

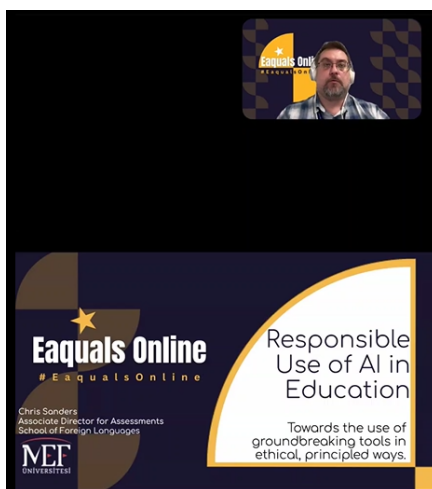
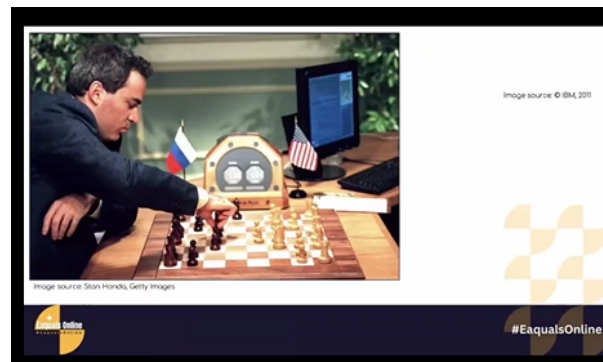


Reflections on EAQUALS Online 11-12 October 2024 By Okan Bölükbaş, School of Languages, Sabancı University

Reflections on Eaquals Online session “Responsible Use of AI in Education”, presented by Chris Sanders Tarhan, Associate Director for Assessments at MEF University.

I was able to follow Mr. Sander’s presentation with more comprehensive notes and as it is about a flashy topic in ELT, I have decided to write about this presentation among others in Equals Online event which was held 11-12 October 2024. In his talk, “Responsible Use of AI”, Chris Sanders, Associate Director for Assessments at MEF University in Istanbul, explored both the benefits and challenges of using AI in education, urging educators to integrate AI carefully and ethically. Coming from a tech background with a focus on educational assessments, Sanders emphasized the importance of using AI purposefully to meet clear learning objectives. He also advocated for setting guidelines that address ethical concerns and align AI use with educational goals.

Sanders began by summarizing the rapid development of AI. He credited Alan Turing’s concepts of machine learning and the Turing Test, which helped establish early ideas of machines that could mimic human behavior. Sanders highlighted significant AI achievements, including IBM’s Deep Blue defeating chess grandmaster Garry Kasparov in 1997, IBM Watson’s success on “Jeopardy!” in 2011, and the more recent Transformer model developed in 2017. This Transformer model has been essential in creating popular AI tools like ChatGPT, which have quickly become influential in various fields, including education.



A key part of Sanders’ talk focused on ethical issues related to AI. He raised concerns about data privacy and security, warning that student information should be protected and used only with clear protocols. He illustrated the risks with an example of Samsung employees who unknowingly exposed company secrets by using ChatGPT. Sanders also examined AI’s biases, noting that the data used to train AI models often comes from “WEIRD” (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, Democratic) societies. This can lead to outputs that reflect cultural biases and stereotypes. He pointed out that while AI can reduce some human bias, it still reflects many societal prejudices.

Sanders explained that relying too much on AI could lead to “skill degradation.” For example, surgeons who use AI-assisted tools may lose their manual skills, and young professionals who rely on AI for tasks like drafting emails or reports may miss out on critical learning opportunities. In education, this issue can also affect students, who may become overconfident in their abilities if they depend too much on AI without truly mastering the material. He referenced studies showing that students who use generic AI tutors for math perform worse than those who study independently or with specialized AI tools, an effect often described as the “Dunning-Kruger effect.”

On the topic of plagiarism, Sanders mentioned Noam Chomsky’s view that AI models like ChatGPT could encourage plagiarism. However, he argued that while AI synthesizes information, it does not simply copy content. Instead, it processes vast amounts of data, somewhat like a student who has learned information and then rephrases it in an essay. Nevertheless, Sanders warned that students might misuse AI to bypass

learning, risking both skill loss and academic honesty. He urged educators to check AI-generated content and to encourage students to engage ethically.



Sanders also discussed AI’s tendency to "hallucinate," or produce incorrect information, which can lead to students accepting false information as fact. He spoke about the dangers of deepfakes and AI’s use in creating political messages, which can be highly persuasive and spread disinformation. Sanders recommended teaching students critical thinking and media literacy to help them recognize misleading information, especially as AI-generated content becomes more realistic.

To address these challenges, Sanders advised educators to develop clear policies for AI use in classrooms and encourage students to use AI responsibly. He emphasized that educators should stay informed about AI developments and set a good example by being transparent with students about their own use of AI. Sanders also shared practical tips for creating effective AI prompts, advising educators to provide context and specific instructions to improve AI-generated outputs. He highlighted research suggesting that a collaborative approach, where educators work with AI, yields the best results by combining AI’s strengths with human judgment.

In conclusion, Sanders argued that while AI can support educational practices, it should remain under human control and be integrated thoughtfully. Educators should ensure that AI serves educational goals without replacing human expertise, promoting a balanced approach that benefits students while preserving the integrity of learning.



**This is the document Sanders prepared providing with the links he talked about in his presentation.*

Here are the practical tips for educators shared in Chris Sanders' talk, "Responsible Use of AI":

1. **Develop Clear Policies:** Establish guidelines at the institutional, departmental, and classroom levels to regulate AI usage, ensuring it aligns with educational aims and ethical standards.
2. **Model Ethical AI Use:** Be transparent about using AI with students, showing them responsible and ethical practices as examples for their own use.
3. **Stay Updated on AI:** Follow AI developments, as new tools and techniques emerge quickly. Staying current allows educators to adapt and teach relevant skills.
4. **Involve Students in AI Discussions:** Encourage students to share their views and experiences with AI, involving them in decisions about how it's used in the classroom.
5. **Emphasize Critical Thinking and Media Literacy:** Teach students to critically evaluate AI-generated content, including skills for spotting deepfakes and assessing the reliability of information.

6. Craft Specific AI Prompts: Provide context, objectives, and detailed instructions when using AI, especially for educational tasks, to improve the quality and relevance of outputs.

7. Ask AI for Clarifying Questions: When unsure of how to structure a prompt, educators can request that the AI ask clarifying questions to help produce more accurate results.

8. Save and Refine Prompts: Reuse effective prompts to save time and refine them as needed to get better results over time.

9. Check AI Content for Accuracy and Bias: Always verify AI-generated content for factual accuracy and potential biases before sharing it with students.

10. Use AI as a Collaborative Tool: Instead of relying on AI alone, combine its outputs with human judgment and customization for the best educational outcomes.

11. Be Prepared to Edit: AI-generated outputs may need adjustment to align with teaching goals, so educators should review and edit materials for quality and fit.