Basic principles of AI use in Korean Studies

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Last update: November 2026

I Basic Principles

1. AI is a tool – not a scholarly source

Generative AI outputs do not undergo academic quality assurance processes. They are therefore not considered citable academic literature, but are comparable to the results of an internet search. AI-generated information must be critically evaluated for accuracy, reliability, bias and contextual appropriateness.

You always bear full responsibility for the AI output in case you choose to use it in your work.

You are responsible for everything you submit, publish or present – even if AI was involved.

2. Protection of Data and Research Subjects

Data gathered through interviews or fieldwork is often personal, sensitive, context-dependent and relational. AI use must respect participants' consent, confidentiality, and applicable data protection requirements. Researchers remain responsible for interpreting these materials in context and critically assessing any AI-assisted analysis.

3. Transparency is mandatory

The use of AI must be documented – either within the work itself or in the appendix.

Documentation must also cover AI-generated or AI-assisted content beyond written text, including images, translations, visualizations and other relevant materials.

Depending on the assignment – written papers, oral exams, power point presentations etc. – students may be required to document the prompts used and submit an appropriate declaration of independent authorship.

The university's guidelines recommend various forms of documentation–citation, description, tables, prompt logs, etc. (see V Documentation of AI use).

4. Academic Independence

AI may support academic work but must not replace your own intellectual contributions and critical thinking.

Students must be able to explain, justify and independently defend the arguments, methods, and conclusions presented in their work.

II Before use: What needs to be clarified?

Read and be aware of the AI tool's "terms of use" and what you are consenting to.

It is highly recommended to turn off AI model training for your chosen AI tool to avoid personal and sensitive data leaks.

Please observe the examination and course regulations (course-specific guidelines take precedence).

Check copyright: Do not upload any protected texts or images without permission.

Data protection: Not all AI services are secure environments for confidential or personal data. Recommended services are listed here:

AI_Research_Tool_Overview.pdf

Artificial Intelligence for Academic Research (university page):

Literature Research with AI | University of Tübingen

III During use: Rules for input

Prohibited – never upload:

- Personal data of third parties, e.g. real names, photos, videos;
- Ethnographic interviews and transcripts;
- Field notes featuring identifiable individuals;
- Political, religious or ethnic affiliations;

- Health data or other sensitive information;
- Internal documents, unpublished research.

Reason: AI tools process data externally – sharing such data is not permitted under data protection law and contravenes the ethics of ethnological research.

Accepted:

- Your own texts, synopses, ideas;
- Academic questions;
- Methodological work (e.g. explaining theories, coding logic, statistical software);
- Linguistic support (writing style, structure, glossary);
- Simulations/practice questions;
- Coding aids (R, Python) with fictional or anonymised data.

IV After use: What do I need to check?

- Technical accuracy (AI hallucinates sources and facts);
- Logic and plausibility of the argumentation;
- Applicability to the subject (particularly in the case of theories and concepts);
- Compliance with copyright law;
- Transparency: Has the use of AI been documented?

V Documentation of AI use (based on university-wide documentation options)

There are several accepted formats – course leaders decide what is required – please always check with them. In addition, you must read and sign the Declaration of Integrity (see separate file).

Option A: Citation

Suitable when sections of text have been copied directly.

Chicago Style citation is the default citation style in the Korean Studies department of the University of Tübingen. Please consult your instructor about the preferred citation style for their class.

For examples of citation of AI-generated content in Chicago Style see the Chicago Manual of Style page:

https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/qanda/data/faq/topics/Documentation/faq0422.html

Note: AI is not an academic source – this citation serves only to ensure transparency, not to support academic argumentation.

Option B: Description in the methods section / in footnotes

Example:

"ChatGPT (version 4.1) was used for linguistic editing. Decisions regarding content were made by the author."

Option C: Description in the appendix

Can be used for citing:

- Prompts (questions and instructions);
- Responses/excerpts;
- Reflection on use;
- Screenshots or exporting the chat history.

Advantage: Readers can follow the research process.

Option D: Documentation table

(based on the model from the university handout)

AI Tool	Step	Usage	Result/Comment	Reflection
ChatGPT 4.1	Collection of ideas	Request for alternative approaches to my research question	Helpful structuring ideas	Next time, a more specific prompt

VI What is permitted?

AI usage is permitted for:

- Generating deas & concepts;
- Refining research questions;
- Explaining theoretical approaches;
- Comparing different perspectives;
- Writing and research support;
- Structuring (outline, draft abstract);
- Stylistic revision of your own texts;
- Translations (always check translation accuracy);
- Methodological support;
- Code explanations (R, Python) using anonymised data;
- Understanding complex statistics.

VII What is not permitted?

It is not permitted to use AI for:

- Analysis or interpretation of ethnographic data (e.g. automatic coding of interviews);
- Entry of personal data from research partners;
- Uploading copyright-protected field data AI-assisted assessment of individuals or groups (epistemically and ethically unjustifiable).

VIII Responsibility

1. Responsibility for content

- AI errors = your errors. All statements must be verified and supported by specialist literature.

2. Responsibility for academic quality

- AI does not replace reading, critical thinking, reflection or argumentation.
- The theoretical work must be of your own development.

3. Responsibility for citation style & transparency

- Indicate the use of AI if it was significant. Consult your instructor if AI usage conditions are unclear.

4. Responsibility for data protection and field ethics

- Protection of communities, minorities and research partners must be the first priority in all research, AI-assisted or not.
- Do not use tools that store data externally.
- It is highly recommended to disable data transfer for AI model training, even when handling non-sensitive data.

5. Responsibility in the research process

- AI may provide support, but must not make final decisions in the research and writing process.
- Automated interpretation of qualitative data does not only violate rights of the persons the data was collected from, but also takes data out of important context and is not a responsible academic practice.

6. Responsibility towards research participants

- Avoid stigmatisation, bias or harmful statements in your input and output.
- AI can reinforce colonial or stereotypical patterns. It is your responsibility to recognise them and reflect on them.

7. Responsibility for ethical concern

- AI usage may further preexisting inequality based on technical literacy and accessibility.
- AI usage puts a burden on the environment (e.g. abusing the planet's water and energy resources).

Make sure to consider these points before deciding whether to use AI, particularly generative AI, in your work.

IX Best practice examples for students

Good practice (permitted):

“ChatGPT helped me develop three alternative structural options for my proposal. Based on my own considerations, I chose option 2 and wrote the text entirely myself.”

Bad practice (not permitted):

Uploading an interview transcript with “anonymised” names but recognisable contextual details.

X Summary: The most important rules

Permitted: Using AI for learning, structuring, formulating, understanding.

Not permitted: Using AI for processing personal data–including data collected through fieldwork or interviews.

Always permitted: Checking output, documenting use, taking responsibility.

Never permitted: Entering real research partners or sensitive field data into AI tools, and having the tools generate and analyse the data.