Google AI summaries are ruining the livelihoods of recipe writers: 'It's an extinction event'

Level 2: Intermediate

Article summary: This article explains how the use of AI as part of Google searches has affected the work of recipe writers.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking

Language focus: Reported speech

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

a. This activity aims to let students discuss the potential effect of using AI for finding recipes and what the advantages and disadvantages might be. Ask them to imagine the situation and think about how they would look for recipes. Then discuss how common it is for people to use AI for recipes. End by having students brainstorm the advantages and disadvantages of the use of AI for recipes. Encourage them to think of as many examples as possible.

2. Key words

a. Ask students to do this task individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. As an extension activity, ask students to highlight the key words in the article.

Key:
1. *overloaded*
2. *slop*
3. *trustworthy*
4. *revenue*
5. *rolling out*
6. *acknowledges*
7. *conflate*
8. *crawler*
9. *extinction*
10. *Frankensteined*
11. *generate*
12. *interpretation*
13. *knowhow*
14. *uncluttered*

b. Before reading the article carefully, students use the key words to fill the gaps in the sentences to ensure that they know how the words are used in other contexts.

Key:
1. *slop*
2. *trustworthy*
3. *acknowledge*
4. *crawler*
5. *extinction*
6. *Frankensteined*
7. *generate*
8. *interpretation*
9. *uncluttered*
10. *overload*
11. *revenue*
12. *knowhow*
13. *conflate*
14. *roll out*

3. Comprehension check

a. Students answer the questions based on the information in the article. Encourage students to answer in complete sentences, e.g. in item 2, they may say, *When Google rolled out AI Mode in March, it became possible to get AI-generated recipes.*

Key:
1. *The rollout of Google AI Mode*
2. *It recommended using glue.*
3. *Recipes are sets of instructions.*
4. *Through the use of ads*
5. *They will stop trusting online recipe sites.*
6. *Websites dependent on the advertising model*
7. *She uses her experience and technical knowhow.*
8. *An increase in views of the links to his site, but a decrease in the number of visits to the site (suggesting that AI is showing the link to the site, but people aren't going to the site).*

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9. *Many food blogs are cluttered with ads.*
10. *AI content is rated less trustworthy, cookbooks are from a trusted source and allow you to learn, people are starting to identify AI slop.*

4. Key language

a. This activity helps students understand the rules of reported speech by comparing reported and direct speech and using the examples to complete the rules. Ask them to refer back to the article to better understand the examples of direct speech.

Key:
1. b
2. a

1. *couldn't*
2. *fed*
3. *he*
4. *it*

b. Tell students they are going to change the examples of direct speech into reported speech and the examples of reported speech into direct speech. Go through the rules of reported speech and ask students to make suggestions of where changes might happen. There are many changes to remember (tense changes, changes of pronouns, changes of specific references to general references), so you may want to monitor and support students as they do the activity.

Key:
1. *Maria said that she loved the taste of that chocolate cake.*
2. *Luca said that they would prepare the pasta the next morning.*
3. *John said that this recipe was his grandmother's secret.*
4. *'I baked a lemon tart for the party,' Emma said.*
5. *'The soup needs a bit more pepper,' Carlos said.*
6. *'I am trying a sugar-free recipe for the first time,' Mia said.*

5. Discussion

a. Students discuss the statements related to the article and give their reasons and justifications for each answer, referring to their own experiences wherever possible.

6. In your own words

a. Ask students to read the argument (labelled A1- A6) against the use of AI for recipes and identify the paragraph from the article where this argument is referred to. You might want to explore these arguments with your students.

Key:
A1 = P1
A2 = P5 / P6
A3 = P4
A4 = P10
A5 = P11
A6 = P3

b. Students read the counterarguments (1–6) and match them with the short summaries of those counterarguments (a–f). If possible, have students research more information about these counterarguments.

Key:
1. c
2. e
3. d
4. b
5. f
6. a

c. Students then prepare arguments either for or against the use of AI for finding recipes and get ready to have a debate. Either allow students to choose which side they argue for or allocate them to a specific team.

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d. Organise students into groups or into two teams and hold the debate. As students make their arguments against the other team, encourage them to report what the opposing group say and use reported speech. Make sure to monitor students and support them.