

## Editorial: On the Use of Generative AI Tools in Academic Writing

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools, and particularly large language models (LLMs), have become an inescapable reality of modern life, with their potential to permeate the distinct dimensions of human activity, including fundamental ones, such as the communication of knowledge and information, which are at the core of scientific publishing. Thus, it behooves those of us involved in academic and editorial arenas to exert careful control over the management of those tools. This is much needed to avoid falling into ethically questionable practices (e.g., reproducing biases, spreading misinformation, plagiarism, and lack of transparency, among many others), for which only we can be held liable.

Trust in scientific knowledge is built through transparent practices, which have prompted scholars, ethics committees, and publishing houses to raise awareness of the ethical and transparent use of GenAI tools in scholarly publishing. This has materialized in public positions, such as those of the Committee on Publication Ethics regarding authorship and GenAI tools (COPE Council, 2024), and in the inclusion of guidelines in renowned journals and publishing houses on what constitutes fair use of GenAI tools.<sup>1</sup> In Latin America, the *Heredia Declaration* (Penabad-Camacho et al., 2024a) seeks to establish working principles to guide authors, editors, and reviewers in the responsible integration of GenAI tools, calling for full disclosure of such use and for individuals to actively supervise any material produced by LLMs.

As we see, two main concerns have driven the discussion in the publishing world. On the one hand, we have the authorship attribution. This entails that only human beings have the intellectual capacity to create and make decisions and, fundamentally, can be held morally or legally accountable for what they do, something that could not possibly be enforced on GenAI tools (Hosseini et al., 2023; Kaebnick et al., 2023; Penabad-Camacho et al., 2024a). In that sense, we agree with the recommendation that these tools should not be given authorship status.

On the other hand, there is a need for transparency, with all stakeholders required to disclose any use of GenAI tools (e.g., specific LLMs or applications), for what purpose, which prompts were given, and how the outcome was supervised by the authors and integrated

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<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, the *Best Practice Guidelines on Research Integrity and Publishing Ethics* by the publishing company Wiley (<https://authorservices.wiley.com/ethics-guidelines/index.html#22>).

into the paper<sup>2</sup> (Penabad-Camacho et al., 2024a). These registries may be (increasingly) necessary to assist editorial decisions and can even be included as appendices in published papers (Hosseini et al., 2023). The important consideration here is that the authors should always disclose. As Kaebnick et al. (2023) claim, “authors should err on the side of too much transparency rather than too little: when in doubt, disclose” (p. 4).

Of course, there is the possibility of banning the use of GenAI tools, but we agree with Hosseini et al. (2023), who remark that such bans can be counterproductive as they may deter authors from being transparent and are difficult to enforce. Nonetheless, applications for GenAI-writing detection, while not totally accurate, can help give a general overview, especially when authors do not disclose the use of GenAI tools. Thus, in the *Profile* journal, we have opted to allow the use of GenAI tools, but only to assist with minor editing, provided such use does not exceed 15% of the total manuscript (see the journal’s Guidelines for Authors).

We arrived at this percentage based on two main reasons. First, the authorship criteria followed by the journal include substantial contributions in the composition of the paper, and by limiting the use of GenAI tools, we add a new layer as to why these tools cannot be given authorship status. Second, and perhaps more importantly, we need to bear in mind the special characteristics of the academic community around the journal: preservice and in-service teachers of English. As foreign (or first) language users and professionals, we advocate for the capacity to work with the language as our raw material, through which we exhibit our innate abilities to interpret, summarize, and communicate genuine ideas. At a time when many occupations may be at risk due to the encroachment of GenAI technologies, we believe we should not cede our power to perform those linguistic tasks and instead use them to verify and control all artificially created material.

Our journal’s decision is in tune with Kosmyna et al. (2025) who, in the preliminary results of a study carried out at MIT to measure the participants’ cognitive debt while resorting to GenAI tools to assist essay writing, have found that participants who used an LLM in the task exhibited less memory to quote what they had just written and felt less inclined to claim authorship on the produced text. Thus, by relying too much on these tools, we may be jeopardizing our very own authorial identity and our ability to recall information. From a practical perspective, as teachers of the language, and as suggested above, we may compromise our professional identity as well, so we should be aware of all these considerations to follow ethical principles in the different dimensions of our professional practice, to promote authentic writing—with a distinct voice—and to instill good habits among our students as language users.

To sum up, and based on what we have briefly discussed here, we can highlight four main recommendations regarding the use of GenAI tools to assist academic writing: (a) use these tools judiciously and only when necessary for minor assistance, (b) keep a record of the specific LLMs and prompts used, (c) have evidence of your own oversight on the artificially

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<sup>2</sup> Some of the members of the team behind the *Heredia Declaration* have produced a document with specific guidelines on how to record and disclose the use of GenAI tools during, among other things, the composition of what they call a “scientific communication unit” (Penabad-Camacho et al., 2024b).

created material to avoid spreading inaccurate or deceitful information, and (d) disclose all uses of GenAI tools.

### **In This Issue**

We have gathered 12 articles for this first issue of 2026. There are four contributions from Chile, two from Colombia, two from Mexico, two from the USA, one from Australia, and one from Iran, which make up a geographically diverse and interesting sample for readers around the world.

Nine articles are featured in the *Issues from Teacher Researchers* section. We open with the article by Chilean authors Jessica Vega-Abarzúa, Eduardo Gutiérrez-Turner, Valentina Recabarren Maturana, and Daniela Roco Soto, who report an action-research study intended to explore the perceived development of learning and innovation skills and teaching knowledge of a group of English as a foreign language (EFL) preservice teachers. To achieve the study's aim, the researchers implemented project-based learning, which turned out to be beneficial for enhancing participants' critical thinking.

Next, Iranian authors Alireza Karbalaee and Mohammad Hossein Arefian equally focus on EFL preservice teachers, specifically on the role collaborative reflective practice plays in fostering teacher leadership. Through a narrative approach, the authors unveiled the benefits and challenges of collaborative reflective practice, which, on the one hand, has a positive impact on personal, social, and professional levels and, on the other hand, can be hindered by time limitations and the individuals' lack of expertise in reflective endeavors.

Another paper from Chile, authored by Lilian Gómez-Álvarez and Anita Ferreira, reports on the implementation of an innovative assessment approach—peer feedforward—whereby peers commented on their partners' written production, which, complemented with cycles of self-reflection, aimed at improving the participants' text coherence and cohesion, metacognitive awareness, and critical self-assessment skills. The authors conclude that this exploratory study with EFL preservice teachers helped them achieve the dual purpose of mastering academic writing skills while learning to teach them.

Preservice EFL teachers are also the population featured in the case study reported by Mexican author Rosa Isela Sandoval-Cruz, who examined the process of conceptual change in participants' interlanguage, that is, the evolving linguistic system underlying the acquisition of a second or foreign language. The two most salient factors that influenced this process during the study include online written collaboration and reflection on prescriptivism and power issues.

The recent introduction by the Chilean Ministry of Education of an intercultural approach to EFL teaching served as the starting point for Chilean authors Maura Klenner-Loebel, Juan Carlos Beltrán-Véliz, and Trevor Driscoll to analyze the stance of EFL in-service teachers toward their role as intercultural mediators. Three main beliefs around this role were uncovered: (a) proponent of positive intercultural attitudes, (b) expander of intercultural contexts, and

(c) guide for purposeful learning. Thus, the study raised participants' awareness of their responsibilities as intercultural mediators.

The article by Adeline De Angelis, from the USA, revolves around the teacher capabilities valued by a group of Ecuadorian EFL teachers. The author examined participants' language use practices and instructional goals to shed light on their attitudes towards aspects such as content and pedagogical knowledge, teacher identity and cognition, and language proficiency. The author calls for teacher education programs to critically evaluate which factors and stakeholders are involved in defining those teacher capabilities worthy of being valued.

Next, Australian authors Amanda Baker, Michael Burri, and Bianca Mister report on a longitudinal study that explored the impact of times of crisis on English language teachers' practices and cognition, particularly as regards pronunciation pedagogy. The study shows that after initial challenges, the participants exhibited resilience in trying to adapt to the new situation and still continued providing instruction to their students. Nonetheless, the authors conclude that hybrid learning can be an appropriate strategy to help teachers cope with challenging teaching situations.

The quasi-experimental study by Chilean authors Erika De la Barra and Sylvia Veloso explored how cooperative learning can enhance listening comprehension skills among advanced English language learners. Cooperative principles such as positive interdependence, individual accountability, and social skills fostered increased engagement and motivation in the experimental group, as reflected in higher levels of listening comprehension after the intervention.

The first section closes with a contribution from Colombian author Alejandro Fernández. This paper reports a mixed-methods action research study with a group of 20 English language learners at a public university. The aim was to explore the impact of multimodal pedagogies on the participants' conception of culture and intercultural relationships. The experience fostered participants' awareness of how culture permeates their daily lives and of the role of mediation in intercultural interactions. The author highlights that multimodal pedagogies promote critical perspectives on language teaching and learning.

The second section, *Issues from Novice Teachers-Researchers*, contains two articles. The first, by Mexican authors Patricia Cuervo Vera and Mariza Guadalupe Méndez López, revolves around an action research study aimed at addressing the low willingness to communicate among a group of young EFL learners in an English conversation club. The authors implemented the Dogme methodology, emphasizing speaking activities that promote meaningful language use, and found that, after implementation, learners were more willing to communicate in English and produced longer utterances.

Next, we have the article by Jackeline Bravo and Estela Ene, from the USA. The study they conducted explores the perspectives of EFL university teachers in Colombia on self-regulated learning and whether their teaching practices actually promote it. Although most participants were broadly aware of self-regulated learning, they did not explicitly incorporate it into their instructional practices. The authors claim that a strategy like self-regulated

learning should not be overlooked, as it can be tailored to learners' specific needs, improving their chances of learning success.

The final section, *Issues Based on Reflections and Innovations*, features a systematic review paper by Colombian authors Miguel Martínez-Luengas and Andrés Felipe Micán-Castiblanco. They focused on narrative studies in English language teaching carried out in Latin America between 2007 and 2024. The authors highlight the increasing attention in the region of this kind of inquiry and its contributions to the pedagogical, methodological, ontological, and epistemological areas of English language teaching. The paper concludes with a discussion of the main areas that could be explored further: the use of narratives as a research method, the investigative processes behind narrative inquiry, and the relevance of digital narratives for ELT research and pedagogy.

We invite our readership to delve deeper into the contents of this issue. We hope they become a source of practical ideas and further research endeavors.

*Melba Libia Cárdenas*  
Journal Director & Editor

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