

Understanding AI Use in Education: Language Learning and Academic Integrity In 2026

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.102100064>

Received: 06 July 2026; Accepted: 11 July 2026; Published: 24 July 2026

ABSTRACT

In the year 2026, a highly revolutionary period has commenced due to the fact that Artificial Intelligence was combined with language learning, which was led forward by educational institutions such as Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) during the ICMAL 2026 conference. These modern technologies of Artificial Intelligence developed into very complex self-working helpers that work as individual talking companions for students because Artificial Intelligence uses deep data memory and many ways of communication so that language fluency can become faster. Even though this great technological jump brings high progress, academic integrity faces very heavy difficulties because of these changes. Many experts claim that the border line between the thoughts of the student and the text created by machines is disappearing while Artificial Intelligence changes from being a basic writing helper into a self-acting creator that produces long writings and deep academic papers. To reduce the power of generative AI, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) and other major global educational institutions are creating very strict system rules and "human-in-the-loop" protocols. Our current short paper investigates how to utilise the power of AI for language acquisition while the schools protect the moral rules and honest thinking which are highly required in the Malaysian and global educational landscape.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Academic Integrity, generative AI, human-in-the-loop, UiTM

INTRODUCTION

Across the world, the educational landscape is experiencing a huge change because Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies are being integrated very fast. A critical inflection point has been reached in 2026, especially in the area of language learning. Experts claim that AI-powered systems have grown from basic grammar-checking tools into advanced, self-operating conversational agents that can copy natural human speech. Leading educational institutions, such as Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) in Malaysia, have embraced these technologies to make them central pillars of their language education strategies, which is proved by the convening of the International Conference on Modern Applied Linguistics (ICMAL) 2026. Because these AI-powered systems use deep neural networks and multiple ways of communication, language fluency is accelerated quickly. Learners are offered personalised, real-time feedback that was previously only possible when human teachers gave direct instruction (Kasneci et al., 2023).

Great instructional possibilities are offered by AI in language acquisition because this technology is very powerful. Many people believe that large language models (LLMs) and adaptive learning platforms can shape learning content to match the level, speed, and background of each student, which democratises access to high-quality language education (2025). When conversational AI agents practice realistic speaking situations,

students can practice speaking, listening, reading, and writing in a safe space. This safe environment encourages learners to experiment while language anxiety is greatly reduced. Consequently, a clear improvement in language fluency is observed, especially in English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) situation where students rarely get to hear natural language speakers (Kasneci et al., 2023).

At the same time, a very worrying problem is created by this fast technological progress. It has been observed that the identical generation abilities that make AI an excellent language learning tool also make AI a dangerous tool for academic dishonesty. While AI evolves from a simple writing helper to an independent creator of long and advanced academic texts, the line between the personal work of students and the texts created by machines has become blurred. (Bittle & El-Gayar, 2025) (Perkins, 2023). Due to the fact that academic assessment holds the foundation of higher education, the safety of academic assessment is currently facing a danger that has never been seen before. Indeed, it has been observed that scholars, policymakers, and institutional leaders across the world are struggling with a very difficult question. This urgent question is created by the need to use the power of AI for educational benefit while the ethical and intellectual foundations of the academy are being protected by these leaders.

By investigating the function of AI in language learning, this concept paper looks at the double problem. These dangers to academic integrity are analysed in detail, while the rules and governance systems are being developed by institutions like UiTM and other universities in the world. In this regard, many people believe that a balanced and organised method, which is based on the "human-in-the-loop" principle, is highly necessary. This balanced method must be used when educators and learners manage the benefits and dangers of AI in the modern educational environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Artificial Intelligence as a Tool for Language Acquisition

Scholars have recently given great attention to how AI is applied in second language acquisition (SLA). Within a landmark systematic review employing the expanded SAMR (Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, Redefinition) model, which analysed 281 studies published between 2015 and 2024, it was revealed that AI applications predominantly enhance, rather than fundamentally transform, SLA tasks (Bao et al., 2025). Although writing and speaking tasks constituted 60% of the reviewed corpus, researchers observed that most studies remained at the augmentation level of the SAMR framework. On the other hand, according to Bao et al. (2025), vocabulary acquisition demonstrated the highest transformation ratio, which suggests that AI-driven vocabulary tools possess great power to change the learning experience. Many people believe that the generative AI-driven three-stage instructional framework, comprising: pre-class diagnostics and adaptation, in-class dialogic co-construction, and post-class data-driven extension, which was synthesised by this review, offers practical guidance for educators and policymakers who wish to increase the pedagogical value of AI (Bao et al., 2025).

To understand the function of AI in SLA, the concept of distributed agency is considered by researchers to be a significant theoretical lens. Within this framework, Godwin-Jones (2024) argued that generative AI systems function as co-agents in the language learning process, which redistributes cognitive and communicative agency across the learner, the teacher, and the AI tool. Experts claim that this sociomaterialist perspective acknowledges the capacity of AI to scaffold authentic language use, even though these AI systems lack the lived, embodied experience necessary for genuine pragmatic and cultural competence (Godwin-Jones, 2024). Due to this unexpected situation, while AI can simulate peer interactions and provide corrective feedback at scale, the pedagogical emphasis must remain on developing the critical awareness of learners regarding the limitations of AI, especially in communicative situations that are culturally and contextually sensitive.

Looking at the broader landscape, the study of LLMs in education has been extensively examined by Kasneci et al. (2023). It has been observed that these researchers identify personalised learning, enhanced student engagement, and streamlined administrative processes as the key benefits of these technologies. According to the scientific investigation of Kasneci et al. (2023), the successful integration of LLMs in educational

institutions demands that teaching professionals and studying individuals build specific practical capabilities. These specific skills must be acquired by teaching professionals and studying individuals so that they can critically evaluate AI outputs, verify AI-generated information with facts, and keep their minds focused on deep analytical thoughts.

Generative AI and the Erosion of Academic Integrity

In this same research, the authors warn that when a clear teaching plan and strong moral rules of behavior do not exist, the dangers of partiality, wrong usage, and excessive trust in AI-generated content become very high. Indeed, many people believe that the integration of LLMs cannot succeed without these clear teaching plans. Worldwide, a difficult situation regarding academic integrity in advanced schools has been caused by the rapid spread of generative AI tools. When Bittle and El-Gayar (2025) performed a deep and wide study that gathered and evaluated 41 previous investigations published between 2021 and 2024, they discovered that generative AI helps to increase the participation and quickness of learning. However, it has been observed that generative AI at the exact same time creates large and growing dangers of academic dishonesty. In this deep study, three main groups of dangers were identified: the support of cheating through AI-generated text, the destruction of true testing methods, and the weakening of the inner desire of studying individuals to grow their own self-reliant analytical capabilities (Bittle & El-Gayar, 2025).

Many researchers have widely written about the situation of "chatting and cheating", where studying individuals use talking machine intelligences to make graded homework. When Perkins (2023) looked at the academic integrity issues of LLMs after the global health crisis, this researcher argued that old copying-finding ways are completely useless for finding AI-generated content. In this study, the immediate necessity for educational organisations to modernise their academic integrity rules, create detection ways meant only for AI, and grow a habit of moral AI use among studying individuals was highly stressed (Perkins, 2023). When a many-cultures questionnaire of 1,217 advanced school interested parties in 76 different nations was done by Yusuf, Pervin, and Román-González (Yusuf et al., 2024), the results showed that worries about academic dishonesty are not the same everywhere because they are strongly guided by cultural backgrounds. In this research, experts claim that while answering individuals from all cultures had a high knowledge of generative AI tools, underscoring the need for culturally responsive governance frameworks was not observed to maintain its core foundation (Yusuf et al., 2024).

Many people believe that difficulties in education increase because the growth of generative AI happens with great speed. Traditional written assessments are deeply damaged in their value as evidence of knowledge when generative AI models produce long and advanced academic texts. Learners easily create acceptable writing without using much brain power, which makes conventional essay-based assessments untrustworthy for showing true knowledge acquisition and comprehension (Fajardo-Ramos et al., 2025). Such a state of affairs forces a complete change in how assessment design and management of educational institutions are created.

Institutional Policy Responses and the Human-in-the-Loop Framework

In Malaysia, the integration of AI into education is guided by the National Artificial Intelligence Roadmap 2021–2025 and the Digital Education Policy. These frameworks emphasise the importance of developing AI literacy, promoting personalised learning, and designing AI-ready teaching and learning practices (Jamaluddin et al., 2025). In addition, they encourage the responsible and ethical use of AI by supporting educators in integrating AI technologies into classroom instruction while ensuring that students develop the digital competencies needed for future learning and employment. Collectively, these initiatives reflect Malaysia's commitment to preparing an education system that can effectively harness AI while maintaining educational quality and academic integrity. Many researchers note that Malaysia reached great movement forward in AI literacy and personalised learning, while they also found remaining empty spaces in rural digital basic structures and the preparedness of instructors (Jamaluddin et al., 2025). A strong promise to match national AI education strategies with global rules is shown by the creation of the National Artificial Intelligence Office (NAIO) and Malaysia's taking part in the ASEAN AI Safety Network (Jamaluddin et al., 2025).

Inside educational organisations, the management of academic integrity in this time of generative AI requires big changes in systems. An academic integrity indicator system structure is shown by Coates, Croucher, and Calderon (Coates et al., 2025), which they made through case study examination of many educational institutions and asking experts for advice. This system structure demands system improvements across management designs, workers, and computer setups, and experts claim that force from the outside is needed from controlling groups, standard-setting efforts, and competition between educational institutions (Coates et al., 2025). The rule of "human-in-the-loop" remains the most important part of these system improvements, which requires real control by humans at every level of learning tasks done with AI.

The human-in-the-loop assessment model has been extensively theorised in the context of higher education. In a scoping review of 76 peer-reviewed studies, a group of researchers propose a function-by-purpose taxonomy of AI assessment technologies and identify five competency clusters essential for educators: feedback literacy with AI, rubric and item validation, data interpretation and fairness, integrity and transparency in AI-involved assessment, and orchestration of platforms with moderation and double-marking (Fajardo-Ramos et al., 2025). The review concludes that higher education systems are technically ready for AI integration but pedagogically under-specified, and that progress depends less on the adoption of new tools and more on the professionalisation of human-in-the-loop assessment within robust governance structures (Fajardo-Ramos et al., 2025).

DISCUSSION

Balancing AI Affordances with Ethical Constraints in Language Education

When AI is integrated into language learning, a deep educational contradiction is created because the exact features that make AI an excellent teaching instrument also build the path for student cheating. Because large language models can produce text that is clear, suitable for the situation, and high in grammar quality, rapid language acquisition is facilitated by these tools because they give students endless speaking practice and fast custom feedback (Kasneci et al., 2023). In places like Malaysia, ESL and EFL students who have little chance to hear real English language outside the classroom find that conversational tools powered by AI are a very helpful resource. Many people believe that these tools allow students to practice language abilities in modeled real situations at any hour and in any place.

A serious moral difficulty is brought by this creative power of technology. Since AI systems are now able to write long academic papers that look exactly like the writing of actual students, the line that separates real AI-supported study from academic dishonesty is becoming very hard to see and control (Bittle & El-Gayar, 2025) (Perkins, 2023). It has been observed that this trouble is not just about technology but is deeply connected to how we teach and how we think. Educational institutions must struggle with the question of what real human work is when AI can work as a supporting ladder for learning and also as a fake writer.

The Imperative of Culturally Responsive AI Governance in the Malaysian Context

Effective AI governance requires approaches that are sensitive to cultural differences rather than relying on one-size-fits-all solutions. Yusuf et al. (2024) discuss how culture affected stakeholders' views on the advantages and disadvantages of generative AI tools like ChatGPT as well as cheating and academic integrity policies surrounding them. Malaysia is unique in its focus on English language education as well as its multicultural, multilingual context.

UiTM's stance on AI use in English learning will influence other universities across Malaysia. As one of the largest public universities in Malaysia, UiTM plays an important role in Malaysian education. Recently, UiTM released Academic Circular No. 5 (2023), which invited teachers to use ChatGPT to facilitate teaching and learning in classrooms. This stands in stark contrast to policies banning ChatGPT use for assessments.

Fortunately, the Malaysian National AI Roadmap 2021–2025 already exists to help navigate AI use in universities. In order to properly execute the roadmap, investments must be made in digital infrastructure, teacher upskilling, and teaching students about AI (Jamaluddin et al., 2025). Rural areas in Malaysia have less

access to technology than urban areas, so policies regarding AI use in education should help close the digital divide. The Malaysian government should also conduct research on how Malaysian students and teachers view AI as well as use that information to tailor AI governance policies to students' and teachers' needs. Cultural differences may change how students and teachers view AI.

The human in the loop concept particularly applies to this scenario. Institutions can preserve the pedagogical judgment, cultural sensitivity, and ethical oversight that AI systems lack by ensuring that educators remain active, informed, and involved participants in AI-assisted assessment processes (Fajardo-Ramos et al., 2025) (Coates et al., 2025). Teacher education programs need to be revamped to impart teachers with the competencies needed to effectively govern the use of AI, such as being able to provide feedback literacy, data stewardship, and to evaluate outcomes produced by AI in culturally specific contexts (Fajardo-Ramos et al., 2025).

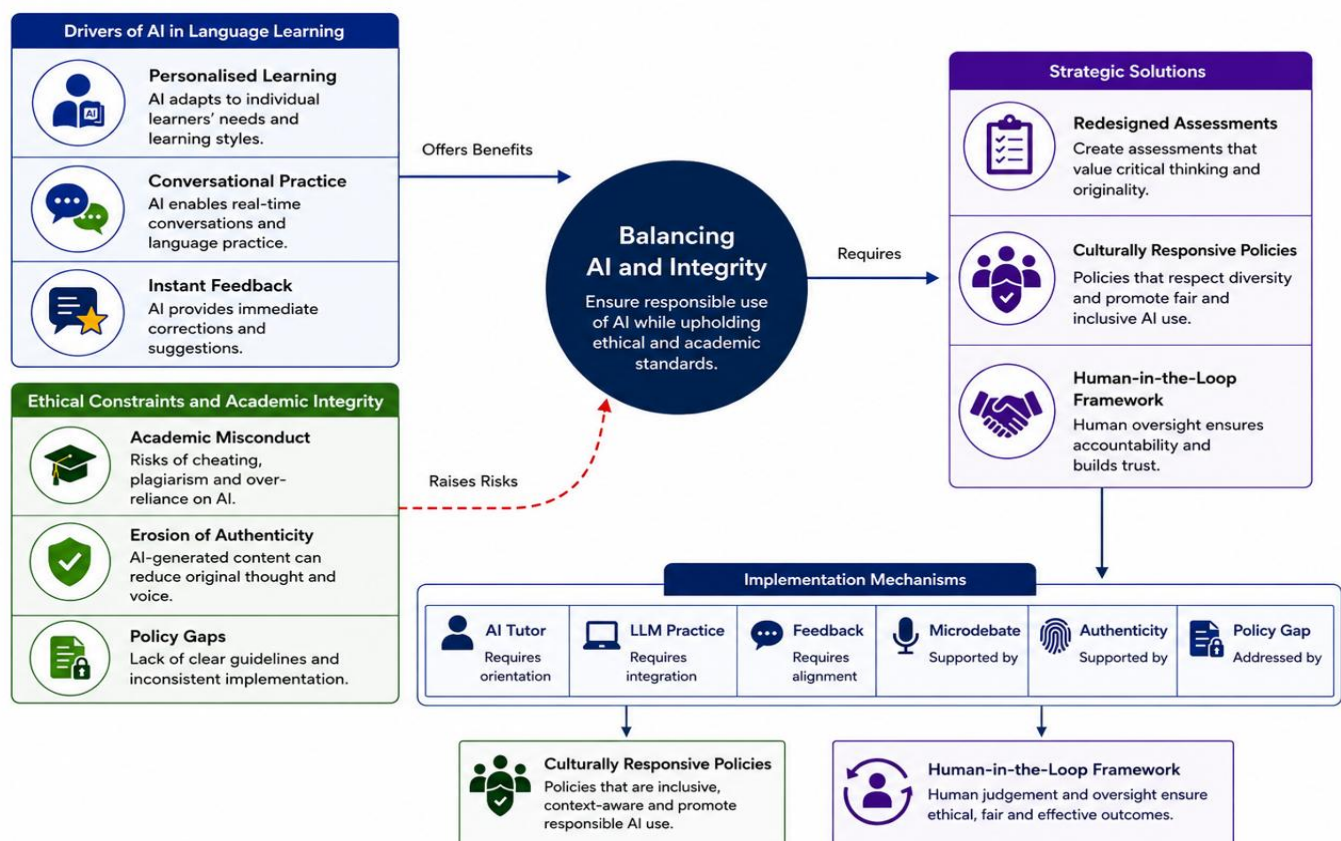


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Responsible AI Use in Language Learning (OpenAI, 2026)
Note: Diagram generated using ChatGPT based on the author's descriptive prompts. Adapted by the author to ensure factual accuracy of the data variables. Solid arrows represent positive contributions, dashed arrows represent potential risks, and blue arrows indicate supporting or required relationships between the constructs in the conceptual framework.

CONCLUSION

Artificial intelligence (AI) is changing language acquisition. Its growing use in education has created new opportunities for personalised learning. It also enables more efficient and learner-centred language learning in both global and Malaysian contexts. Indeed, the old ways of teaching are being changed by AI-powered conversational agents and smart learning platforms, which help students to speak languages easily and quickly in ways that could not be done in the past. Many educators believe that educational institutions like Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), by using meetings like the ICMAL 2026 conference, show how AI has the power to change language education within Malaysia.

Subsequently, the power of AI to make new text creates big difficulties for academic integrity, which can destroy the difference between the work of a person and the work of a machine. Experts claim that the line

separating honest study with AI from cheating in school is disappearing, which means educators and decision-makers must find answers quickly. To protect the basic values of universities, strict rules must be created by educational institutions, while tests must be changed to show real human thinking, and "human-in-the-loop" methods must be used so that teachers can control the work of AI.

Guided by the National AI Roadmap 2021–2025 and the Digital Education Policy, the schools of Malaysia have a good position to lead these rules. Still, the real power of AI in language education cannot be achieved unless money is spent on digital systems, teachers are trained well, and rules are made to fit the local culture, while academic integrity is also protected. Through focusing on real test designs, strong rules, and teaching people how to use AI, the school sector can use the helpful power of AI while keeping the clean character of learning safe. Many people believe that the main struggle of this time is not to choose between new technology and academic integrity, but to find the deep knowledge and teaching skills to keep both of them together.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to express their sincere appreciation to everyone who contributed to the completion of this study. Special thanks are extended to colleagues and reviewers whose valuable feedback and constructive suggestions helped improve the quality of this paper. The authors also acknowledge the researchers whose published work provided important insights and guidance throughout this study. Finally, gratitude is extended to OpenAI's ChatGPT for assisting with the development of conceptual visualisations, while all interpretations, revisions, and final content remain the responsibility of the authors.

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