

## Gen AI for a generative or a creative generation: A gesture of a materialist orientation to contemporary L2 writing?

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** In this age of omnipresent celebration of generative artificial intelligence (Gen AI) in education, what will happen to humans' naturally acquired intelligence may be a million-dollar question. From the long-termism perspective and existential and humanistic worldviews, this question stands very relevant and legitimate.

**Aims:** This paper aims to philosophically pose questions as regards the uncritical uses of Gen AI tools and deconstruct the meaning of AI-integrated writing, positing the phenomenon in the generational concern and futurism with the potential formation of writing habitus.

**Methods:** By applying the method of theoretical reflection, this study employs a philosophical analysis and critically engages with the extant literature on GenAI-integrated academic writing. By doing so, the paper brings up the potential materialist perspectives on writing within the emerging discourse around the dominant orientations towards GenAI-assisted writing and thus interprets the implications for writers' creative agency and cognitive contribution.

**Result:** The analysis reveals that students (digital natives) of the present generation may exhibit a syndrome of being easily gravitated into the materialistic quicksand of the so-called "textual generation" while keeping themselves as "cognitive absentees" in the process of writing as a "knowledge creation." Students' overindulgence in availing Chat GPT's generative service may develop a materialistic "generative habit" in students characterizing them as "faithful slaves" to Gen AI labor and as "intelligent dwarfs." If this decoupling of natural intelligence from writing keeps fossilizing, the whole generation of student writers may turn into the "practitioners" of GenAI-assisted generation of contents and "escapists" and "skeptics" of creation of knowledge based on the contingency of natural human intelligence.

**Conclusion:** The paper, therefore, advocates that it is high time to bypass the shortsighted, neoliberal triumph of writing as a GenAI-supported product or commodity for attaining marks and grades and, thus, reclaim the dignity and creative credits of students' real scholarship by reorienting writing as a human intelligence-centric creation of real knowledge.

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## INTRODUCTION

Academic writing has been coming along an evolutionary trajectory over a long time (Carroll, 2019; Paltridge & Starfield, 2020). It is, therefore, fluid on one hand. On the other hand, it should not be viewed as ahistorical. Accordingly, viewed from the perspective of the contemporary age, GenAI has brought in a new intersection between 'academic writing and technology' (Regan et al., 2026). It has led to a new discourse around AI-integrated writing in the space of higher education. Besides the many potential benefits of this GenAI-integrated approach to writing, there have also emerged techno-philosophical, social, and cognitive debates around the potential negative effects on "writer generation" of the present age. Generative Artificial Intelligence (hence, Gen AI) is, beyond doubt, a wonder of technology (Cazzaniga et al., 2024), which and the likes of which humans are entitled to inventing as intelligent beings with evolutionary and revolutionary enthusiasm and inspiration. The matter of more wonder is that underneath the invention of AI or GenAI is the power of human intelligence. Indeed, it is an established philosophical position that human intelligence is the unique property which probably makes humans

superior to other beings across the cosmos. Constitutively, human intelligence is a melting pot containing a cumulation of cognitive traits, including thinking, evaluating, creating, synthesizing and so on. Of the traits, rationality is one of the intelligent cognates, which should manifest itself as the testament to how humans follow self-determinism within collective objectivity when it comes to perfect directions to which their activities should be oriented. Often, the long-term “common good” is the orientation of human activities, including those in education. Following this normativity, humans apply their steering force of intellect, talent, rationality, and logic to determine the nature and nurturing principles of any sort of scientific and technological inventions. When it comes to the directionality of the uses of Gen AI tools in writing, the rule should be the same.

Plainly, all human creations such as those of technology are utility bound. However, this common man’s “utilitarian sense” of technology uses in education is not absolute in itself. Rather, the notion is contingent on ethics and moral principles. Human creations should be subject to many other socio-philosophical criteria by fulfilling which human societies stand as with a universal or unique unity of an intent of common good or “greater good”, and logical coherence in a common utility determinism across societies. Thus, judicious, rational and logical determinism of the manners, in which Gen AI should be embraced as an actor in one of the most creative educational activities (i.e., writing), should render the application of AI technology philosophically and scientifically meaningful and objectively acceptable. Nevertheless, we wonder whether or not that is the case of students of current generation celebrating Gen AI tool, Chat GPT, in writing.

There is a wider consensus among scholars that the emergence of Gen AI has brought about immense utility potentials and proofs of transforming education (Giannakos et al., 2025), including enhanced learning outcomes and effective pedagogy (Prestridge et al., 2025; Pratschke, 2024). Yet, the matter of accommodating and embracing this new technology as a non-human agent in writing is subject to serious philosophical debates and discussions. Seemingly, education as a whole itself has assumed a new character of materialism in the present time and so has academic writing in higher education. Being embedded in the materialistic turn of education, commodification, objectification, and materialism have come along to materialistically influence educational processes and practices. As an outcome, “products” seem to be the end goal of education. Notably, this utilitarian philosophy of education may be counterproductive in many ways. For instance, the “materialistic vital” of education may overshadow the classical vital of humanness and morality of education, which is supposed to cause positive convictions in humans. Seemingly, graduates are now turning out to be “job seekers,” and jobs are all situated in the growing spaces of global “markets.” (Un)Saleability of graduates (a more formal term is employability) has, thus, turned out to be the value system of global higher education standards. The notions of marketization of education and saleability of human graduate sound like rather materialistic worldviews. Classical goals of the educational process of molding humans into the complete embodiments of all the non-materialistic, invaluable essences of humans as the greatest beings, including kindness, morality, compassion, care, love, honesty, virtuosity, and the like, seem to have been decentered.

More pointedly speaking, the materialistic worldview is persistently encompassing all the human delivery and utilization processes, which are universally perceived as the signs of human evolution. Coming along as part of this encompassing evolutionary process, educational activities are no more beyond the pervasive intrusion of materialist approaches and principles. Hence, GenAI as a new technological agent has appeared as a powerful catalyst in this materializing process as far as writing in L2 is concerned in this era of GenAI (Kim et al., 2025; Ironsi & Solomon Ironsi, 2025; Li et al., 2025). However, beyond the superficial promises made by Gen AI tools for revolutionizing writing in L2 remains a crucial philosophical concern about L2 writing as a materialistic process, which may otherwise dwarf humanistic values in the cases of unregulated, overuses of the Gen AI tool, ChatGPT, in academic writing.

The pointed tension should be viewed in a “generational scale,” not as individual cases of deviation from the expected norm of judicious cultivation of unique (human) natural intelligence. That is, the mentioned philosophical and pragmatic concern centers not just on the materialistic obsession and

persuasion of distinct individuals, but it concerns a potential scenario of a generation plunging into the “materialistic quicksand” of the so-called technologized writing. The current generation is often identified as a “digital native” (Soyupak & Ipek, 2025). Accordingly, it may be a matter of a tendency of many student writers of contemporary age of Gen AI and in higher education of local or global contexts towards wholesale, uncritical adoption of Gen AI tools, and in this process the digital natives may reduce themselves to being materialistic L2 writers with human “cognitive absenteeism” in the landscape of growing digital obsession in academic writing. Within this prospect, there pops up that very relevant question: Gen AI for a generative or a creative generation: a gesture of a materialist orientation in contemporary L2 writing? Thus, the present paper serves to offer a primary gesture of this philosophical tension.

## **METHOD**

Methodologically speaking, this study is qualitative in nature and evaluates a phenomenon rather than calculates or enumerates it. It applies a conceptual research design, aligning it with the norms of philosophical debate and critical literature analysis to understand (by predicting) how Gen AI can transform the current generation of students’ writing habitus from creation of knowledge to generation of knowledge. In doing so, the study does not involve any empirical data. Instead, it systematically engages with the relevant scholarly literature on Gen AI and writing. The selected literature was purposefully reviewed to capture how GenAI has been conceptualized and reported to have been utilized in academic writing. The available concepts were then examined through a materialist analytical lens to predict how Gen AI-based writing practice may lead to a product-oriented mindset to L2 writing and what it may imply for the epistemic capacity of student writers of future generations. The study maintained analytical rigor through iterative reading, thematic abstraction, and conceptual synthesis. Thus, the study ensures that the interpretation and arguments remain consistently grounded in the reviewed literature. Rather than confirming any empirical generalization, the study perspectivizes the phenomenon through conceptual coherence, theoretical plausibility, and analytical depth.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

“Generation,” an attribution to GenAI tools, is what scholars call the automatic, machine generation of content or ideas by generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools (Alam & Asmawi, 2023), best exemplified by ChatGPT. Following the emergence of GenAI actors, students especially in higher education suddenly got uncontrollably gravitated by the unthought-of wonder of ChatGPT generating content and ideas (Attaluri & Mudunuri, 2025; Jin et al., 2025) for accomplishing which student folks have ever employed their naturally acquired human intelligence. As the time passed by, students started exhibiting “intellectual agency” by placing full faith in Chat GPT when it came to generating ideas and content for writing their assignments (Sison et al., 2024). These ominous symptoms of intelligent students’ overreliance on cheap Chat GPT for availing “generative service” may develop over time into a seeming “generative habit” of being faithfully dependent on “Gen AI labors.” This generative mindset in the present generation of students may signify three critical threats. Firstly, students may “lose self-confidence” in their own natural intelligence. As such, a disposition of self-degradation may create a sense in them that they are inferior to GenAI in terms of the quality of the natural intelligence they possess. As a corollary of this type of mindset, they may stop nurturing and sharpening their own human intelligence that legitimates their claim of their writing as their own. Ironically, young students of today, who are supposed to follow suit of the older generation creating GenAI tools, may take it for granted that their sense of “deficiency” of intelligence is absolute.

Secondly, they may turn into a generation forsaking the human glory in academic, epistemic “creativity.” If that dystopian scenario comes fully true, we cannot but sincerely bother asking this million-dollar question: Is this a generative generation or a creative generation? Given the current trend and tendency of students being over faithful and over reliant on the GenAI tools, and therewith their

demonstrated obsession with “automatic generation” of random contents by tools (Alam et al., 2024) rather than thoughtful inclination for “intellectual creation” of knowledge by using their naturally acquired higher-order cognitive properties, the question asked above stands critical and legitimate.

Thirdly, students may develop a common skepticism about the genuineness of each-other’s original academic writing derived from the genuine labor of natural human intelligence. In such cases of pervading “generational disbelief” in human intelligence, there will be no such thing as “real writing,” although genuinely there should be some. This may create a “cycle of disbelief” in the present and coming generation about human intelligence as being enough for academic writing. Precisely, the student writers of the present generation may self-identify as “practitioners” of generation and “escapists” and “skeptics” of creation. Not surprisingly, writing educators may also be skeptical of academic writing submitted by students who persistently make a collective exhibition of the notorious “generation syndrome” and characteristic “creativity avoidance.” The generative syndrome may be manifested in university students’ habitual and constant asking of GenAI for generating contents or ideas when it comes to coursework submissions or assignment writing. This phenomenon may reveal a reluctance among students to using human intelligence in cognitively creating the intended contents.

Viewed from a pragmatic point of view, modern life’s materialism, which entails a preponderance of contingency on matters or objectives both as means and ends, may provide a schematic inclination and endorsement to GenAI’s couplehood with student writers in the act of academic writing in an L2 (most commonly English). The “omnipresence” of tools and wholesale tendency of mechanization, automatization, and technologization of non-academic activities of modern life may encourage students towards the tooling of writing by generously embracing Gen AI artifacts with the least reluctance or hesitation. Normally, tooling non-academic activities (e.g., agriculture) is more concerned about the products’ maximization, which matters more than anything else. However, it is fallacious to equate agricultural production and epistemic production as the same phenomena because in the case of the latter, both the means and the end equally matter in terms of ethics and moral principles. Injudicious indulgence in Gen AI contingency may generate a “disposition for objectification” of writing in the current generation of students. Once this disposition is at play, this may not be a rare sight of students’ wholehearted adoption of GenAI materials in the generation of “writing as an object,” which may be handled more by their hands rather than their brains.

Ideally, students are supposed to flourish and prove their worth of faculty of intelligence or cognitive treasure, not any other borrowed art of artificial intelligence, when it comes to their scholarship of writing in educational spaces. For any community that fosters cognitive creativity, the instances of deviation from this high ideal of nourishment of cognitive cultivation among students purposed in writing education may signify a big failure of education even after the materialistic gains from tooled writing, such as marks, grades, and GPAs, may still be attained. After all, the cheap “material triumph” of technologized writing is tantamount to “shortsightedness,” and it carries an inherent threat of a potential avenue of transforming the student generation in higher education into less critical, intellectually less autonomous and materialist fans of Gen-AI-based generation of writing as a product, not the naturally intelligent, proud creators of epistemic wealth, a testament to which is supposed to ensure the real “dignity” of their studentship and scholarship.

## IMPLICATIONS

The perspective highlighted in this paper suggests that a warranted deconstruction of the meaning of academic writing in the face of GenAI mediation is bound to happen in the higher educational spectrum. This meaning can be derived from the re-habituating or re-fossilization of traditional or local writing norms and paradigms, which can result in viewing writing as a product-oriented activity that prioritizes accuracy and conformation over creation. Therefore, the paper implicates critical stances to be taken by educators and conscientious policy makers to make sure human creativity and cognitive claims do not disappear.

## LIMITATIONS

This is a preliminary perspective limited to qualitative reflections. The analysis is based on critical engagement with the extant literature. The findings cannot be generalized. Rather, they are implicative or indicative. Because of not being data-based insights, the study is limited to serving as a preliminary prediction derived from the researchers' subjective opinions.

## SUGGESTIONS

As this paper is a preliminary perspective predicting the paradigm shift of L2 writing thanks to Gen AI, future research may be directed to exploring empirically how Gen AI shapes writing orientations, creative agency, and cognitive cultivation, which is the precondition of humanism. Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method studies may be carried out for such exploration. Such research will contribute to the strengthening of the discourse on AI-integrated writing and its intersectionality of creativity, intellectual autonomy, and meaningful learning.

## CONCLUSION

Since the emergence of the Gen AI tool, ChatGPT, a utopian-dystopian debate has also surfaced in the space of academic writing when it comes to employing this techno wonder as a mediation in the process of writing. The advocates of technological revolution in writing education have tended to advertise what wonderful things we can do with this tech-intelligence. More nakedly speaking, the question is often pregnant with the very superficial spirit and shallow curiosity about how wonderfully learners generate excellent writing. Based on the hype created by the generative capacities of ChatGPT, it may be more sensible to ask where our generation is going rather than what they can generate with this tool. Because of not posing this critical question, an unexpected thoughtlessness seems to be manifested in the celebration of GenAI tools by the present generation of student writers as a material agent to actualize the materialist orientation to academic writing as a tool-generated object, rather than a creation of human cognitivity. From the long-termism point of view, apparently it is a wrong orientation. Human intelligence in writing must be made a superordinate invaluable treasure for students of the present generation, by employing which they can claim the real creator's credit in their writing in L2. After all, this paper stands with a recommendation that the university students of the present generation should be nurtured in such a way that they can consider themselves as intellectually autonomous and able, rather than as writers primarily dependent on GenAI-supported text generation.

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