POSITIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN THE AI ERA: CULTIVATING A MADANI GENERATION IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract

The AI era brings about a paradigm shift for the education system globally, offering opportunities and challenges to holistic human development. In Malaysia, the vision to produce a Madani generation—values of sustainability, prosperity, innovation, respect, trust and compassion—requires a pedagogical shift that AI cannot alone provide. This paper argues that Positive Language Education (PLE) is the human-centric counterbalance to harness AI for these civic virtues. PLE goes beyond linguistic competence to integrate Positive Psychology principles, focusing on strengths, well-being and flourishing in language learning. This paper shows that a technocratic approach to education in the AI age is insufficient as it will worsen mental health issues, ethical dilemmas and socio-emotional skills deficit. Instead, it proposes a synergistic model where AI handles analytical and repetitive tasks, freeing educators to focus on character, empathy and critical thinking through language by infusing Positive Psychology principles. The study uses existing literature on Positive Education and AI in learning, set within Malaysia's multi-ethnic and multilingual context framed by MADANI pillars. It concludes that a purposefully well designed PLE framework with AI tools can develop the communicative and moral competencies to produce Madani citizens. This approach shows how technological advancement can be utilized to amplify, not diminish, the humanistic goals of education which would produce a generation that is not only digitally literate but also morally grounded and psychologically resilient.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education; Positive Language Education; Positive Psychology in language learning; human-cantered pedagogy; socio-emotional competencies; Madani framework; Malaysian education.

INTRODUCTION

Background

The global educational landscape is undergoing a seismic transformation driven by Artificial Intelligence (AI). From adaptive learning platforms that personalise content to intelligent tutoring systems and automated assessment tools, AI promises unprecedented efficiency, scalability, and data-driven insights into the learning process (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). This technological revolution presents a critical juncture for nations worldwide: to either adopt a purely technocratic model focused on optimisation and workforce readiness or to forge a path where technology serves deeper, humanistic educational goals. For Malaysia, this choice is framed by a distinct national vision: the MADANI framework. Introduced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Madani is an acronym and philosophical construct built on six pillars: *keMampanan (Sustainability), KesejAhteraan (Prosperity), Daya cipta (Innovation), hormAt (Respect), keyakiNan (Trust) and Ihsan (Compassion)* (Anwar Ibrahim, 2023). This framework is not merely a political slogan but a clarion call for a society that balances material progress with spiritual, ethical, and social well-being.

The overarching goal of Malaysian education, as enshrined in the National Education Philosophy (NEP) since 1996, is to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and physically balanced and harmonious. The Madani vision provides a contemporary, values-laden interpretation of this NEP, explicitly calling for a generation that is not only technologically adept but also morally grounded, compassionate, and capable of stewarding a sustainable and respectful multicultural society. The central challenge, therefore, is to integrate AI in a manner that amplifies these Madani values rather than eroding them.

Statement of the Problem

The central problem this paper addresses is the inherent inadequacy of a purely technocratic, AI-focused education for fostering the human virtues required by the Madani vision. An uncritical embrace of AI in classrooms risks creating an "ethical vacuum" and a "socio-emotional deficit" (Biesta, 2020). When learning is reduced to interaction with algorithms, students may gain efficiency in information retrieval and procedural tasks but at the potential cost of empathy, deep interpersonal connection, and ethical reasoning. The risks are multifaceted: it can lead to ethical deficits where students use AI for plagiarism without understanding the moral implications of intellectual property; it can widen socio-emotional skill gaps as screen time replaces rich, face-to-face dialogue essential for understanding nuance, emotion, and cultural context; and it can exacerbate mental health issues by fostering isolation and a performance-oriented mindset

devoid of authentic meaning and connection (Selwyn, 2022, Al Zahrani, 2024; Mohd Noor, 2025). The outcome could be a generation that is efficient in processing data but deficient in the compassion (*Ihsan*), respect (*Hormat*), and trust (*Keyakinan*) necessary to navigate the complexities of a pluralistic nation like Malaysia.

Identifying the Gaps

This research is situated at the intersection of several scholarly discourses, yet significant gaps remain. First, a knowledge gap exists. While there is a burgeoning body of literature on AI in Education (AIEd) (e.g., Holmes et al., 2022) and a separate, well-established field of Positive Education (Norrish, 2015), scholarly work that meaningfully integrates these two domains is scarce. Research often treats them as parallel tracks—either focusing on technological efficacy or on well-being outcomes—without proposing a cohesive pedagogical model that synergises them.

Second, and more critically for this paper, is a contextual gap. The potential integration of AIEd and Positive Education has not been sufficiently explored through the specific lens of national educational goals, particularly within the Malaysian context. There is a lack of scholarly frameworks that demonstrate how such an integration can be operationalised to achieve the explicit civic virtues outlined in the Madani framework. Furthermore, the specific focus on language education as the ideal vehicle for this integration—given language's intrinsic role in shaping thought, identity, and cultural understanding—is a particularly underexplored area.

Research Questions

This paper is guided by the following research questions:

1. Why is a human-centric pedagogical approach like Positive Education necessary to counterbalance the potential drawbacks of AI-driven learning, particularly in achieving the socio-emotional and ethical goals of the Madani framework?
2. How can Positive Language Education (PLE) act as a conceptual framework for developing the moral and communicative competencies required for a flourishing society?
3. What would a synergistic model, integrating PLE with AI tools, look like in the practical context of the Malaysian multilingual classroom to cultivate the values of the Madani generation?

The necessity of this inquiry is justified by PM Anwar Ibrahim’s statement which explicitly “highlighted the need to instil in future generations the values of discipline, resilience,

unity, and cultural pride that define the Madani warrior ethos" (Bernama, 16 Sep 2025)—a spirit rooted in the martial art of silat and Malay traditions (Bernama, 2024). This public endorsement elevates the cultivation of these values from a pedagogical preference to a national educational priority. However, a critical challenge remains: *how* to effectively operationalize these virtues within modern, technology-driven classrooms. This paper argues by incporporating language classroom as an example, that Positive Language Education (PLE) presents a robust pedagogical framework to meet this exact challenge. By integrating the strengths-based principles of positive psychology with language acquisition, PLE offers a structured methodology to embed the very values—discipline in practice, resilience in communication, unity through collaborative learning, and cultural pride through literature and discourse—deemed essential for the Madani citizen in the AI era.

This paper will first explore the MADANI framework and Malaysian educational policy. Then the next sections review the literature spanning AI in education, Positive Psychology and humanistic language pedagogy. It will critically analyse the challenges posed by the AI paradigm, define the conceptual framework of Positive Language Education, and propose an original synergistic model for the Malaysian context. The conclusion will summarise findings, discuss implications, and offer recommendations for policy and practice.

THE MADANI FRAMEWORK AND MALAYSIAN EDUCATIONAL POLICY

The Madani framework, introduced is best understood not as an entirely new initiative, but as the latest evolution in a longstanding national policy trajectory aimed at holistic human development. It builds directly upon the foundation laid by the National Education Philosophy (NEP), which was formally established in 1988. As the NEP Malaysia articulates the ultimate goal of education in Malaysia needs to serve as a continuous endeavour to holistically unlock human potential. It should aim to cultivate a balanced and harmonious citizen, whose development is rooted in spiritual and ethical integrity, and who is equipped with robust intellectual, emotional, and physical capacities.

The Madani framework, with its six pillars—Sustainability (*Kemampanan*), Prosperity (*Kesejahteraan*), Innovation (*Daya Cipta*), Respect (*Hormat*), Trust (*Keyakinan*), and Compassion (*Ihsan*)—operationalises this broad philosophy for contemporary 21st-century challenges. It provides a concrete set of value-based indicators against which educational outcomes can be measured and contextualised. For instance, the pillar of Sustainability (*Kemampanan*) calls for an education that instills environmental stewardship, a concept also emphasised in the Ministry of Education's Environmental Education Policy. Similarly, Innovation

(*Daya Cipta*) demands a pedagogical shift away from rote memorisation towards fostering creative and critical thinking, aligning with goals stated in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 with a shift to developing values-driven Malaysians.

Meanwhile, the Digital Education Policy Framework (2023) further expands the Malaysian educational landscape through six core thrusts (T1-T6), which form the pillars of the policy, each supported by detailed implementation strategies.

Table 1

Thrusts and strategies of Digital Education Policy Framework

Thrust	Focus Area	Key Strategies
T1	**Digitally Fluent Students**	S1.1: Empower digital education in curriculum and assessment. S1.2: Develop a Students' Digital Competency Standard. S1.3: Cultivate integrated, creative, innovative, and ethical use of technology. S1.4: Nurture student potential and talent via digital co-curricular activities.
T2	**Digitally Competent Educators**	S2.1: Identify the current level of educators' digital competence. S2.2: Continuously improve educator competency levels. S2.3: Empower educators as digital education experts. S2.4: Holistically cultivate knowledge, creativity, and innovation in digital education.
T3	**Visionary Digital Leadership Culture**	S3.1: Improve the digital competencies of education leaders. S3.2: Cultivate change in digital education leadership.
T4	**Empowerment of Infrastructure and Infostructure**	S4.1: Provide agile and dynamic digital infrastructure across all institutions. S4.2: Provide access to digital devices and support services. S4.3: Utilize digital technology in MoE services. S4.4: Use data to improve MoE services and user experience.

Thrust	Focus Area	Key Strategies
T5	**Quality Digital Content**	S5.1: Empower digital learning platforms to improve user experience. S5.2: Empower digital educational resources.
T6	**Committed Strategic Partners**	S6.1: Strengthen partnerships with parents, communities, NGOs, and the public/private sectors. S6.2: Utilize collaborative partnerships and networks.

An analysis of the Digital Education Policy Framework reveals a predominantly technocentric orientation, with thrusts like T4 (Empowerment of Infrastructure and Infostructure) and T5 (Quality Digital Content) focused on the essential hardware, software, and platforms of digital learning. However, a deliberate and crucial human-centric counterweight is embedded within the policy, primarily through Thrust 1 (Digitally Fluent Students) and Thrust 2 (Digitally Competent Educators). Specifically, strategies such as S1.3, which calls for the "cultivation of the integrated, creative, innovative, and ethical use of technology," and S2.4, which aims to "holistically cultivate knowledge, creativity, and innovation," explicitly transcend technical proficiency. These strategies signal a recognition that the ultimate goal is not merely to create users of technology, but to develop well-rounded individuals who can wield digital tools with wisdom, ethics, and creative purpose. At the same time, Prime Minister Anwar further explained these strategies by stating that the Madani philosophy focuses on leveraging economic and technological advancement to enhance human dignity, not to undermine ethical values. He argued that technological sophistication without a strong moral foundation does not constitute genuine progress (Bernama, Sep 13, 2025).

A central pillar of the 13th Malaysia Plan (13MP) is the governmental objective of cultivating "Madani citizens" as a foundational element for the nation's future social fabric and developmental trajectory. As presented to the Dewan Rakyat by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, this initiative seeks to reinforce a value system integrating ethics, spirituality, and humanity. This framework is explicitly grounded in the principles of Maqasid Syariah and a robust sense of patriotism, with the aim of developing a citizenry characterized by strong principles, a firm national identity, and noble character. Operationalizing this vision will involve comprehensive education reforms, including the implementation of compulsory preschool education from age five. Furthermore, the plan outlines an expansion of structured programmes designed to inculcate patriotism, civic responsibility, and volunteerism. Initiatives such

as *Kembara Perpaduan Malaysia* are cited as key mechanisms for promoting cross-cultural unity, utilizing a dual approach of values-based education and open intercultural dialogue to foster a more tolerant, caring, and socially cohesive society (Mahari et al, 2025).

However, while these policy documents successfully establish the "why" and the "what," the practical "how"—a detailed pedagogical roadmap for teachers to implement these values in diverse classroom context yet to be developed comprehensively. This gap between high-level policy and classroom practice creates the critical space for this paper's contribution, which seeks to propose a tangible model for realising Madani's aspirations within the specific domain of language education. This educational approach we intend to adapt in the AI era needs to be strategically designed to nurture individuals who are not only knowledgeable and highly competent in navigating a digital world but who also possess high moral standards. The goal is to form responsible citizens capable of achieving personal well-being and, crucially, of leveraging their skills to actively contribute to the harmony, prosperity, and betterment of their families, communities, and the nation. With the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 concluding and a post-2025 educational framework yet to be formulated, the models proposed in this paper offer timely and concrete pedagogical strategies that can inform the development of the next level of national education policy.

THE AI PARADIGM: CHALLENGES AND IMPERATIVES

Both profound promises and significant perils characterize the discourse on AI in Education (AIEd). On the promise side, the AI learning pathways are hyper-personalized, and varied. Adaptive learning systems can analyse a student's performance in real-time, identifying knowledge gaps and tailoring subsequent content to address them, moving beyond the one-size-fits-all model (Xie et al., 2019). This can be particularly beneficial for language acquisition, where AI-powered tools like Duolingo or Grammarly provide immediate, corrective feedback on vocabulary and grammar, allowing for extensive practice outside the classroom. Furthermore, AI can automate administrative tasks—grading, attendance—freeing up valuable teacher time for more impactful student interaction (Holmes et al., 2022). AI can also act as a powerful research assistant, sifting through vast information databases to provide students with curated resources for projects.

However, substantial jeoparodies are revealed through critical analysis. The foremost concern is dehumanisation. Biesta (2020) warns of the rise of "learnification," where education is reduced to a technical process of knowledge delivery, sidelining its broader purpose of subjectification (becoming a subject in the world) and socialization. Over-reliance on AI interactions can impair

the development of empathy and deep interpersonal skills, which are cultivated through nuanced, unpredictable human dialogue (Turkle, 2017). Secondly, issues of data privacy and algorithmic bias are paramount. AI systems are trained on datasets that can perpetuate societal biases. In a multicultural context like Malaysia, an AI trained primarily on Western corpora could fail to understand or could misrepresent local linguistic nuances, cultural references, and values, potentially marginalising minority perspectives (Borenstein & Howard, 2021). These risks widening educational inequality rather than closing it. Finally, there is the peril of creating an ethical vacuum. When students use AI to generate essays or solve problems without deep engagement, they risk bypassing the critical thinking and ethical struggles that are fundamental to authentic learning and character development (Selwyn, 2022).

The Socio-Emotional Deficit

The most insidious risk of an AI-dominated classroom is the erosion of socio-emotional competencies. Human communication is a rich, multimodal phenomenon involving tone, facial expression, body language, and the ability to respond to unexpected emotional cues. AI interactions, by contrast, are typically transactional and predictable. When students primarily converse with chatbots or work in isolation on adaptive platforms, they are deprived of the practice necessary to develop empathy, patience, and the ability to navigate conflict (Turkle, 2017; Cambra-Fierro et al., 2024) such as skills essential for *Ihsan* (Compassion) and *Hormat* (Respect) due to the potential reduction of human interaction in learning environments (Chelghoum & Chelghoum, 2025).

In the Malaysian context, this deficit may not be particularly healthy. Malaysia's strength is in its collectivist nature, and ethnic diversity. But these features require constant, careful negotiation. Empathy—the ability to understand and share the feelings of another—is the glue that holds a multicultural society together. If education becomes a solitary pursuit of algorithmic efficiency, it fails to prepare students for the complex, often messy, reality of living and working with people from different ethnic, religious, and linguistic backgrounds. The classroom must remain a space for authentic, facilitated dialogue where students learn to disagree respectfully, to see the world from another's perspective, and to build the *Keyakinan* (Trust) that is fundamental to a harmonious society.

The Ethical Vacuum

AI tools present novel ethical challenges that a technocratic education is ill-equipped to handle. Concerns over plagiarism and data privacy create an ethical tension (Chelghoum & Chelghoum,

2025). The ease of AI-assisted plagiarism is a prime example. A student can command a Large Language Model (LLM) to generate a competent essay on a novel. However, this act bypasses the intellectual struggle of interpretation, analysis, and synthesis, which is where true learning and ethical formation occur. The issue is not just academic dishonesty; it is the loss of an opportunity to develop integrity, a key character strength (Selwyn, 2022).

Furthermore, AI systems are not neutral. They embed the values and biases of their training data. A student using an AI research tool may receive information that unconsciously reinforces stereotypes or presents a skewed view of history. Without a strong ethical compass and critical thinking skills—fostered through human guidance—students may accept AI-generated content as objective truth. For Malaysia, a nation with a complex history and sensitive socio-political dynamics, this is a critical imperative. Education must equip students to critically evaluate information, recognise bias (including algorithmic bias), and make ethical decisions based on the values of *Ihsan* and fairness. This cannot be outsourced to an algorithm.

Concern for Students' Wellbeing

Although AI is utilized to the academic success of the students their wellbeing cannot be forsaken at the cost of cognitive development. While having number of benefits, increased digital use can weaken physiological and psychological wellbeing (Nakshine, 2022: Kilmova & Pikhart, 2025). Increased gadget uses and lack of human contact, the fear of losing privacy, overwhelming demands of technology may add on to students feeling of anxiety (Kilmova & Pikhart, 2025). The main drawbacks are caused by reduced face-to-face interactions (Cambra-Fierro et al., 2024), increased loneliness (Xie et al. 2023; Crawford et al., 2024), and technostress (González-López et al., 2021). Thus, notwithstanding its promises, AI tends to lessen the quality of life of its users. Malaysia to achieve the Madani citizen's values, wellbeing of its citizen is unnegotiable. If the education aims to produce a well-balanced citizen, caring for their physical and mental wellbeing becomes a vital mission.

The Malaysian Imperative

The challenges of the AI paradigm are global, but they have specific, urgent ramifications for Malaysia's Madani ambitions. A purely AI-driven approach threatens the very pillars of the framework. It can undermine *Ihsan* by de-prioritising human connection; it can erode *Hormat* by failing to cultivate deep intercultural understanding; and it can weaken *Keyakinan* by creating an educational environment based on algorithmic surveillance rather than human relationships. The DEP 2023 does state it includes the strategy to ethical use of technology (see S1.3). The

imperative, therefore, is to adopt a *human-cantered* approach to AI integration (Kilmova & Pickhart, 2025). This means consciously designing learning experiences where AI handles the mechanistic aspects of education (drill, practice, data analysis), thereby liberating human educators to focus on what they do best: fostering wisdom, empathy, ethical reasoning, and the complex skills of dialogue and collaboration that are the bedrock of the Madani society.

POSITIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Positive Psychology and Positive Education

Positive Psychology, pioneered by Martin Seligman, shifts the focus of psychology from remediating pathology to fostering well-being and flourishing. Its core is often encapsulated in the PERMA model, which outlines five elements of well-being: Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment (Seligman, 2011). This is complemented by the VIA Classification of Character Strengths, which identifies 24 universally valued strengths like curiosity, bravery, kindness, and fairness (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Positive Education is the deliberate application of these principles within educational institutions. It posits that well-being is not a distraction from academic achievement but a crucial enabler of it. Students who feel safe, connected, and purposeful are more likely to be engaged, resilient learners (Norrish, 2015). Schools like Geelong Grammar School in Australia have pioneered whole-school approaches, integrating practices such as mindfulness, strengths spotting, and gratitude journals into the curriculum and school culture. Research in various contexts has shown that Positive Education interventions can lead to reduced anxiety, increased life satisfaction, and improved academic outcomes (Waters & Loton, 2019).

The relevance to Malaysia is acute. The National Education Philosophy's goal of a "balanced and harmonious" individual aligns perfectly with the aims of Positive Education. The Madani pillars, particularly *Ihsan* (compassion) and *Hormat* (respect), can be directly mapped onto character strengths like kindness, teamwork, and social intelligence. Therefore, Positive Education provides an evidence-based pedagogical toolkit to realise the nation's long-stated human development goals, which a purely academic or technocratic approach has struggled to fully achieve.

Core Methodologies in Positive Education: Training the Mind for Flourishing

Positive Psychology exercises in positive education are intentional, evidence-based activities designed to cultivate well-being and flourish in educational settings. These practices move beyond traditional pedagogy by systematically training students' psychological "muscles," much like physical exercise trains the body. A quintessential example is the "Three Good Things" or

gratitude journal, where students regularly record positive events from their day and reflect on their causes. This simple practice shifts cognitive focus from deficits to assets, directly countering the brain's innate negativity bias and has been shown to significantly increase levels of happiness and life satisfaction over time. Similarly, "Strength Spotting" exercises encourage students to identify, label, and apply their core character strengths, such as curiosity, perseverance, or kindness, in new ways. This not only boosts self-esteem and engagement but also helps students approach challenges with a toolkit of personal resources. For fostering resilience, "Best Possible Self" visualizations guide students in vividly imagining a future where they have achieved their goals, which enhances optimism and clarifies motivational pathways. In the social realm, activities like "Active Constructive Responding" train students to engage enthusiastically and supportively when others share good news, thereby strengthening interpersonal relationships and building a cohesive classroom culture. Ultimately, these exercises are not isolated events but are most effective when integrated into the daily fabric of school life, empowering students with the skills to navigate adversity, build healthy relationships, and lead more fulfilling lives.

Positive Language Education (PLE): a form of Humanistic Language Pedagogy

Language pedagogy has evolved significantly from the grammar-translation method to communicative language teaching (CLT). However, even CLT, with its focus on functional competence, can be critiqued for being overly instrumental. Humanistic Language Pedagogy represents a further evolution, viewing language learning not merely as a skill acquisition but as a transformative process integral to personal and social development (Oxford, 2020).

This approach acknowledges that language is the primary medium through which we construct our identity, understand our culture, and relate to others. It emphasises the whole person—the learner's emotions, values, and experiences. Pedagogical practices within this paradigm include using literature and film to explore ethical dilemmas, engaging in project-based learning on community issues to foster civic engagement, and employing reflective journals to encourage metacognition and personal growth (Wang et al.,2021). The goal is to develop what Byram (2021) calls "intercultural communicative competence," which involves not just linguistic accuracy but also the skills to mediate between cultures, critically evaluate perspectives, and act as a responsible citizen.

As Mercer et al (2018) posits Positive Language Education (PLE) is the intentional integration of Positive Psychology principles and practices into language pedagogy, with the dual aim of enhancing linguistic proficiency and promoting learner well-being, character development, and intercultural understanding. PLE is not a separate curriculum but a pedagogical lens. It views the

language classroom as an ideal environment for cultivating the wellbeing elements such as PERMA Plus constructs: Positive Emotion through engaging activities; Engagement through flow-inducing challenges; Relationships through collaborative tasks; Meaning through relevant, real-world topics; and Accomplishment through mastery of both language and interpersonal skills.

This aligns perfectly with the needs of developing a Madani citizenry characterized by strong principles, a firm national identity, and noble character. As pointed out earlier, operationalizing this vision will involve comprehensive education reforms, where language education can be a tool to carry the mission and be a bridge between communities, fostering the *Hormat* (respect) and understanding essential for national cohesion.

Core Methodologies

PLE moves beyond traditional exercises to methodologies that engage the whole person. Concrete examples include:

Table 1

Positive Psychology Exercises within PERMA+ Framework

Dimension	Exercise	Description
Positive Emotion	Three Good Things	Write three positive experiences daily and reflect on why they happened.
	Savoring Walk	Take a mindful walk, focusing on sights, sounds, and smells.
	Gratitude Letter	Write a heartfelt letter of appreciation to someone.
	Positive Reminiscence	Recall and relive a joyful memory in detail.
	Best Possible Self	Imagine and write about your best possible future self.
Engagement	Flow Activity	Spend time in an activity that fully absorbs you.
	Strength Spotting	Identify your top strengths and plan to use one daily.
	Mindful Breathing	Focus on the breath to cultivate presence and attention.
	Pomodoro with Joy	Use focused work intervals with enjoyable rewards.
	Micro-Mindfulness	Pause briefly to ground yourself in the present.
Relationships	Active Constructive Responding	Practice supportive, enthusiastic responses to others' good news.
	Random Acts of Kindness	Perform small, unexpected kind deeds.
	Quality Time Ritual	Dedicate distraction-free time with loved ones.

Dimension	Exercise	Description
	Compliment Journal	Record compliments received and how you reacted.
	Gratitude Sharing	Share things you are grateful for in a group/family setting.
Meaning	Values Clarification	List your top values and reflect on their alignment with actions.
	Meaningful Storytelling	Write or share a story that shaped who you are.
	Contribution List	Identify ways you have positively impacted others.
	Purpose Mapping	Connect daily tasks to a larger life purpose.
Accomplishment	Tiny Goals Challenge	Break large goals into small steps and celebrate progress.
	Success Journal	Record weekly achievements and reflect on them.
	Celebrating Progress	Use visual trackers (e.g., checklist, habit tracker) to mark milestones.
	Self-Affirmation Statements	Write and repeat affirmations about your abilities.
	Strength-Based Goal Setting	Set a goal using one of your top strengths intentionally.
Health & Vitality	Gratitude for the Body	Note one thing you appreciate about your body daily.
	Mindful Eating	Eat a meal slowly, noticing taste, texture, and nourishment.
	Energizing Movement	Engage in short, joyful physical activity (yoga, dance, walk).
	Sleep Ritual Journal	Track bedtime routines and their impact on rest.
	Digital Detox Break	Set aside time daily to disconnect from screens.

The Role of the Educator in PLE

In a PLE framework, the teacher's role transforms fundamentally from a "sage on the stage" to a "guide on the side" and, more importantly, a "facilitator of flourishing." The educator becomes a designer of experiences that foster well-being, a model of curious and compassionate communication, and a strengths-spotter who encourages each student's potential. They create a psychologically safe classroom climate where students feel comfortable taking linguistic risks and engaging in open dialogue about values and emotions. This human facilitator role is irreplaceable by AI and is the critical counterbalance to the impersonal nature of technology.

The Malaysian Imperative for Positive Language Education

Just as the AI paradigm presents specific challenges to the Madani framework, the pedagogy of language education holds particular urgency for Malaysia's national ambitions. A traditional, deficit-focused approach to language learning—one that prioritizes grammatical accuracy over communicative competence and high-stakes exams over authentic expression—risks failing the Madani citizen. Such a model can stifle Daya Cipta (Innovation) by punishing creative risk-taking; it can weaken *Keyakinan* (Trust) by fostering a fear of making mistakes rather than building confidence; and it can overlook Ihsan (Compassion) by ignoring the socio-emotional dimensions of communication.

Positive Language Education (PLE) emerges not merely as an alternative methodology, but as a vital pedagogical imperative. It aligns seamlessly with the national education policy's shift towards holistic development and the aspiration to cultivate balanced, empathetic, and articulate citizens. By integrating the principles of positive psychology, PLE consciously designs learning experiences that do more than teach vocabulary and syntax. It uses language as the medium to build the very competencies a Madani society requires: the Hormat (Respect) practiced through active listening and constructive dialogue; the Ihsan (Compassion) fostered by sharing personal narratives and expressing gratitude; and the *Kemampanan* (Sustainability) developed through lessons on cross-cultural understanding and global citizenship.

Given this imperative for a human-centric counterbalance within digital education policy, the explicit integration of the PERMA+ model into language pedagogy becomes not just beneficial, but imperative. The PERMA framework—addressing Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment—provides a robust, evidence-based structure to operationalize the "holistic" and "ethical" development called for in strategies like S1.3 and S2.4. In the context of language education, this translates to designing AI-enhanced lessons that foster positive emotion (e.g., joy and curiosity in cultural discovery), engagement (through personalized, compelling content), and strong relationships (via collaborative, digitally-mediated projects). Furthermore, it anchors language learning in meaning by connecting it to students' cultural identities and the MADANI values of compassion and unity, and ensures a sense of accomplishment through mastery of both linguistic and digital literacies. The "plus" (+) component—which encompasses physical health, mindset, and self-regulation—is equally critical, providing students with the resilience to navigate the attention economy and the ethical compass to use AI tools responsibly. By embedding PERMA+ into the curriculum, we move beyond a technocentric model of digital fluency to cultivate a generation that is not only

linguistically and digitally proficient but also psychologically well-equipped to use these skills for positive, meaningful, and ethical engagement in a complex world.

Therefore, the adoption of Positive Language Education is a strategic alignment of pedagogy with national purpose. It transforms the language classroom from a site of rote instruction into a workshop for the Madani citizen—a space where students do not just learn to speak in English, Bahasa Malaysia, or Mandarin, but learn to speak with confidence, to articulate with empathy, and to engage with respect. This approach ensures that language education directly contributes to building a generation that is not only linguistically proficient but also psychologically robust, ethically grounded, and fully equipped to contribute to a *kesejahteraan* (Prosperous) and harmonious society.

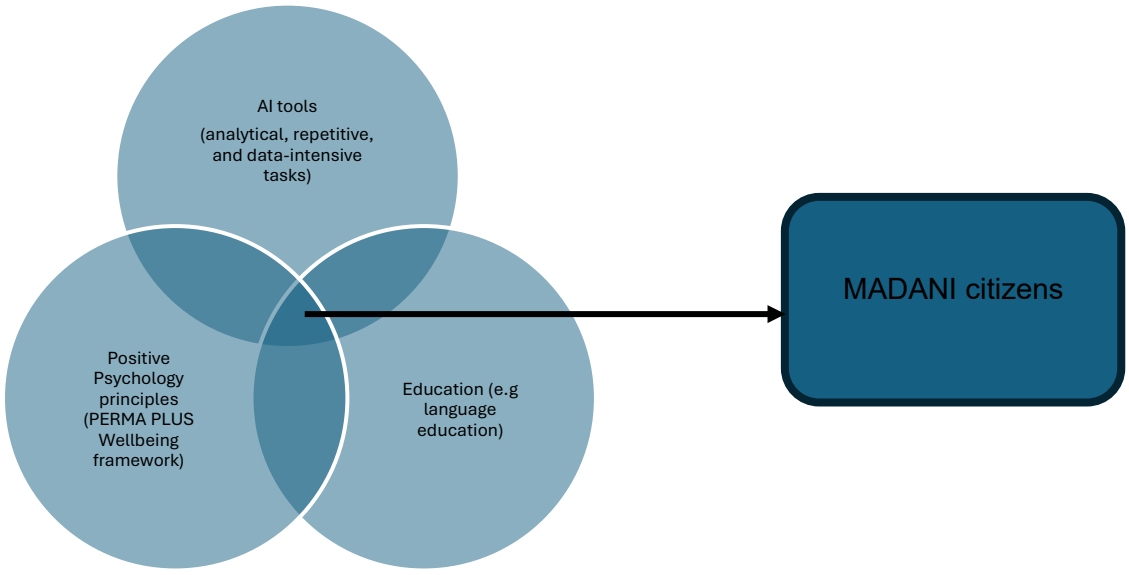
A SYNERGISTIC MODEL FOR THE MALAYSIAN CONTEXT

The Principle of Synergy

The proposed model moves beyond a binary choice between AI and human-centric pedagogy. It forges a synergistic partnership that leverages the distinct, complementary strengths of each. However, the core principle is straightforward.

Figure 1

Synergetic relationship of AI and Positive Education



It lets AI handle the analytical, repetitive, and data-intensive tasks. As a result this approach frees the human educators and students to focus on the meaningful, creative, ethical, and interpersonal dimensions of learning. This division of labour optimises the educational process, making it more efficient without sacrificing the deeply human core of teaching and learning. It is crucial to note that this model requires the educator to transition from a sole knowledge-dispenser to a facilitator and critical guide, responsible for framing activities, curating tools, and helping students evaluate AI output against learning objectives and ethical standards.

Mapping the Model to the MADANI Pillars

To demonstrate the practical application of this synergistic model, the following section maps its core principle onto the national MADANI framework. The following section illustrates how this can be operationalized within a Malaysian language classroom, showing how specific AI-enhanced activities serve dual purposes: advancing language acquisition and cultivating the values enshrined in the official MADANI pillars: **Sustainability (*kemampanan*), Prosperity (*kesejahteraan*), Innovation (*Daya cipta*), Respect (*hormat)*, Trust (*keyakinan)*, and Compassion (*Ihsan*).** Furthermore, the dimension of **Health** is presented as the foundational bedrock necessary for the flourishing of all six pillars.

Compassion (Ihsan)

Under the **Positive Emotion** dimension of PERMA, the activity of writing a 'Three Good Things' journal is augmented by AI. Students can use **AI-powered writing assistants** to refine their initial notes into more fluent and stylistically varied reflections. This process strengthens the linguistic focus on developing a nuanced vocabulary for emotions. In alignment with the MADANI pillar of **Compassion (*Ihsan*)**, the activity encourages students to cultivate a kind and grateful disposition towards their own experiences and the actions of others. The expected outcome is that students will be able to articulate gratitude and kindness more fluently and confidently. For example, a student's initial note, "My friend helped me," could be developed with AI assistance into: "I felt profoundly supported by my friend's compassionate act, which eased my anxiety."

Innovation (Daya cipta)

Within the **Engagement** dimension, the activity of Strength Spotting is scaffolded by AI tools, such as digital character strength profilers, to help students identify and articulate their personal strengths. This activity emphasizes the linguistic focus on descriptive writing and the effective use of adjectives. By aligning with the MADANI pillar of **Innovation (*Daya cipta*)**, students are

encouraged to recognise and creatively apply their unique capacities. The expected outcome is improved self-awareness and more innovative self-expression. For instance, an AI tool could prompt a student with an identified strength, such as creativity, to then write a paragraph brainstorming a novel solution to a school-level problem.

Respect (hormat)

For the **Relationships** dimension, the adapted activity of Active Constructive Responding is supported by **interactive role-play with a conversational AI chatbot**, enabling students to simulate authentic conversations and practice supportive responses. The linguistic focus here is on dialogue writing and the use of discourse markers to maintain natural and fluid interactions. This activity aligns with the MADANI pillar of **Respect (*hormat*)**, as it fosters empathetic, attentive, and courteous communication. The expected outcome is that students will develop the ability to communicate encouragement and support more effectively. For example, an AI chatbot can act as a friend sharing good news, and the student's task is to craft a response that demonstrates active listening and respectful engagement.

Sustainability (kemampanan) & Trust (keyakinan)

Under the **Meaning** dimension, the activity of Values Clarification is strengthened with **AI mind-mapping tools** to brainstorm and organize ideas for essay writing. The linguistic focus is on argumentative essay writing, as students learn to articulate personal values with clarity and coherence. This activity resonates strongly with the MADANI pillars of **Sustainability (*kemampanan*)** and **Trust (*keyakinan)***, encouraging students to link their personal values to long-term societal well-being and to build arguments based on reliable information and intellectual honesty. The expected outcome is that students will be able to write more meaningful, well-structured essays. For instance, students may explore the value of environmental stewardship by drafting an essay, supported by an AI-generated outline, on how individual actions contribute to a sustainable future.

Prosperity (*kesejahteraan*)

To achieve a prosperous society, mental and physical wellbeing of that society is unnegotiable at all times. All the PERMA plus components together enable the construction of wellbeing. Therefore, all the activities that embed the PERMA plus elements will assist in producing a a generation that embodies *Kesejahteraan.* Just to point pone one activity as an example, in the **Accomplishment** dimension, the adapted activity of maintaining a Success Journal is

enriched with **AI writing assistants** that help students transform brief achievement logs into coherent reflective essays. The linguistic focus is on cohesion and the accurate use of past tense. This activity is aligned with the MADANI pillar of **Prosperity *(kesejahteraan*)**, as it motivates students to recognise their own growth and skill development, which are fundamental to personal and future professional prosperity. The expected outcome is that students will build greater confidence in both their abilities and their written communication. For example, a simple note such as “I finished my project” can be developed into a polished reflection like “Completing the project enhanced my time management and collaborative skills,” with structured AI guidance.

Health: The Foundation for MADANI

Finally, in the ***Health*** component of PERMA, the activity of a "Mindful Reflection" journal can be integrated with **AI speech-to-text tools**, allowing students to dictate their experiences and then refine the text for descriptive depth. The linguistic focus is on descriptive writing, particularly the use of sensory language. This activity directly supports the **mental and physical health** of students. A healthy, well-balanced individual is the fundamental prerequisite for embodying all six MADANI pillars: they have the psychological capacity for **Compassion**, the cognitive energy for **Innovation**, the stability to build **Trust**, the well-being to engage with **Respect**, the vitality to work towards **Prosperity**, and the long-term perspective necessary for **Sustainability**. The expected outcome is that students develop greater health awareness alongside more sophisticated descriptive writing skills, laying the groundwork for all other values.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

For this model to succeed in Malaysia, several factors must be addressed. First of all. The successful implementation of this synergy largely lies on teacher training. A massive investment in professional development is required. Teachers need training not only on using AI tools but, more importantly, on the principles of Positive Psychology and facilitative pedagogy. They must feel confident leading discussions on values and well-being. Secondly, curriculum designing has a vital role in its appropriate implementation. The national curriculum needs to be flexible enough to accommodate project-based, PLE-driven units. Learning standards should explicitly include socio-emotional and ethical competencies alongside linguistic ones. Finally multilingual dynamics needs careful considerations. In a multilingual classroom, AI tools must be chosen or developed with sensitivity to local languages and cultures. PLE activities should be designed to celebrate

linguistic diversity, perhaps by having students translate their campaigns or share stories in their mother tongues, fostering pride and cross-cultural understanding.

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATION

This paper has contended that the implementation of AI in Malaysian education needs a thoughtful adoption to avoid potential major risk to achieving the Madani generation, endangering socio-emotional shortcomings and a moral void. It was determined that solely a technocratic method is inadequate for promoting values such as Ihsan, Hormat, and Keyakinan. The article described Positive Language Education (PLE) as a human-centric framework that incorporates well-being and character growth into language instruction. Ultimately, it suggested a collaborative model that utilizes AI's analytical strengths to enable teachers to concentrate on the significant, relational, and ethical aspects of education, with specific instances aligned with the Madani pillars. This paper argues that a human-focused method such as Positive Education is essential since AI alone cannot replicate compassion, enable profound ethical reasoning, or establish trustworthy relationships. It is the vital equilibrium that guarantees technology supports human well-being rather than the reverse, which is necessary for the Madani vision. Positive Language Education (PLE) refers to the educational incorporation of Positive Psychology into language teaching, striving for both linguistic skill and the development of well-being, character strengths, and intercultural proficiency. The synergistic model in Malaysia is characterized by an intentional division of responsibilities, with AI handling data, personalization, and repetitive tasks, while human educators, adhering to PLE principles, create experiences that nurture empathy, critical thinking, creativity, and respect through collaborative and meaningful language engagement.

As for the implications of this paper, theoretically, it contributes to the fields of educational technology and language pedagogy by proposing a novel, integrated framework that moves beyond the siloed treatment of AI and well-being. It provides a values-driven lens for AI integration. Practically, for Malaysian policymakers, it implies the need for curriculum reform that explicitly values socio-emotional learning. For school administrators, it highlights the urgency of teacher upskilling. For teachers, it offers a hopeful vision where AI becomes a supportive tool that enhances, rather than threatens, their core mission as facilitators of human development.

Recommendations for future Research mainly includes the necessity for pilot programmes and empirical studies to assess the impact. The Ministry of Education (MoE) should initiate pilot programs to test the PLE-AI synergy model in selected schools. Teacher training colleges (IPG) should incorporate Positive Psychology and AI literacy into their core curriculum. The MoE should

also establish guidelines for the ethical use of AI in classrooms, emphasising critical evaluation and academic integrity. Empirical studies are urgently needed to evaluate the impact of this model on both academic outcomes (language proficiency) and well-being indicators (student engagement, empathy, resilience) in the Malaysian context. Research should also explore the development of culturally responsive AI tools tailored to the Malaysian linguistic landscape.

In conclusion, the path to a truly Madani generation lies not in resisting the AI revolution, but in steering it with wisdom and a clear moral purpose. By championing a Positive Language Education framework, Malaysia can ensure that its educational future is not only digitally advanced but also profoundly human.

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