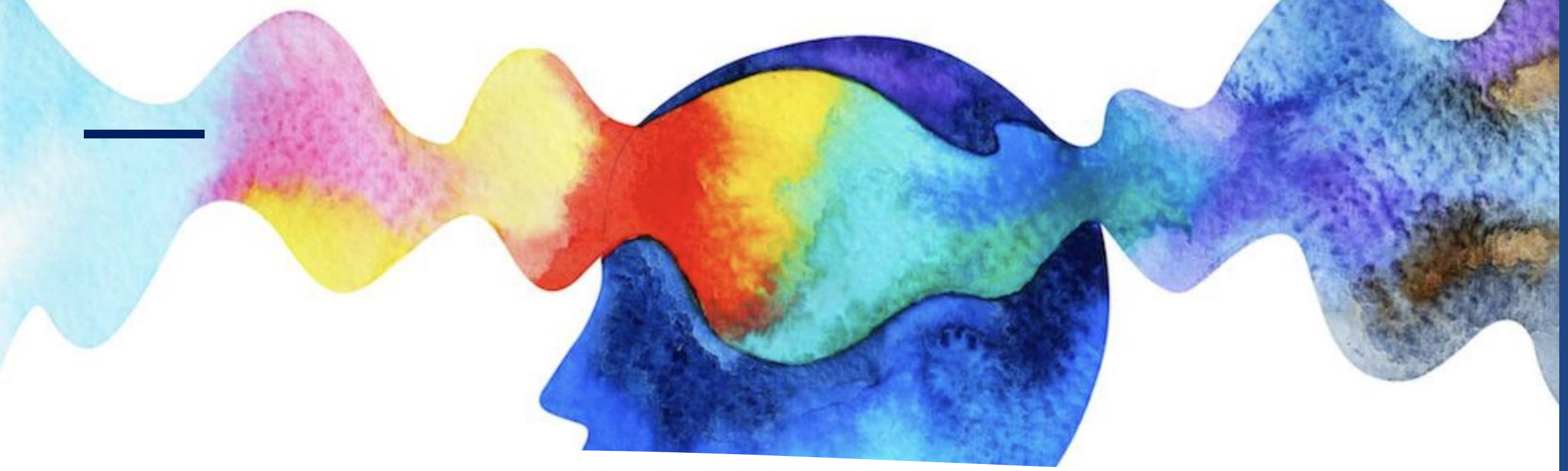
”**Insufficient mechanisms for teachers** to develop their understanding, confidence and skills with AIEd are a major barrier to its effectiveness “ (Baker et al., 2019).

“There is a **scarcity of self-study of teacher educators’** understanding, applying, and evaluations of AI literacy” (Yang & Banks, 2024).

Gaps in AI professional learning



”Unfortunately, in most countries currently, teachers primarily acquire AI-related content knowledge through **incidental learning**, which frequently leads to **misconceptions and fragmented understandings of AI**” Teacher Task Force (2025).



We are not only dealing with technology

"AI will have an impact on teaching and learning, not only from a technological standpoint but also **from pedagogical, ethical, and teacher competency development perspective**"
(Lameras & Arnab, 2021)

AIED in Curriculum

AIED operates within a curriculum:

- It is used **within a context**
- within **specific goals**,
- with **particular learners**,
- and shaped by **curriculum decisions**

There are some concerns…

“While generative AI enhances individual creativity and improves the perceived quality of outputs, **it paradoxically reduces the collective diversity of ideas.”**

(Doshi & Hauser, 2024)

AI and Curriculum

So, the question is no longer:
How do I use this tool?

The real question is:
How do I make informed pedagogical decisions about AI in this situation in my context?

If learning happens in a Community of Practice

We move from:

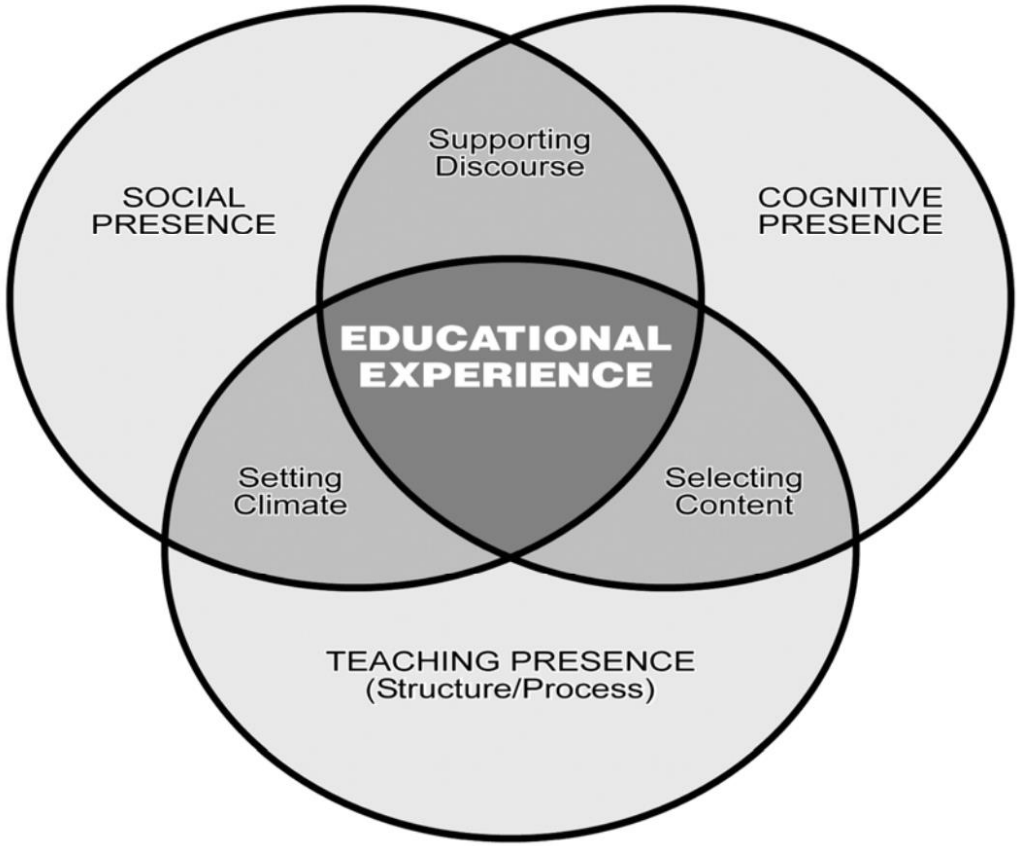
using AI

to

exploring, questioning, and shaping its role in education.

Community of Inquiry

"Effective collaborative inquiry that can cope with mis and disinformation in the age of AI will largely be dependent upon **metacognitive awareness of the inquiry** dynamic operationalized through **cognitive presence in a community of inquiry** where participants can challenge ideas and collaborative construct meaning open to verification" (Garrison, 2023)



(Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 2000)

Rethinking AI professional learning

- AI learning is often **fragmented and short-term**
- AI is more than a technical field, it involves **thinking, judgement, and pedagogy**
- We need **ongoing, collaborative learning in practice**
- **CoPs are a necessary** response to the nature of AI

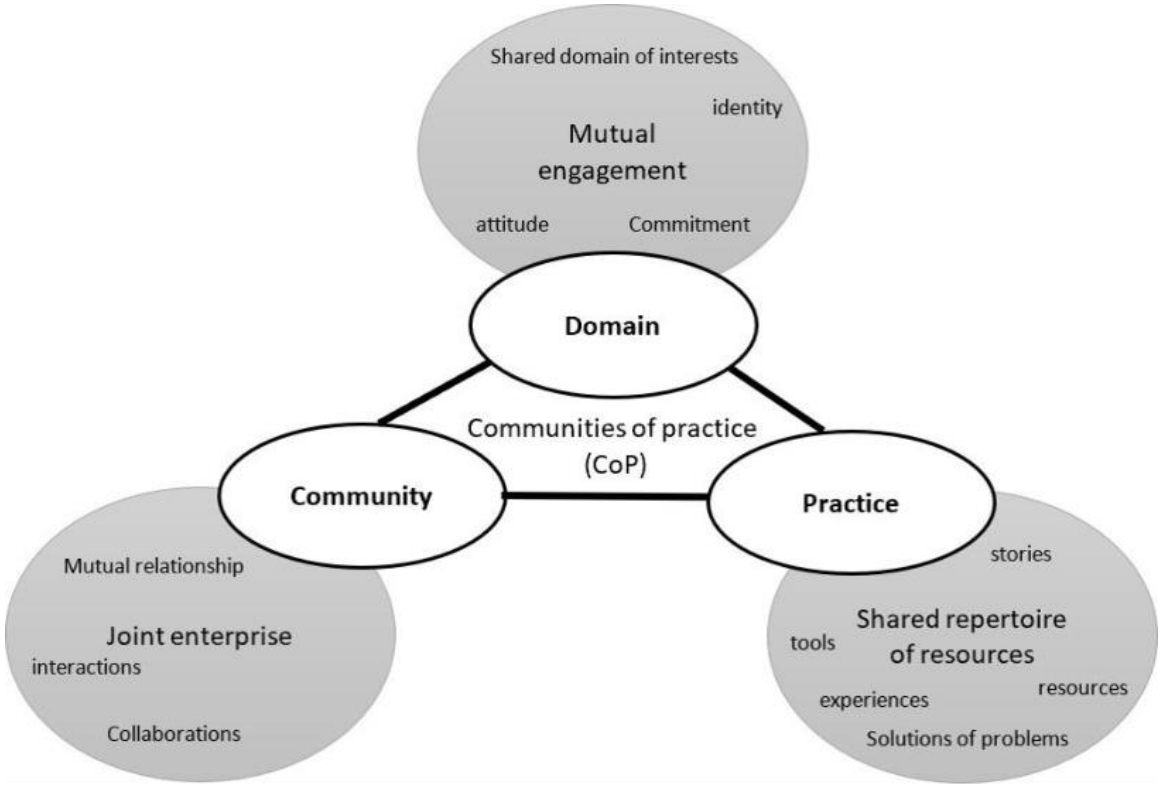
If CoPs are necessary, how do we design them?

Designing a Community of Practice

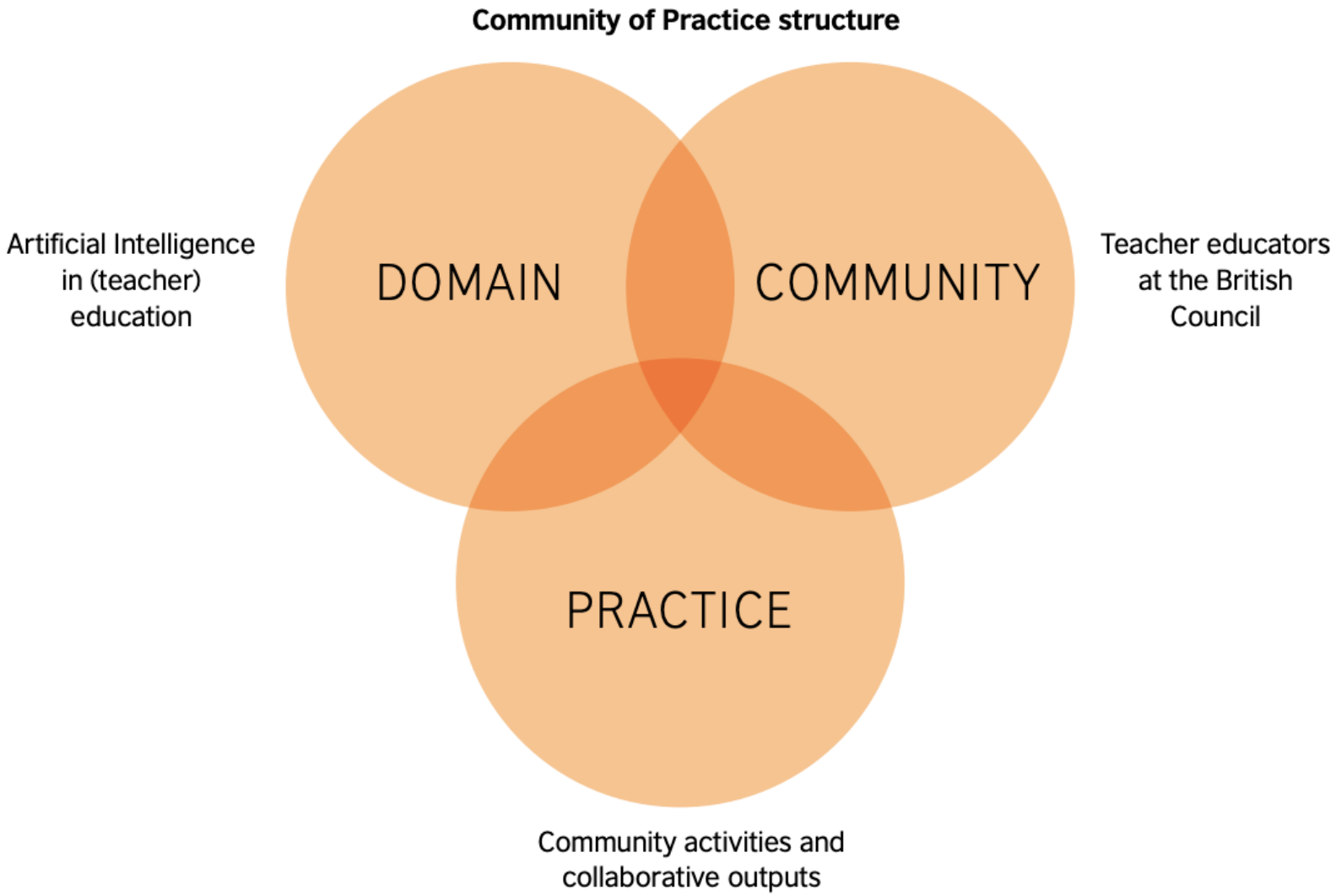
A Community of Practice is not just
a group of people.
It is built on three essential elements:

- **Domain**
- **Community**
- **Practice**

(Wenger, 1991)



AI Roundtable for Teacher Educators



AI Roundtable for Teacher Educators

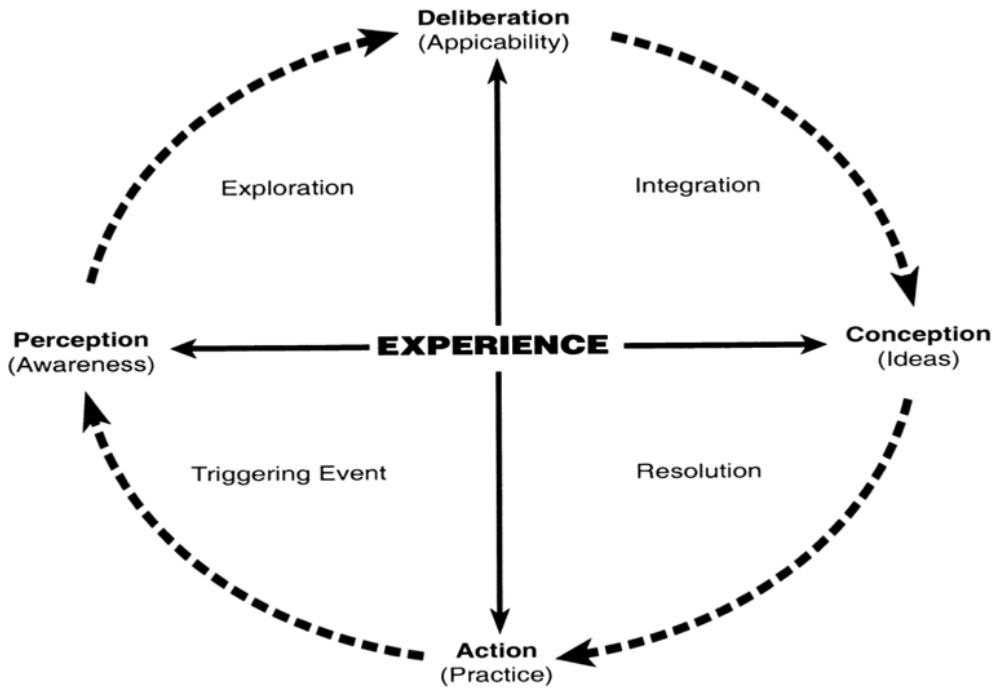
- 30+ teacher educators
- Teacher educators from 18 countries
- Pre and in-service teacher educators
- Mix of synchronous sessions and asynchronous collaboration
- Varied levels (from emerging awareness to active experimentation)

Orientation

Conceptualization

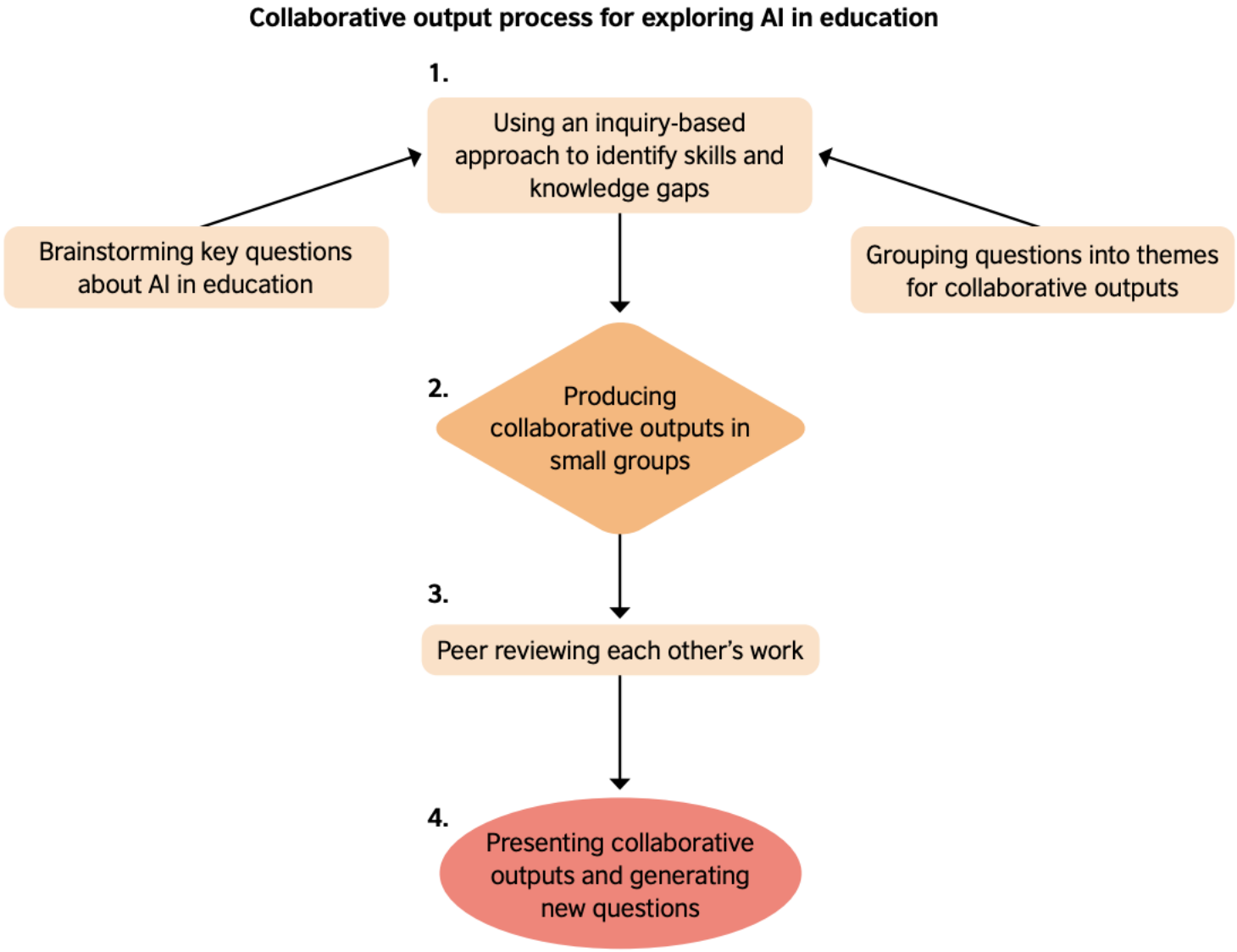
Integration

Resolution



Adapted from the Practical inquiry Model (Garrison et al., 2000).

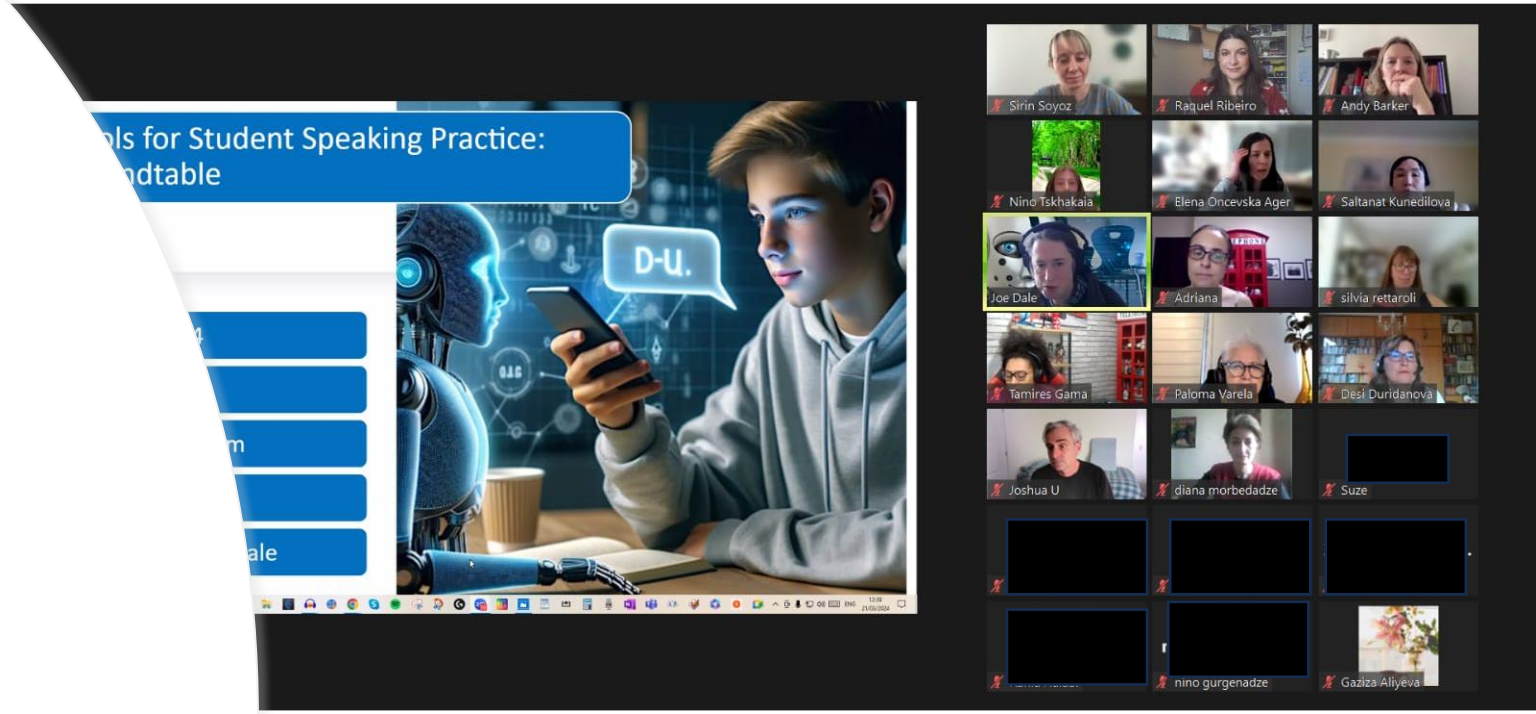
AI Roundtable for Teacher Educators

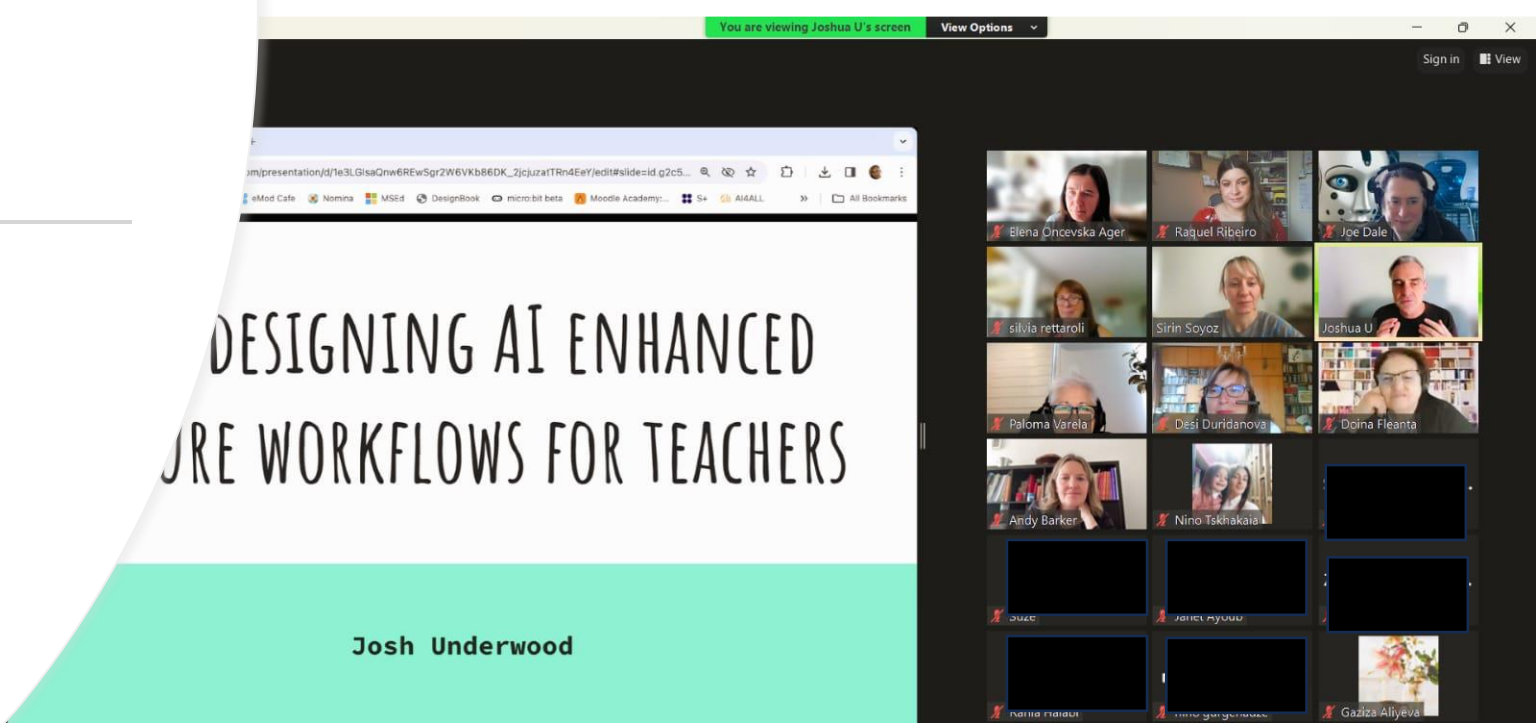


Themes for AI Roundtable for Teacher Educators

1. Writing effective prompts
2. Setting classroom rules for AI integration
3. Methods to assess the effectiveness of AI-based learning tools
4. Using AI for formative assessment
5. Mindful distribution of teaching work across human & AI teaching and learning environments
6. Addressing ethical concerns related to AI use in teacher education
7. Safeguarding learners and ensuring responsible AI use in educational settings
8. Using AI to provide access to learners with special needs and disabilities
9. Encouraging feedback in AI learning environments
10. Staying updated on the latest developments of AI

AI Roundtable for Teacher Educators





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Teaching quality

Transforming teacher education with AI: Lessons from a global Community of Practice

Edited by Nik Peachey

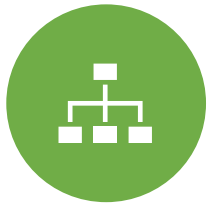
Key design principles

INQUIRY-DRIVEN DESIGN

CHOICE

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY AND INCLUSION

DOMAIN RELEVANCE

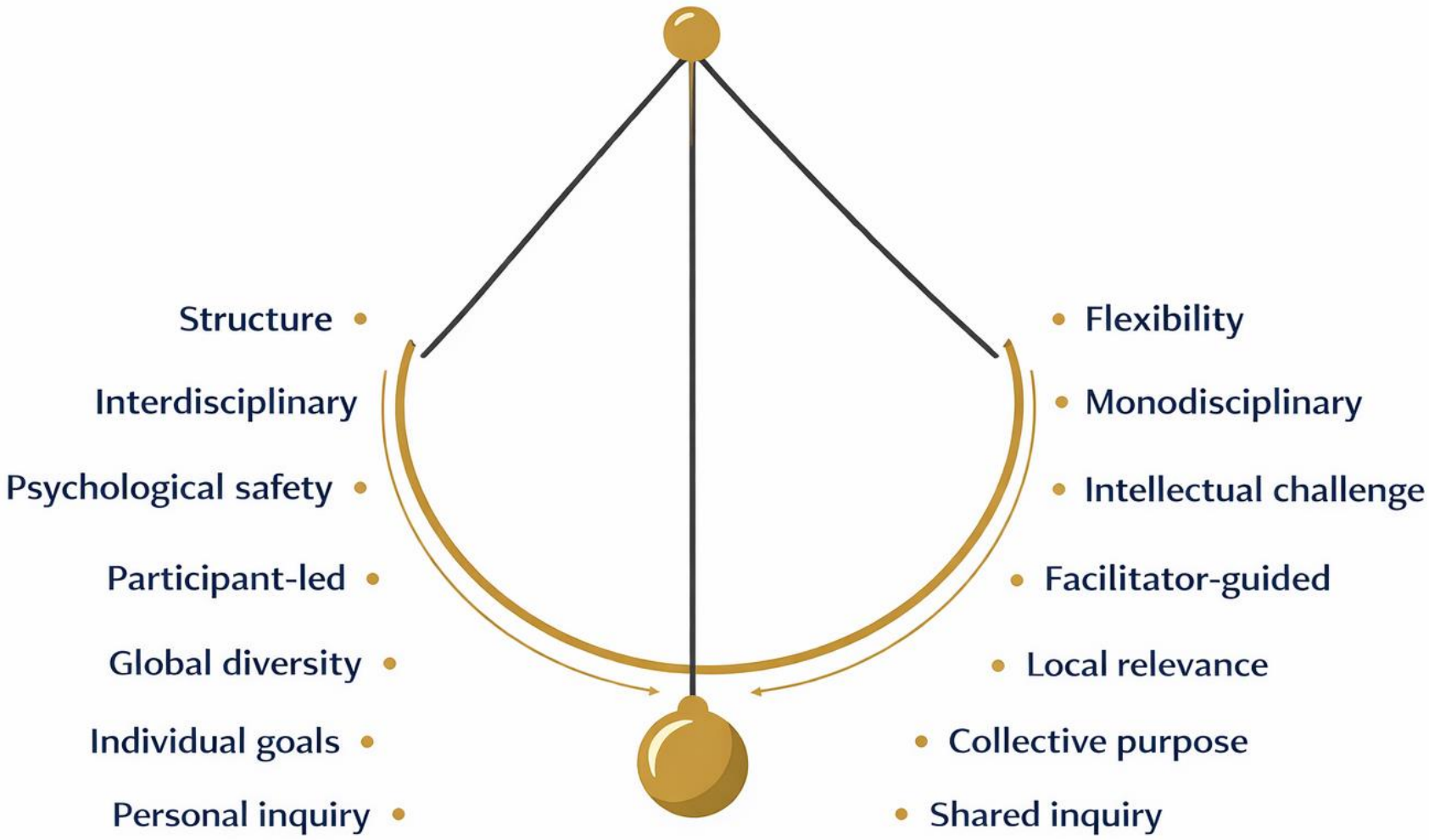


COLLABORATIVE OUTPUTS

DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

REFLECTION AND NEW INQUIRY

Design tensions



Quotes from CoP members

"So, I think it kind of gave me a stimulus to try out a lot of things I wouldn’t necessarily have otherwise done.”

“I quite like that democratic kind of setting in which people are invited to choose their niche. It was very liberating and very practical.”

"This was very transformational, even though my growth is not necessarily visible in the forums. It was happening behind the scenes.”

"I do not feel shy using AI anymore, or I don't feel any kind of guilt over using AI. I'm a confident user now.”

Toolkit for a CoP Leader

Pendulum

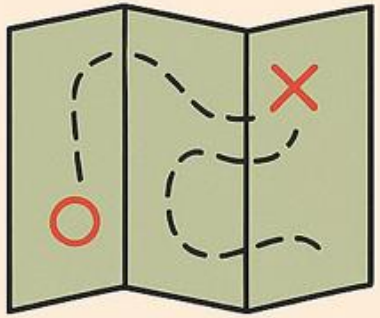
Am I giving enough space for community voices while still providing direction?

Barometer

Are we gaining or losing momentum? Who is engaged, who might need support?

Thermometer

Are participants feeling safe, motivated or overwhelmed?



Map

Do members understand how to navigate the space and learning pathways?

Compass

Are our current activities aligned with our shared purpose and values?

Key learning points

Cognitive presence was positively and strongly correlated with **co-regulation.**

The shift from self-regulation to co-regulation was gradual, suggesting that effective collaboration develops over time rather than immediately.

Key learning points

AI literacy should be socially situated rather than a set of isolated competencies.

CoPs create spaces for educators to navigate uncertainty without fear of judgement.

The Community of Inquiry framework provides a design lens.

Teacher educators play a central role in AI-focused CoPs.

Webinars for teacher educators

Does your work include facilitating the professional development of teachers? Do you provide support and mentoring to pre- and in-service teachers? Do you deliver teacher training, or lead a community of practice for teachers? Do you work as a school inspector or conduct research into teacher education or have one of the many other roles undertaken by teacher educators? If so, then these webinars are for you. If you are a teacher, visit our **Webinars for teachers** page.

Our monthly interactive webinars for teacher educators are facilitated by experts in teacher education and English language teaching. Our webinars for teacher educators are held monthly and are completely free.

Certificates are available for all attendees.

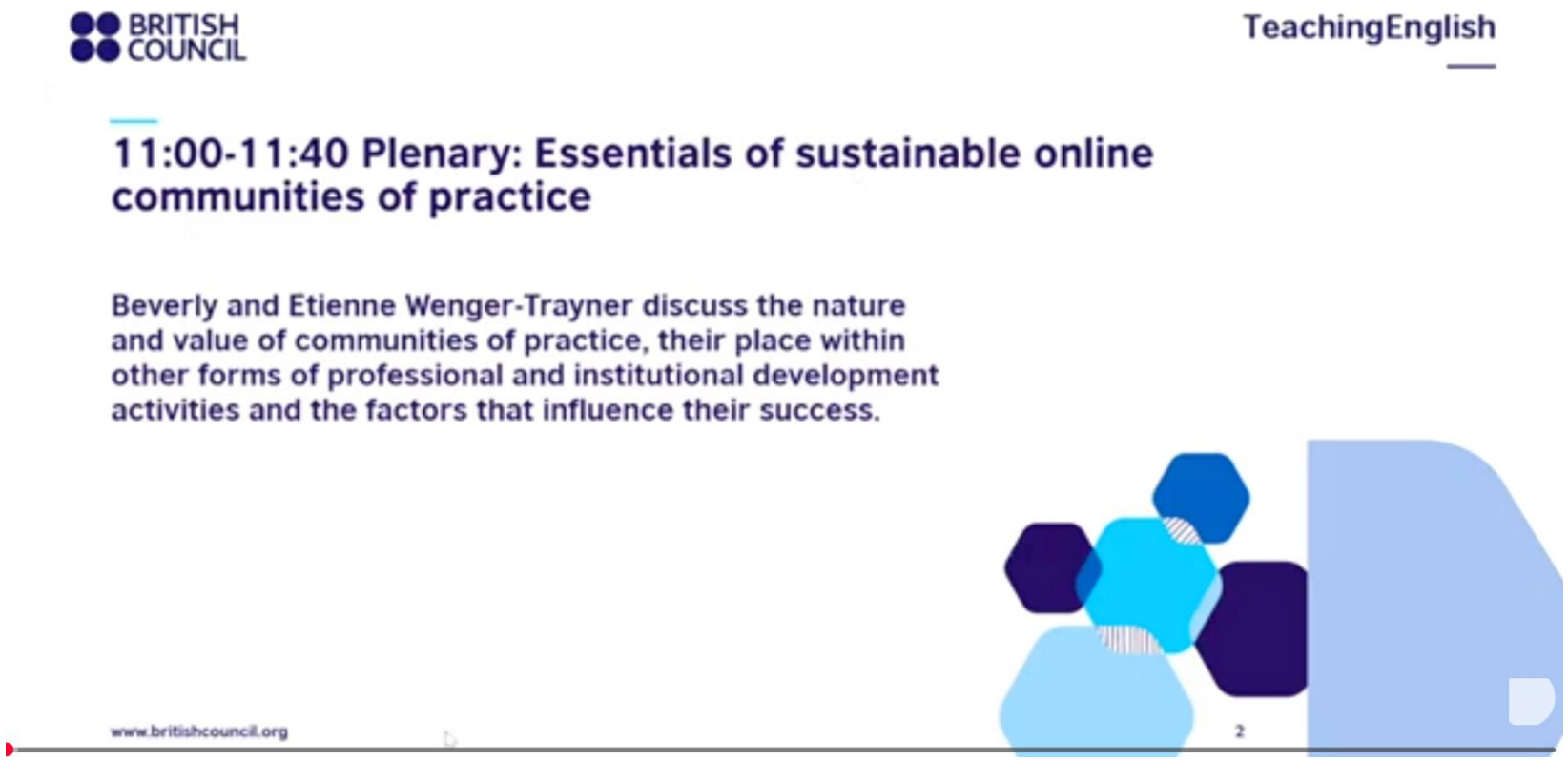
Artificial intelligence in teacher education: Lessons and practices from a Community of Practice for teacher educators

Watch this panel discussion to explore how artificial intelligence (AI) can be used in teacher education.

Supporting teacher development through the effective use of social media groups

Watch a recording of this webinar where Nicky Hockly and Gary Motteram discuss using social media as a space for teacher and teacher educator learning.

Interview with Etienne Wenger



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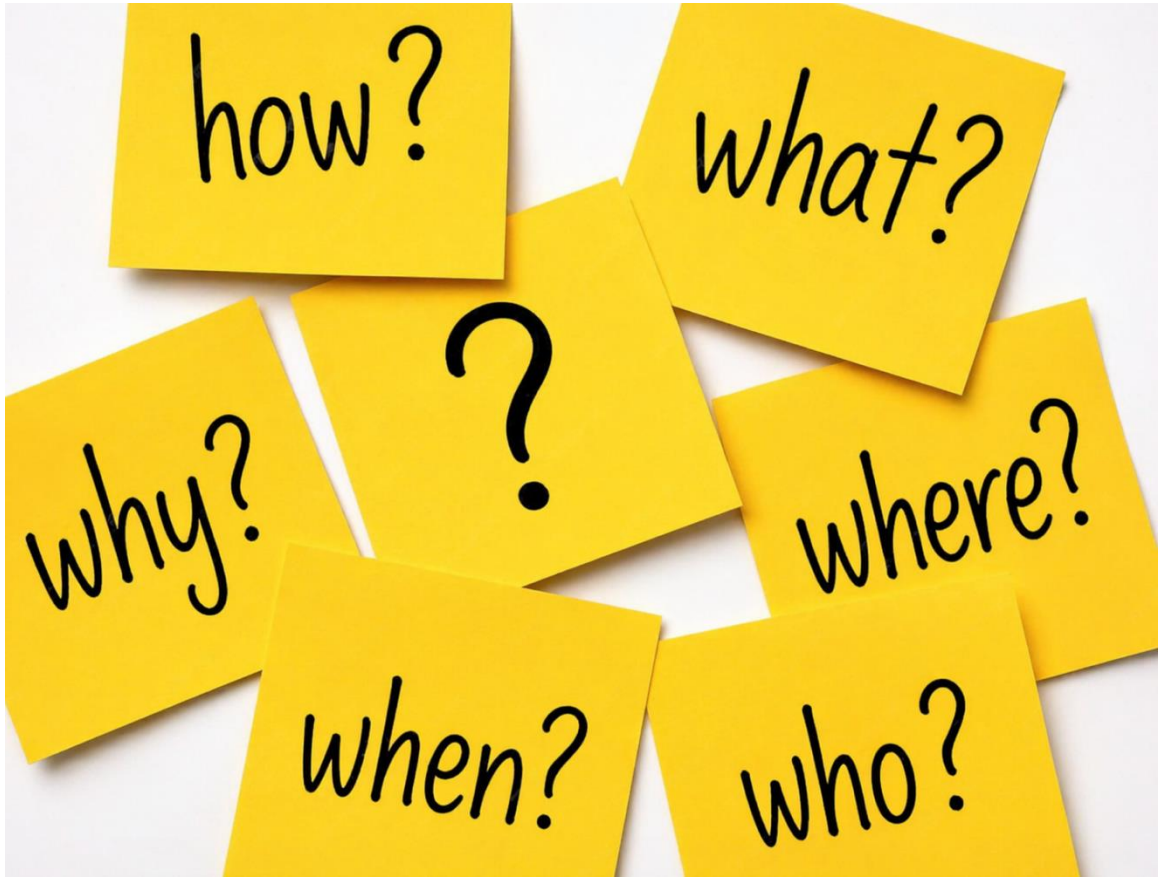

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