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GenAI and Authorship in Academia: The (Im)Possible Creator. An Integrative Review

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Abstract: Amid vivid ethical discussions on using AI to assist scholars in the writing process, this contribution tackles the question about Generative AI and authorship from a philosophy of language and academic perspective. In this integrative review, we look into the ways Generative AI impacts the very notion of authorship on the stages of knowledge production, knowledge consumption and knowledge dissemination. We focus on the implications of using Large Language Models with their enhanced capabilities of generating convincing imitations of human natural language for our conception of authorship. Contextualizing this capability to the realm of academic production, we seek to explore whether generative AI is going to further add to the postmodern destruction of the author, and how it relates to a core aspect of academic integrity, namely acknowledging the intellectual contributions of other scholars.

Keywords: GenAI, authorship, academic integrity, knowledge production, knowledge consumption

Introduction

LLMs and generative AI tools are everywhere: submerging content creation online (Chankova & Vassileva, 2024), impacting deeply the very fabric of academic publishing (Perkins & Roe, 2024), interfering with learning on every imaginable level of autonomous internet users (Yu, 2023), shaping up pedagogical practices and overrunning didactic material preparation, formative assessment and feedback (Nguyen et al., 2024). In order to position the discussion of generative--AI tools in the framework of text-creating activities, we look into the question

of how our conception of authorship in academia is being impacted by these tools. Two primary applications are envisioned as a backdrop of the discussion: first, academic publishing and the guidelines to acknowledge the generative-AI tools used in the preparation of the manuscript (according to COPE, 2024); and second, the more general question of the use of generative-AI tools in academics' production. Both perspectives seek to answer the question of which uses of generative-AI tools can be described as ethical in terms of writing assistants.

The LLMs which made possible the elaboration of the ChatGPT-like algorithm have fascinated users with several particularities: they can imitate patterns of human speech; utilizing a larger window of local dependencies, they can produce speech that appears coherent across paragraphs (Bender et al., 2021); they can perform tasks of language manipulation, such as paraphrasing, general editing, rewriting (Lingard, 2023). The vast amount of data that is being used in the training (the process of feeding more linguistic patterns into the algorithm) allows these systems to produce on-topic text generations immediately, creating the illusion that they respond to the human user. Users have quickly discovered that these systems are prone to hallucinations and are quite plainly generic in their output (van Dis et al., 2023; Xames & Shefa, 2023; Grimaldi & Ehrler, 2023). These features stem directly from the algorithm, which is based on a randomized selection of linguistic patterns: since the algorithm lacks semantic understanding of the language data it manipulates, it tends to produce random item associations which make no coherent sense and/or express false propositions about the world (Bender et al., 2021; Titus, 2024). Even though hallucinations rates have been significantly reduced in later models (see OpenAI, 2025), this is deemed to be a structural feature of Large Language Models, and, in this sense, inevitable (Xu et al., 2024; Xu, 2025). This is one of the reasons why it can be argued that these algorithms cannot replace information search: they produce a probability generation that completely obscures the sources of the ideas one interprets them to contain. This very same particularity of the algorithm could make it a useful tool to jumpstart the creative process itself, taking on the role of a brainstorming session with outlines, ideas, summaries, which can then be exploited and developed by the user (Lingard, 2023; Grimaldi & Ehrler, 2023).

Two more brushstrokes to complete the context setting. Importantly, in the absence of compelling evidence of AI's ability to have communicative intention, it cannot be described as communicating and thus does not reflexively intend to create in the human user an understanding of the communicative intention: this particularity has led Bender and Hanna to call language models "synthetic text extruding machines" (2025, p. 31), underlining the danger of mistaking human's capacity for interpreting the textual output of GenAI for GenAI's thinking, understanding or feeling. This idea will be developed in a subsequent section of this article.

Secondly, the predictions of a fundamental, drastic change in the very fabric of the workforce with the arrival of generative AI systems (for example, McKinsey & Company, 2023) a couple of years into their adoption in various domains of human activities take a particular shape in reality. A large-scale Danish study by economists investigated 25 000 workers in 11 different sectors that were considered susceptible to be affected the most by the introduction of AI systems and the impact of AI use on their professional activities and found an average of 2.8% of time gains due to AI introduction (Humlum & Vestergaard, 2025). It is further emphasized that these gains are affected by an average increase in work charges as people now have to complete tasks that they did not have before, such as verification of AI output, this charge being between 8% for accounting to 10% for the educational sector, up to 15% increase in work tasks for law. Of course, the adoption rate of AI is different for different sectors, and many factors influence these decisions in the industries, not to mention the fact that different sectors will be impacted differently by the adoption of these tools. More broadly, preliminary findings of an MIT study entitled *The State of AI in Business 2025* uncovered an important divide in returns for investment for companies that invest in AI—according to the report, 95% of the companies with important investments in the development and implementation of AI technologies receive no return on investment (Challapally et al., 2025). These findings suggest that the implementation and exploitation for profit of these tools is still largely under way, even though on the individual level, they may be evaluated as having a measurable impact on productivity and/or efficiency.

Our preoccupation here concerns academia only, which leads us to another problem, namely the evaluation of the impact AI systems may have on the state of academic production. To quote Bender and Hanna, who spoke of workflow automation using ChatGPT-like systems: "We find ourselves asking: if they couldn't be bothered to write this, why should we be bothered to read it?" (Bender & Hanna, 2025, p. 52) This sentiment applies fully, in our view, to the potential AI bearing on academia. In this contribution, we set out to explore the question of how GenAI tools have impacted and can potentially impact our understanding of authorship.

Aims and methods

In what follows, we turn to the notion of authorship, which we will tackle from a philosophy of language and an academic perspective. We adopt the approach of the integrative review, as it allows us to draw ideas from multiple and diverse sources in order to integrate them into a holistic, coherent view on the problem of authorship in the age of GenAI. This approach permits a problematization of AI-augmented authorship from a multiple aspect perspective. We operate within the context of a GenAI-saturated academic environment, where scholars, instructors and students alike have largely adopted GenAI tools for various purposes (Chankova, in print), navigating the complex challenges these tools can potentially create for academia (Hughes et al., 2025). Our discussion of GenAI impact on academia will be limited to Large Language Models for their potential applications in writing research (language and style enhancement, structuring and planning, draft writing, idea generation, etc.). We do not consider other types of AI, which may have a vast array of applications in a multitude of domains. Our investigation is best framed in terms of ethical and responsible GenAI use, its high resource-intensiveness notwithstanding.

The analysis is organized as follows: we start by considering authorship and the construction of knowledge (section Authorship and knowledge creation), then we explore the ideas suggested by publishers in an effort to uphold academic

integrity in publishing research (section Authorship and knowledge distribution), and finally we turn to authorship and the consumption of knowledge (section Authorship and knowledge consumption), as we suggest that the primary aim of academic communication is the creation, dissemination and consumption of knowledge.

Authorship and knowledge creation

Historical perspectives

Historically, the concept of scientific language as a "universal code" stripped of individuality progressively gave rise to a discourse marked by strong formalization and standardization. This extended beyond grammar, vocabulary, and textual organization to shape how authors present themselves and how they engage with their readers. At the same time, the construction, production, and dissemination of knowledge are firmly embedded in culture-specific norms that have developed historically. As a result, distinct intellectual styles of presenting scientific discourse have emerged.

Rosenblatt (2018, p. 466) argues that human writing and reading are fundamental to the creation of meaning. These processes entail interactions not only with others—authors and readers—but also with oneself, drawing on memory and personal experience. Such dimensions cannot be replicated by AI. The process of writing is a function of the author's experience and individuality, participating in its turn in the construction of society, helping to articulate interpersonal relations, perceptions and representations (also Bazerman & Paradis, 1991, p. 3).

Two long-standing but still highly influential philosophical approaches to knowledge creation have to be taken into consideration here. First, according to social constructionists, knowledge is shaped by, and relative to, the community in which it is produced; meaning and understanding depend on a shared conceptual framework expressed through social norms. This makes it possible to define an 'academic discourse community' by identifying its underlying norms. Social constructionism is philosophically grounded in the work of analytic thinkers

such as Frege, Russell, and Chomsky, but it also resonates with speech-act theorists like Searle and phenomenologists such as Gadamer.

In contrast, externalists adopt an anti-Cartesian stance, drawing on philosophical traditions associated with Nietzsche, Dewey, Heidegger, Davidson, Derrida, and others. They view propositional attitudes as emerging from public interaction, where knowledge is achieved through interpretation rather than through the mediation of a prior framework of social norms. Communication, therefore, relies on deviation—or what Bakhtin terms *addressivity*, i.e. the recognition of the otherness of the other, if we desire to communicate at all. For Bakhtin, polyphony is inherent in all words or forms (1981, p. 293), i.e., it is impossible to create a totally new text.

GenAI tools are based on the social-constructionist understanding of knowledge creation, since LLMs draw on existing textual databases and extract repetitive, thus also normatively shaped textual strings. They therefore ignore the possibility of interpretation of information presented in a way deviating from the said norms. The latter, on their part (at least for the time being), are primarily centered around the Anglo-American views about knowledge representation and hardly allow for textualizations based on different rhetorical styles in academia.

Consequently, intercultural communication poses even greater challenges for the author, who is expected to navigate between different systems of cultural values and beliefs, sometimes entirely unfamiliar ones. This challenge arises not only when writing in a foreign language but also when addressing international audiences. It entails, as Bizzell (1990, p. 53) puts it, "going native", that is, reshaping one's identity as constructed by national culture, society, and the conventions of the native scientific community. The difficulty of fully transforming one's identity becomes particularly acute for scholars from cultural backgrounds that differ considerably from the target context, or for those who, due to political or economic isolation, have long been excluded from the international exchange of knowledge. Cultural identity and the relationship between the individual and society, however, can vary considerably. Foley summarises the Western concept of person as "individualism" where the "basic premise of this ideology is egocentric personal autonomy" (1997, p. 265). Within an egocentric, individualist ideology, society is positioned as secondary to the individual. Inequality in such

contexts is viewed as the outcome of free competition among individuals who are, at least in theory, considered equal. By contrast, in many traditional cultures, the concept of personhood is fundamentally different: meaning is generated through interaction and achieved through the active participation of all involved. Here, the audience is not a passive recipient expected merely to grasp the intentions of a fixed speaker (for a detailed discussion on the development of the philosophical views of authorship see Vassileva, 2006).

Reframing these aspects of the writing process and knowledge creation and transmission in the augmented author perspective, it appears that AI-produced output glosses over every single aspect we mentioned: such output does not in any meaningful way relate to forming propositional attitudes by an individual with their specific experience, perceptions and interpretations, neither does it reflect in any meaningful way the cultural baggage the human may carry with them, nor does it carry over authorial voices—or permit their development and polishing through the practice of the craft of writing.

Current views of human–GenAI interaction

From present-day perspective, it seems that the deconstruction of authorship, or the death of the author, to use Barthes' phrase, which centered around the destruction of the idea that a text possessed necessarily one ultimate interpretation (the message of "Author-God"), accommodates well the promise of another type of intelligence that seems capable of generating texts that simulate human production. It also reflects Barthes' conception of text as this "multidimensional space, in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash" (1977, p. 146). This description fits the AI algorithm really well: its training on vast amounts of texts, its capability of processing thousands of signs in the computational process of executing the selection algorithm in response to the prompt, all of those tally with the word mash which is then interpreted using the same sense-making defaults as the output of a human author. The output generated by ChatGPT is compared to a kind of "generalized view of people who write about a particular topic" (Van Woudenberg et al., 2024, p. 20), while others are at pains to describe such output as qualifying as

propositions in the first place (Frye, 2023, editor-in-chief's foreword). Indeed, without characterization, contextualization, source attribution, explicitation of connections, and the reference act (as a shortcut, we refer to Searle's notion of meaningfully realizing the act of referring to objects and realities in the world), it is difficult to evaluate the output in terms of its ontological value, even if it sometimes can be evaluated as true or false due to independent verification (also pointed out by Van Woudenberg et al., 2024).

The question of evaluating the AI systems' output appears to be settled by the very particularities of the LLM's system: it is by chance that output sentences may turn out to be true, not by design (Van Woudenberg et al., 2024, p. 5). To Bakhtin's definition of text, Treharne and Willan (2019) oppose another, one that takes into account the intentional and deliberate social move that motivates its creation to purposefully convey a message that has interpretable meaning. This echoes Bender and Hanna's insistence that 'normal' writing involves intentionality (in Brentano's sense), and writers, as do speakers, usually have illocutionary and perlocutionary intentions (Searle, 1969). The following definition of the notion of author has been suggested recently:

> "At root, an author is someone who engages in normal writing, and normal writing embeds normative, agency embellishing capacities, including certain kinds of belief, intentions, and responsibilities, like the ability to participate in practices in which one could be held accountable overtime for their words (ledger function); or would be answerable for specific claims made (answerability function); or participate in practices of blame and praise (desert function); or practices surrounding the seriousness with which one should treat certain statements (gravity discerning function); or practices of providing compensation, when necessary (compensation function)" (Van Woudenberg et al., 2024, p. 10).

Thus, authorship is a lasting relationship that the author entertains with their creation, actively serving as a reminder of the accountability and responsibility of each individual author for the ideas put forth, as well as serving the function of social (or academic) recognition. The text would serve

as sharing both the results and the evidence of the coming to know process, deliberately undergone by the author.

AI tools' users tend to interpret the output as if it had these attributes (on perceived AI agency, see Hwang & Won, 2022; on perceived agency and trust, see Vanneste & Puranam, 2024), which accounts for the perception of these tools as human substitutes: this is the default interpretation. Similar considerations have led legal scholars to rule on the legal status of machine-generated production by suggesting it should not be protected by copyright (Gervais, 2020). Moreover, encouraging machine-generated artistic production is seen as seriously threatening human progress (Gervais, 2020; Bender & Hanna, 2025).

Goffman's (1981) model of the author in terms of the production end of communication encompasses the following participant roles: the author, the one scripting the lines; the principal, the one endorsing the message; and the animator, the one vocalizing the message (the sound box). In academia, where ghost-writing is proscribed as practice, the researcher ideally embodies all three of the roles, as it is their responsibility that is engaged when they are involved in academic communication. Line-scripting is supposed to reflect authorial voice and style idiosyncrasies, ideas, stances and beliefs. It reflects the result of the thought process: thinking and writing are fundamentally inseparable processes (Bender & Hanna, 2025, p. 50). Using a text-generating system to generate the lines resembles in substance to ghost-writing, a practice in which the responsibility is claimed by the principal for content created by somebody else.

Ghost-writing (or contract cheating) is deemed an infringement of academic integrity—students (or academics, for that matter) who resort to buying essays/articles ghost-written for them by a third party are guilty of academic dishonesty. This may be used as validation for the presupposition still in play in academic writing and integrity matters that the processes of writing and thinking are interconnected and are a reflection of the special relationship between content and author. In any case, outsourcing a crucial part of the knowledge-creating process seems to be counterintuitive to the realization of human intentionality. Yet, GenAI tools' use is tolerated to a certain extent in the academic community.

The "distant writing" hypothesis in academic communication

The notion of "distant writing" was introduced by Floridi (2025) to describe a creative literary writing practice that is conjointly performed by a human agent acting as the designer of the narrative and by LLMs acting as writing generators. It will be discussed here in order to evaluate the possibilities of its application to the production and consumption of academic texts. The theoretical background of distant writing integrates ideas from multiple fields. From modal logic and narrative theory, it adopts the view of narrative as a boundless space of possible worlds constrained by coherence. From design theory, it makes use of the idea of creativity as an exploration process. From computational theory, it incorporates the human-computer partnership as a source of novel possibilities. Beyond these, it introduces the principle of "isotropy of the narrative space", meaning that narratives can develop in any direction as long as coherence is preserved, challenging traditional notions of fixed narrative progression.

Discussing the merits of such a theoretical construct for literary creation is beyond our focus in this integrative review; however, academic texts as a rule have pre-defined aims and outcomes, with highly standardized paths of progression, so that the space they move in is further constrained by disciplinary norms and expectations. Therefore, this space cannot possibly have an isotropic character, that is, it is not 'boundless'.

The methodology of distant writing treats composition as designing prompts that direct an LLM to produce the desired narrative. The mechanics of writing thus becomes a process of systematic prompting and refinement, where the quality of the output depends on the precision of the input. Through iterative progressive refinement, the author shapes the text and ultimately assumes responsibility for the final product. A crucial point here is the distinction made between *responsibility* and *ownership*, stemming from the 'decoupling' of the traditional functions of the author as both the conceptualizer and the physical writer of the text, assuming the role of operator, a kind of 'meta-author', directly involved in mapping out the plot, but not in the writing process itself (Floridi, 2025, p. 9).

The challenge of losing the individual author's voice, typically associated with unique stylistic figures, rhetorical patterns and language choices that

contribute to the recognition and attribution of literary texts to specific writers is not deemed serious from the perspective of distant writing: as Floridi (2025, p. 16) points out, the lack of mental states and thus intentional choices on the part of LLMs does not impede the development of unique "wrAIting styles" which go beyond the stylistic limitations that may be contained in the prompts. Transposing these considerations to the creation of academic texts, it could be suggested that although the notion of 'voice' is also one of their critical features, its realization is presupposed by completely different norms and expectations, while the style generally demonstrates recurrent structures and lexical choices typical of the respective discipline which, curiously, may make such texts more suitable for machine production.

Another concept that needs reassessment within Floridi's framework is that of *originality*, which has been impacted by a long-standing tradition of intertextuality theories describing texts as "mosaics of quotations"—for Floridi, distant writing underscores and systematizes intertextuality (2025, p. 19). Besides, while originality in fiction lies both on the plane of ideas and their linguistic expression, in academic texts it mainly concerns the novelty of ideas, supporting results and discoveries or inventions. Intertextuality, on its part, is expected to be clearly indicated through attribution, in contrast to its subtle character in literary texts. From an ethical viewpoint, Floridi sees the advent of distant writing as complicating "attribution and accountability", especially considering existing legal frameworks regulating intellectual property and copyright law "that may be inadequate for collaborative human-AI creativity" (2025, p. 26).

More broadly, this philosophical framework challenges the belief that meaningful texts must be purely human creations. Instead, drawing on the philosophy of information, it redefines human roles from sole authors to designers, curators, and interpreters within a wider ecosystem of humans and artificial agents. Thus, distant writing is described to be not just a technical innovation but a philosophical reorientation, undermining assumptions of human exceptionalism in creativity. It points toward distributed morality and distributed creativity, where meaning emerges collectively from both human and non-human agents (Floridi, 2025, p. 31). The latter claim makes

a rather misleading shortcut, as it equates the extrusion of human-like text to meaning generation, which is usually the product of human intentionality and interpretation. Thus, even if signs and symbols may be generated by a machine in response to prompting, it is human interpretation that gives them meaning in accordance with what counts as 'normal' use of these signs: this is what allows the human user to discern what has been termed hallucinations or word salad, and identify falsehoods in the extruded text.

What is more, this theoretical framework clashes with cognitive studies that announce alarming potential effects of prolonged human-AI collaboration for creative tasks, especially in the context of academic learning: comparing three groups of learners (brain-only, search-engine, and LLMs) in an essay writing task, Kosmyna et al. (2025) found that the latter group exhibited the signs of cognitive offload, while the former two groups showed strong brain activity in semantic integration, creative ideation and executive self-monitoring (for the brain-only group) and in the visual cortex (for the search engine group), strongly suggesting that the support tools deeply impact "not only the task performance but also the underlying cognitive architecture" (Kosmyna et al., 2025, p. 136). Coupled with studies pointing out that the mind needs facts and procedures to be able to synthesize and create (Oakley et al., 2025), these findings suggest that the human-AI collaboration is not necessarily beneficial for the development of the human mind in the long run, and that delegating cognitive tasks may result in cognitive offload that accumulates into cognitive debt.

But barring all that, from an academic perspective, the concept of authorship does not have merit on its own; rather in its being instrumental in credit attribution: it quantifies scientific achievement (as imperfect as that may be as a system) so that academics can be hired or promoted on the basis of that credit. Offloading crucial parts of the academic activities to AI may deeply impact the value of authorship within this system. Equally, in academic writing, creativity is measured in evaluative categories such as novelty, innovativeness, plausibility, replicability, applicability—categories that are, by definition, void for GenAI-extruded text, as they depend on a human evaluator.

Authorship and knowledge distribution

Traditionally, the attribution of authorship in academia has several well-defined functions: it allows us to identify the people who undertake accountability for the ideas put forth, who assume responsibility to perform legal tasks such as approve the manuscript as it goes to publishing, or assign (reassign) authorship right (Goto & Katanoda, 2023). Authorship is also an embodiment of different roles in collaborative projects in attributing credit for the work done (Birnholtz, 2006): it includes various ways of participating in the research process, which is finalized with the preparation of the manuscript for results dissemination, such as (schematically) conceptual design of the research, conducting the research, data analysis, crafting the manuscript. This allows the attribution of credit for discoveries and enables the accrual of reputation (Birnholtz, 2006), around which academic promotion is organized.

In view of the importance of academic production and the potential of generative AI tools in performing language manipulation tasks, a central issue for academia became the ethical framework of AI use in academia. One of the important issues publishers focused on in particular was delimiting the uses of AI for academic work that align with the principle of academic integrity and transparency; thus, COPE, for example, united around the general principle that AI tools cannot be listed as authors since they cannot be held accountable for the content put forth, nor held responsible for potential infringements on third party rights, nor can they give approval for the publication of the manuscript (COPE, 2024; Thorp, 2023). At the same time, COPE insisted that AI use should be transparent and thus appropriately disclosed and acknowledged, while reviewers were also compelled not to upload manuscripts to AI tools in order to automate and thus—facilitate and speed up the review process, for fear of copyright infringement, personal data and confidentiality issues. Such provisions aimed at upholding the academic integrity standards while at the same time allowing space for the potential exploitation of technological advances.

In the span of two years after this debate started, reviews of possible publishing policies seem to have reached an agreement: since banning the use

of generative AI is considered to be impossible to enforce (for an overview of the policies, see Hosseini et al., 2024), different options of disclosing the use of AI in the spirit of promoting transparency had to be considered. Academic journals have adopted variations of regulatory policy, instructing researchers how and when they should disclose the use of generative AI systems in their manuscript, revolving around using the methods section and references to describe exactly how and which tool was used in the drafting of the manuscript (Hosseini et al., 2024). The debates around the appropriateness of including AI tools in the acknowledgments section, which also involves an agency of a particular kind on the part of the person being the target of acknowledgment, have led journals to create a specialized section for disclosing AI use (for an overview, see Lund & Naheem, 2024).

The APA style team member McAdoo suggests that acknowledging AI tools' use in the manuscript should be done by describing the prompt and providing the relevant section of the response and cite the tool as one would the output of an algorithm (McAdoo, 2023). Such a qualification appears to exclude the possibility of using AI as a text creator which would act in the researcher's stead, referring to the textual output as to third party's ideas, sourced to the LLM, but taking into account the opacity of the origins of the claim it happens to generate. The corresponding in-text citation and reference are, according to McAdoo, to be formatted in the following way:

- in-text citation: (OpenAI, 2023);
- reference: OpenAI. (2023). ChatGPT (Mar 14 version) [Large language model]. https://chat.openai.com/chat (https://chat.openai.com/chat).

These suggestions essentially provide a model framework of the acceptable uses of generative AI—completely transparent disclosure of any generated text used in the final manuscript and an attempt to discourage generative AI as a kind of 'ghost-writer' for the scholar. McAdoo goes on to explain what has been pointed out as a systemic weakness of LLMs, namely, their inability to provide academic references to back up what appears to be claims in response to prompts. Thus, whatever perceived shortcut or facilitation that has been advertised for such

tools runs against the very foundation of academic knowledge, in which claims are sourced, argued for and backed up. Generative AI cannot make sense of the world, nor can it interpret and draw scientific implications from data (Thorp, 2023; Bender et al., 2021). Given the unreliability of its output, it is recommended to consult the original sources directly rather than depending on LLM's version of them (McAdoo, 2023).

Editors offer clear guidance intended to caution authors, strongly encouraging them to submit prompts, generated content, and a description of their use of AI as supplementary material for reviewers. This is meant to help prevent cases of unintentional plagiarism or fabricated references in the submission (Leung et al., 2023). Reviewers, on their part, are instructed not to use GenAI tools for producing their evaluative reports. It is, however, practically impossible to determine whether and to what extent they adhere to that and can afford the time and efforts to cross-check the submitted information. After all, it is up to their conscientiousness regarding the accomplishment of the peer-reviewing task.

Generally, it appears that the major potential problems which using generative AI may cause have been brought to the knowledge of scholars. It appears that these numerous caveats may indeed create additional workload for academics, in such a way as to bring to naught all (perceived) automation/time savings through the use of AI. Back to square one.

Authorship and knowledge consumption

Authorship entails a form of responsibility, since readers interpret the meanings encoded in texts and attribute them to the individual who produced them. In written communication, however, authors forgo control over their texts' circulation or over the reception and interpretation of their messages. Despite this lack of control, authorship remains consequential. Individual utterances are typically saturated with ideological and historical voices, and for Bakhtin (1981; cf. Volosinov, 1973), authorship represents a means of constructing the self through its dynamic, reciprocal engagement with what lies

beyond the self. Communication, in this sense, is realized through dialogism and the ongoing process of interpretation.

Dialogism is not only a discourse theory but also a philosophical worldview that conceives of reality itself as a communicative system. Bakhtin's treatment of language, particularly the notion of the utterance, reframes dialogic interaction by projecting the others' responses and structuring the discourse event (Phelps, 1990, p. 166). For Bakhtin, the connection between the individual utterance and the social realm lies primarily in its linguistic foundation. The linguistic resources from which utterances draw constitute a "concrete heteroglot conception of the world" where linguistic resources are the reflection of contexts (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 293; cf. Volosinov 1973, p. 86).

Secondly, the immediate source of an utterance—namely the author's consciousness and lived experience—is itself socially situated. For Bakhtin, external events do not constitute experience until they are articulated, and by being articulated, they become ideologically framed and socially oriented. The self is not an isolated essence, but a project sustained through dialogue.

Thirdly, every utterance arises in response to its situational and dialogic context, shaped by specific conditions and communicative demands. This context is always partly constituted by earlier utterances, so that, as Bakhtin (1986, p. 91) explains, each new utterance functions as a reply—it may affirm, refute, expand upon, or otherwise depend on what has already been said, presupposing the audience's familiarity with those prior statements. As a result, any concrete utterance carries "dialogic overtones" from this chain of contexts and often reveals traces of "half-concealed or completely concealed" foreignness.

Fourth, whenever an author refers to an object, the reference is inevitably entangled with the multitude of words and discourses already associated with that object as a theme or topic. As Bakhtin (1986, p. 276) notes, between a word and its object lies a dynamic field of prior utterances, value judgments, and competing accents. Each word enters this charged environment, intertwining with some voices, distancing itself from others, and intersecting with still more, producing a complex web of relationships.

Finally, a fifth aspect of Bakhtin's philosophy that holds particular significance for discussions of audience and authorship is the notion of addressivity, tied

to the function of speech genres. An utterance is inherently social because it is always directed toward an addressee or audience. The author formulates an utterance with a projected response in mind. In doing so, the speaker directs discourse toward the listener's conceptual horizon and worldview, which introduces new elements into the exchange and allows different perspectives, social languages, and evaluative accents to intersect (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 282). It is precisely this encounter with otherness that produces dialogue.

In a similar vein, Foucault (1972, p. 98) asserts that each statement necessarily carries or reflects other statements. For Bakhtin, every text or utterance is both shaped by earlier discourse and oriented toward future responses. Each utterance thus looks backward to what has already been said and forward to what is yet to come, making it permeated with fragments of others' words and inherently intertextual. Bakhtin differentiates between what Kristeva (1986, p. 36) terms "horizontal" and "vertical" intertextuality: the former concerns a text's relation to immediately preceding or subsequent texts, most evident in dialogic exchanges, while the latter points to a text's engagement with more distant discursive contexts. Vertical intertextuality, as Kristeva emphasizes, highlights the historical dimension of texts—the way they respond to, reinterpret, and reshape prior discourses—making historicity an intrinsic aspect of textuality.

Thus, writers routinely form assumptions about their audiences, which may or may not be accurate. Similarly, AI may bear traces of their developers' assumptions about the users. It is therefore crucial for scholars in writing studies to examine the presumptions embedded in generative AI and to highlight any associated stereotypes or biases (Wise et al., 2024, p. 582).

Writers/authors are not the only ones having assumptions about their readers; readers/users may also have a particular set of assumptions/requirements about the texts they may be perusing. Going back to Bender and Hanna's rhetorical question quoted above on bothering to read material generated by AI, let us consider a study by Schilke and Reimann (2025), which demonstrates a rather curious effect of AI disclosure across various tasks and domains of human activities, starting from writing emails and letters of application, through analytic tasks such as tax refund estimates, all the way to artistic tasks, such as advertising and graphic design. The study showed that

AI disclosure had a negative impact on trust, which was slightly attenuated on people with a positive general attitude towards technology and those who see AI as trustworthy, but it also showed that familiarity with and use of AI did not lessen the negative impact. This study tackled the consumption part of the AI--aided (or unaided) tasks and dealt with perceptions respondents had about the task's outcome in regard to the use of AI. Only one of the 13 separate studies conducted by Schilke and Reimann concerned an academic setting, in which the respondents were students whose written assessments were evaluated with the use of AI or by a human TA (teaching assistant), showing a distinct loss of trust if that fact was disclosed to them. This is a surprising effect if one considers the wide spread of AI use among students across different countries and disciplines (for example, Balabdaoui et al., 2024), especially pronounced in Asia (for an overview, see Schei et al., 2024). It puts in perspective the misalignment between perceptions of legitimacy of one's own choices to use AI (say for schoolwork) and the legitimacy of others' choices. Legitimacy is proposed to be the mechanism underlying trust erosion by Schilke and Reimann (2025, p. 12). Similar findings are reported by Li et al. (2024) regarding creative writing tasks, argumentative essay and creative story. Raters trust AI-aided creations significantly less when AI-use is disclosed to them. Legitimacy appears to be connected with certain expectations about agency in the completion of the range of tasks, namely assumed responsibility for the resulting textual creation. It appears that users have an intuitive criterion about authorship, which is legitimately attributed under certain conditions (unaided production) and withheld under others (AI-augmented production).

Beside legitimacy, the study challenges the idea that transparency necessarily leads to positive effects (Sah et al., 2018): after all, transparency is one of the fundamental values that build up academic integrity. Of course, Schilke and Reimann's investigation should be better understood in the context of decision-making, which puts great pressure on the reliability and the legitimacy of the data that underlies the act of decision-making. In terms of knowledge creation, dissemination and consumption, transparent disclosure of generative tools should enhance contextualization for the ideas put forward, which in turn would facilitate judgement-making.

But importantly, generative AI has spread to numerous tools, such as Word processing software, search engines and research equipment, prompting questions about the delimitations of AI use that have to be disclosed mandatorily. Resnik and Hosseini (2025) suggest three types of situations which necessitate AI use disclosure:

- When decision-making is delegated to the AI tool (they take as an example data extraction in systematic reviews);
- When the AI tool generates content, data or images;
- When the AI tool conducts content, data or images analysis.

They base their reflection on the concepts of substantial and intentional contribution, defining these concepts in terms of advancing the development of the research and affecting the content of the final text. The authors provide the following list of examples of substantial contributions: formulating research questions and hypotheses, designing and conducting experiments, drafting parts of the papers, performing textual manipulations (summaries, paraphrases, revisions, syntheses), translating parts or the whole paper, data manipulations (data collection, interpretation, analysis and visualization), literature review, generating synthetic data and images. In short, all the processes which are subsumed under the usual definition of 'author' in academia are judged to be substantial and intentional. Therefore, delegating them requires disclosing that one did not perform these tasks. Thus, our integrative review on the notion of authorship has come full circle: AI cannot be an author and delegating some types of tasks to it are deemed defeating of the purpose of the tasks; at the same time, the delegation of other tasks is allowed based on our understanding of substantial (near-authorial) contribution under the condition of fully disclosing such a delegation, even though this may have a negative impact upon text perception.

Conclusion

Regardless of the potential uses GenAI may have in academia, several points are to be put into prominence in the context of our discussion. First, in the course

of our review, we emphasized the ethical dimension in terms of gatekeeping procedures in academic publishing and the philosophical dimension which appears to privilege a moderate constructivist approach that aims at transcending usual definitions to include human-machine cooperation in the creative domain. There appears to be an incompatibility of sorts between a framework that effectively lets go of the "romantic notion of human exceptionalism" (Hutson, 2025, p. 2) while at the same time striving to uphold a clear quantification of contribution in terms of academic authorship.

Second, even leaving these two dimensions aside, we cannot help but echo Burke's musings on GenAI promoters who create a necessity for AI efficiency in academia where none "*was asked for or needed*" (Burke, 2025, emphasis in the original). From the point of view of the knowledge creator or disseminator, quality and accuracy should trump quantity and speed any day. The academic already knows how to do all of the things that GenAI promises to offload: reading, summarizing, drafting, generating ideas, coming up with creative and unorthodox approaches, looking for literature, analyzing data (the list is not exhaustive). The objective question is, for an academic, what purposes can GenAI serve? All output has to be verified, checked for factual errors, checked for accuracy, checked for plagiarism, re-written or edited to adapt it to the writer's voice, the sources added and verified, and also read and analyzed by the author themselves, because no author would cite without gaining direct and personal knowledge of the source. In terms of streamlining, there is much to ask for. And considering nobody was asking for it, the question remains: what is the purpose of employing AI in academia? Writing itself is formative in academic contexts of the very process of coming to know—a special relationship of forging connections between ideas, producing a coherent understanding of a complex reality through the viewpoint or perspective of the author. As such, this has little to do with creativity or originality, which GenAI can imitate, but with understanding and application, which GenAI does not possess.

Third, there appears to have developed a strong technophile bias in academia—remember the digital immigrants discussion in the early 2000s—calling for new technology to be embraced, period. Such a bias is understandable in a tech-dominated environment that drives the creation of neologisms such as 'distant writing' and underscores the need to reframe and redefine

terminology such as 'author', or 'human-machine collaboration'. The casuistry in proposing formulations such as "the boundaries of contribution are increasingly ambiguous" (Rodrigues, 2023, p. 8599) lies in shifting the burden of the resolution of ethical problems—ensuring that when engaging in academic production, scholars act in accordance with the principles of academic integrity—to a need of conceptual reframing, presupposing that in some fundamental way the very activity (in this case—writing) has irreversibly transformed, so that the very boundaries between original and appropriated work become blurred as well (idem). The normalization of AI-assisted writing is somehow presented as a norm-setting, discussion-closing and pragmatic view of authorship, in which the human author is "augmented" or "enhanced" (Hutson, 2025, p. 4). The use of evaluative terms like these carries a positive qualitative evaluation, thus something that should be encouraged.

Short-term implications for authorship and academia include settling the norms for the acceptable dimensions of AI-aided production: this appears to be largely underway. Hopefully, academia will escape what Kreminski called "the dearth of the author"—a special "condition that arises when AI-based creativity support tools for writing allow users to produce large amounts of text without making a commensurate number of creative decisions, resulting in output that is sparse in expressive intent" (2024, p. 48). Academic writing in its purpose combines the reporting function and the writing-to-think function: creativity acquires a different dimension in academia.

Long-term implications, however, are harder to conjecture upon: is a restructuring of academic skills to be expected, as some skills might fail to be developed due to AI-aided writing? Will that affect the way research is conducted and the quality of academic production? Or is the entire discussion of augmented authorship just an excuse to stretch the boundaries of allowed transgression? It does not appear, however, that AI-augmented academic writing is qualitatively superior in any meaningful way, probably apart from the obvious advantages for academics for whom English is a foreign or second language. Neither does it present significant advantages for scientific knowledge as yet, so as to recommend its use (see Kobiella et al., 2024, for a discussion on ownership and control). We conjecture that the period of tentative exploration of these

tools, followed by their adaptation to the academic ecosystem, will gradually result in the sifting out of practices that contradict the foundation of academia. Such an adjustment has been observed with the emergence of the Participative Web and information search engines for information ecology.

And last but not least, the concept of authorship has a particular functional dimension in academia. It allows the attribution of credit, helps quantify merit, and ensures responsibility for the content which is put forward. If these functions are in any way undermined by AI-augmentation, it means that there is an obstacle to the fulfilment of said functions. In other words, it is the entire system of academic communication based on principles of academic integrity that might break down.

Academic authors are so much more than text producers; they are the function of an ideational tradition, a societal product of particular knowledge-creating architectures, a living part of knowledge-creating and knowledge-transmitting structures. It is in the challenging and/or improving upon existing ideational relations that their scientific contributions are contextualized. They embody the paradox of ideation transgression and the conservation of truth, and their main role for posterity is that of developing robust higher-order thinking skills in all who consume their production, as imperfectly human as it might be.

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