

Multicultural Perspectives on GenAI for Practitioners of Intercultural Education

slide deck & tool kit



AI in Education Seminar Series and Hackathon by the **University of Manchester** and **UNESCO**



Introduction

This slide deck & tool kit is intended to help practitioners in intercultural education understand the impact of GenAI on culture, diversity, equity, and identity, through reflection on the experiences of diverse GenAI users, so that they are better informed to guide learners in using AI ethically and critically.

Real equity concerns are emerging, including English-language bias, error-prone translation, and the loss of authentic language-learning moments, alongside a clear guidance gap. Many practitioners feel unsupported by their institutions in helping learners use AI critically. Across the board, one message is consistent: **awareness needs to come first.**



Academic Research

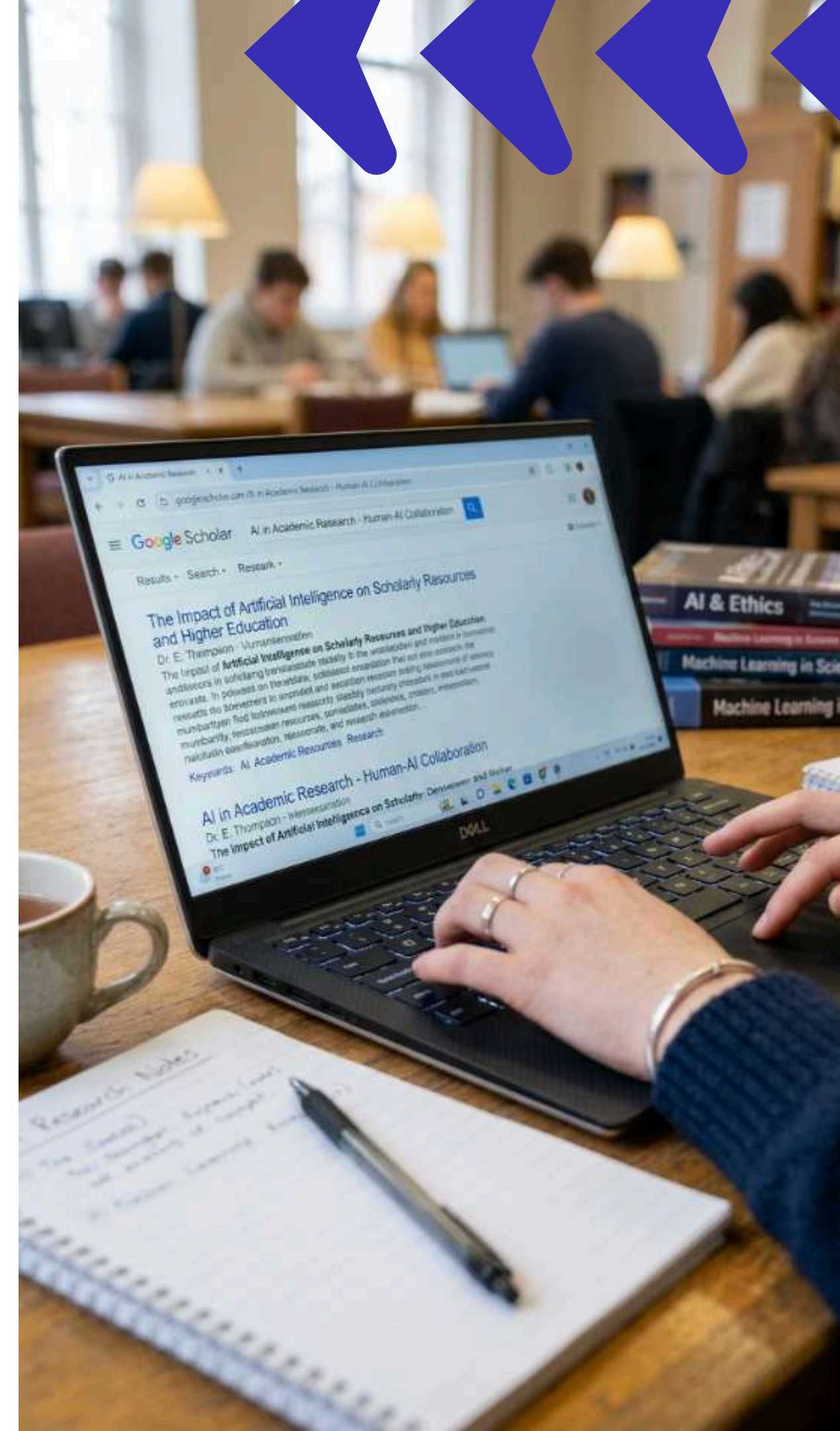
structural/systemic bias

"I noticed that when I search for academic papers, it's work by Western scholars that appears as top results."

(Zarin, Bangladesh)

The Issue

Academic search engines and databases carry structural geographic and institutional bias; favouring Western authors and institutions, it is not always intentional, but ranking algorithms and database scopes amplify Western research and voices.



Misunderstood Voice Prompts

creates emotional harm and inequality

"When I use English voice prompts in chatGPT, sometimes it doesn't understand my non-native accent, and I need to repeat again and again. This makes me feel frustrated and inadequate." (Sumaiya, Bangladesh)

The Issue

Often AI struggles to understand non-native accents, forcing repeated attempts. Not only doesn't this emotionally impact users, it also costs more tokens to reach a result.



Linguistic Challenges

meaning lost in translation

"My professor noticed that several words in my essay had been replaced with synonyms that were grammatically correct but didn't fit the intended meaning of the original text. As a result, the sentences looked correct on the surface, but the actual message had changed." (Zarin, Bangladesh)

The Issue

AI-driven "simplification" or paraphrasing can preserve grammar while quietly changing meaning, since language carries cultural context and tone that AI doesn't reliably track.



Image Generation

visually Westernised by default

"When I was designing materials for a presentation, I used ChatGPT to generate images, and it was all western looking creations: light skin, western clothing, western settings." (Lisitha, Sri Lanka)

The Issue

Images default to Westernised outputs unless specifically prompted otherwise, even when the LLM can see the user's location.



Scenario or Context Generation

cultural bias

"As a practitioner in intercultural education, I sometimes use GenAI to help build activities and contexts. I often encounter Western assumptions. For example, when brainstorming a prototyping prompt, a GenAI suggestion was: 'make an alternative way of eating a meal other than a knife and fork.' Yet in many countries, a knife and fork isn't the norm at all."

(Leyla, UK, Learning Designer)

The Issue

GenAI defaults to Western examples when generating intercultural learning activities.





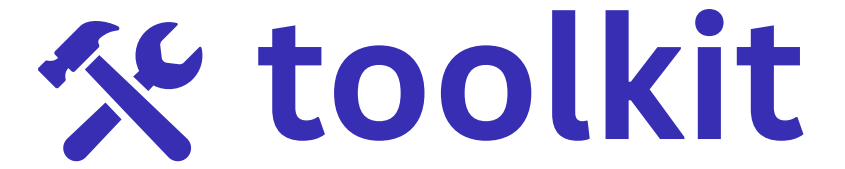
What Are the Risks If We Don't Act?

If GenAI use remains unreflective, these biases compound:

- **Cultural Homogenisation** One culture becomes the default
 - **Loss of Authenticity** Culture flattened into stereotypes
 - **Reduced Competence** Learners underprepared for real life
 - **Disengagement** Underrepresented users disengage
 - **Economic Inequality** Non-natives speakers pay more for less
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Prompting for Better Cultural Equality

practical prompting practitioners & learners can use right away



Research Bias:

Actively seek out non-Western sources rather than accepting default results.

Instead of: "Find research on classroom engagement."

Try: "Find research on classroom engagement by scholars in South Asia."

Image Bias:

Use highly specific prompting, and ask the AI "Why are you producing Westernised images?" to challenge the default.

Instead of: "Generate an image of a family in their kitchen"

Try: "Generate an image of a Korean family in their kitchen."

Linguistic Nuance:

Don't treat grammatically correct output as accurate output, review AI-edited text for meaning drift.

Instead of: "Rewrite this in English."

Try adding: "...flag any words or phrases where the cultural or emotional tone might get lost in translation."

Context Generation:

Specify the cultural context explicitly in the prompt.

Try: "Design this activity assuming a non-Western cultural context, specify [region] explicitly."

Always question the AI agent when cultural assumptions are made.

What Can We Do?

three practical starting points

1 Personal Reflection Extension

Add prompts to existing sessions on culture & identity: "**How does AI affect my culture and identity?**" or "**What's one way I could prompt differently to protect or better represent my own culture and identity?**"

2 Guided Discussion

Start group discussions by simply showing examples of AI bias (e.g. an AI generated westernised image) and building discussion from there. Ask "**What do you notice?**"

3 Ongoing Practitioner Dialogue

Start a discussion forum where practitioners can share examples of AI bias they encounter, whether through their teaching or their own everyday use. This builds a living, growing bank of real experiences.



We hope you found this slide deck and toolkit a useful starting point for bringing intercultural awareness into critical AI conversations with learners and colleagues.

