

# Chapter 8

## What Are Students Saying About AI as an Academic Tool

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### ABSTRACT

*The introduction of artificial intelligence, ChatGPT, and other machine learning technologies has shaken up numerous industries across the globe. The World Economic Forum Future of Jobs Report 2023 predicts that due to a combination of macro trends and technology adoption, over the next five years jobs in the education industry are expected to grow at least by 10%. Many learners in higher education are integrating the use of AI when attending to their academic work, yet there is not much investigation exploring how they plan and perceive the use of AI whilst completing their academic tasks. Therefore, this chapter aims to (1) explore how learners' intention of using AI affects their language learning behavior and (2) uncover the factors that influence the learners' perceptions toward the usefulness of AI as an academic support. Grounded in the theory of planned behavior (TPB), students from two tertiary education institutions in Malaysia were asked to respond to a series of questions that explored their perspectives on utilizing AI-powered tools to aid their academic writing.*

### INTRODUCTION

#### The Status Quo of AI in the Academia

AI-powered tools such as ChatGPT, Google Bard, Bing, QuillBot and Gradescope, to name a few, have gained global attention as the new fad in the education sector (Lim et al., 2023). Reiss (2021) had anticipated that AI was going to transform education, and those who would benefit the most were

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students with special and differentiated needs. In fact, Haleem et al. (2023) made a case that students could potentially utilize AI tools in their academic works without the teacher ever knowing, i.e. to check grammar or sentence structures. Simultaneously, as indicated in Figure 1, there has been press coverage that highlighted the potential issues that are linked to the emergence of AI in the education context.

*Figure 1. Excerpts extracted from the websites of different newspaper related to the influence of AI on the instructors and learners.*

*Last retrieved from The New Straits Times online on 31/08/2023*

The figure displays three separate newspaper article excerpts. The top excerpt is from The New Straits Times, featuring the headline 'A.I. makes hard tasks easier, say students' by Fued Nizam and Wera Zukriee, dated June 18, 2023. The middle excerpt is from The Star, with the headline ''AI will never replace teachers'' and a sub-headline 'AI will never replace teachers', dated Sunday, 04 Jun 2023. The bottom excerpt is from The Guardian, with the headline 'My students are using AI to cheat. Here's why it's a teachable moment' by Siva Vaidhyanathan, and a note that the article is more than 3 months old. Each excerpt includes social media sharing icons and a retrieval date of 31/08/2023.

Due to this, various universities worldwide have developed guides or policies related to students' use of AI tools in academic works to delimit potential issues concerning academic integrity and assessment. Table 1 presents some noteworthy excerpts from three different university guidelines that can be found publicly online.

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