

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the study background, defines essential terms, outlines research questions, states aims, and highlights significance. This chapter lays the foundation for understanding the research background regarding students' perceptions of the ethical issues associated with using AI tools for writing assignments in English as a foreign language.

A. Background of Study

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has swiftly advanced in contemporary times and serves as a conduit that enhances productivity, particularly in the realm of digital technology. Sheikh et al. (2023) asserted that Artificial Intelligence (AI) is frequently characterized as a technology enabling machines to emulate many advanced human capabilities. However, this definition is not particularly informative, as it merely rephrases the term "artificial intelligence" without providing clarity. Without further elaboration on what constitutes these "complex human skills," the definition of AI remains vague. Similarly, defining AI as the ability of computers to carry out intricate tasks in complex environments fails to offer a clear understanding of what AI truly encompasses. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is defined as the ability of computers to execute cognitive processes typically linked to human intelligence, including learning, problem-solving, and decision-making. Artificial Intelligence encompasses a diverse range of technologies and approaches, including machine learning,

natural language processing, data mining, neural networks, and algorithms. AI serves as a comprehensive phrase that incorporates multiple techniques rather than denoting a singular technology (Baker and Smith, 2019).

Despite the fact that some individuals may not be well-acquainted with artificial intelligence (AI), it is widely integrated into everyday technologies such as social media platforms, internet services, cameras, and computer software. Over the past year, there has been a notable advancement in AI capabilities, accompanied by growing ethical concerns regarding its application. Initially limited to performing specific tasks, AI has now evolved to a level of sophistication where it can assist humans in various ways, including generating images, composing text, directly answering queries, and even creating website code.

The impact of AI on individuals' lives is expanding swiftly in ways that are unforeseen and challenging to comprehend entirely. With the increasing adoption of this technology by various sectors, governments, and academic institutions, AI algorithms are being employed to make judgments that may have immediate and potentially detrimental effects. To steer technological advancement towards societal responsibility, it is essential to emphasize education on AI ethics (Borenstein & Howard, 2021). AI ethics encompasses a framework of guiding principles adopted by stakeholders, including engineers and government officials, to guarantee the responsible development and utilization of artificial intelligence technology. This involves implementing a

safe, secure, humane, and environmentally sustainable strategy for AI. An effective AI code of ethics may include techniques to prevent bias, protect user privacy and data, and reduce environmental dangers. The execution of AI ethics can be primarily accomplished through two channels: corporate ethical codes and regulatory frameworks instituted by governmental entities. By tackling ethical AI concerns at both global and national levels and instituting policy frameworks for ethical AI practices within enterprises, these strategies together enhance the regulation of AI technology. Integrating ethics as a fundamental aspect of its identity is crucial for the computer community, and the domain of AI ethics presents significant job prospects (Borenstein & Howard, 2021).

In the realm of education, artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly utilized to enhance the teaching and learning process by making it more engaging and efficient. This is achieved through AI's ability to generate content tailored to specific needs. The widespread adoption of AI has surged in recent years, largely due to its growing accessibility and the diverse range of available applications. Social media platforms have also contributed to raising public awareness of AI functionalities.

Within educational settings, several AI tools are frequently employed. For instance, when students are tasked with writing essays and require precise grammar checks, many turn to tools like Grammarly, which offer additional features to enhance their writing. Additionally, for paraphrasing or rewording text that students either create or reference, Quillbot is a popular choice.

More recently, AI chatbots such as ChatGPT have emerged as multifunctional tools, offering users the ability to issue commands and request a variety of content, within certain parameters. These chatbots are capable of tasks such as generating original text, translating contexts, paraphrasing, and more. The aforementioned tools are among the most recognized by students, though there are many other AI tools available online that remain relatively underutilized.

Mujtaba (2024) who conducted a research involving university students, reveals that artificial intelligence is widely utilized within academic institutions, with most students engaging with AI on a weekly basis to complete assignments, grasp new concepts, and boost creativity. Although some students express concerns about the potential for AI to be misused for plagiarism, the majority perceive its use as both ethical and legal. Consequently, ethical concerns surrounding AI are seen as temporary, as it is increasingly regarded as a tool that enhances learning, creativity, efficiency, and productivity. Similar to calculators, the Internet, or Google, AI has become a routine aspect of the educational process, easily accessible through smartphones and integrated into various learning environments.

It is also implied in the Al-Qur'an surah Al-Baqarah verses 42:

وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

This verse teaches the importance of not mixing right with wrong, which in an academic context means not using technology such as AI to mask or replace other effort in completing assignments. Munthe, et al. (2024) assert Surah al-Baqarah verse 42 emphasizes the importance of honesty and integrity, especially in the academic field, by prohibiting the mixing of truth with falsehood and concealing the true facts. This verse relates to the actions of some scholars who concealed the truth about the Prophet Muhammad SAW and manipulated revelations for their own interests. In an academic context, this message serves as a reminder of the importance of upholding ethical standards, such as avoiding plagiarism, not fabricating data, and conveying knowledge honestly and responsibly.

The researcher acknowledges that students enrolled in the English Language Education program at UIN Antasari possess a thorough understanding of how to effectively use AI technology to support their academic activities. These students leverage AI for various purposes, including generating ideas, identifying errors, paraphrasing text, and facilitating translation tasks.

This study uses a qualitative approach, using descriptive qualitative as the chosen methodology. Interviews are used to collect data. In addition, the researcher asked four students of UIN Antasari Banjarmasin as participants in this study and analyzed the students' ethical perceptions of the use of AI for their writing assignments. This study addresses a significant research gap in

understanding how students perceive the ethical implications of AI tools in educational contexts, particularly in language education. While previous studies like Miao et al. (2023) and Alhajji (2024) have explored AI's ethical dilemmas in academic writing and educators' perspectives, there remains limited qualitative investigation into:

1. EFL Students' Voices: Most existing research focuses on native English speakers or STEM fields (e.g., Miao et al.'s nephrology focus), leaving EFL learners' unique challenges understudied.
2. Responsibility Strategies: Whereas Yani (2024) highlighted AI's productivity benefits, this study uniquely identifies concrete student-devised strategies for ethical AI use (e.g., selective utilization, source verification) absent in prior literature.

By focusing on UIN Antasari's English Education students, this research fills these gaps by providing emic perspectives from an underrepresented demographic (Indonesian EFL learners in Islamic Universities), bridging theory and practice through actionable strategies for responsible AI use, complementing broader ethical frameworks proposed by Borenstein & Howard (2021), contextualizing findings within Islamic academic values, offering a novel lens absent in secular-focused studies like Mujtaba (2024).

This dual focus on perceptions and practical mitigation strategies advances the discourse beyond theoretical ethical concerns toward grounded pedagogical solutions. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting this

study to find out the English language education students' perceptions of the ethical issues of using AI tools for writing assignments and how the English language education students use AI tools responsibly while addressing ethical issues. By exploring these questions, the study aims to contribute to the broader discourse on ethical AI usage in education, highlighting both students' perspectives and potential guidelines for responsible use.

B. Definition of Key Terms

This part contains the definition of the terms used in the thesis in order to avoid misunderstanding or misinterpretation. Several terms related to the research are clarified below to avoid misconceptions.

1. English Language Education Students

In this research, English Language Education Students refer to students from the English Language Education Study Program at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin who are learning English as a foreign language and who use AI.

2. Artificial Intelligence Tools

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in this research are the tools that can generate, produce, and refine any forms of text and can be used to help with writing assignments. The examples of AI-driven tools used are Chat GPT, Grammarly, and QuillBot.

3. Ethical Issues

In this research, ethical issues refer to the moral challenges associated with using AI tools in writing assignments, specifically concerning plagiarism, the potential of generating false information, and the exploitation of AI-generated content. These issues raise concerns about academic integrity, the accuracy of information, and the fairness of using AI in educational settings.

4. Writing Assignments

In this research, a writing assignment refers to any academic task assigned to English Language Education students that requires them to produce written content, such as essays, reports, research papers, or other forms of academic writing, which may be assisted by AI tools.

C. Research Questions

Based on the background of study described above, this research seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How do the English language education students perceive the ethical issues of using AI tools for writing assignments?
2. How do the students use AI tools responsibly while addressing ethical issues?

D. Objectives of Study

This study has the following objectives:

1. To explore the students' perceptions of the ethical issues of using AI tools for writing assignments.
2. To investigate how the students use AI tools responsibly while addressing ethical concerns.

E. Significance of Study

1. Theoretical Significance

- a. This research serves as a foundational reference for future studies conducted in related fields, contributing to the ongoing scholarly discourse on AI in education.
- b. Its findings will be instrumental in guiding future research methodologies and objectives.
- c. It enriches the broader academic understanding of the impact of AI on language education.

2. Practical Significance

- a. The study is significant due to the rapidly changing educational environment and the growing integration of technology in learning.
- b. It provides valuable insights into current trends, challenges, and opportunities in language learning through AI.

- c. Educators can adapt their teaching strategies based on the findings.
- d. Policymakers and AI developers can design tailored interventions, tools, and innovations aligned with English learners' needs.
- e. The outcomes benefit a wide range of readers—students, educators, researchers, and technology developers—by fostering a more informed understanding of AI's role in enhancing the learning experience.