

Opportunities and challenges of scholarly publishing and research dissemination in the age of digital technology and generative artificial intelligence

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Abstract

The rapid evolution of digital technologies has had a profound impact on the ways research is developed and communicated. This article discusses the changes in knowledge production and sharing that are gradually transforming scholarly publishing and research dissemination practices with the advent of digitalisation and, particularly, generative artificial intelligence (GenAI). It first explores the impact on research dissemination as well as the opportunities and challenges faced by publishers and authors – namely, Open Science requirements, digital genres, accessibility, predatory practices, social media, and altmetrics. Then, the focus is placed on GenAI tools and their affordances for academic writing and scientific communication. Opportunities are reported in view of multilingual research, productivity, and dissemination. Several challenges pertaining to authorial voice, institutional support, and academic integrity and related ethics are also examined. Insights gained suggest the need for clear guidance as well as professional development opportunities for the benefit of digitally- and GenAI-literate researchers.

Keywords: Digital genres, GenAI tools, open science, research integrity, scientific communication.

Resumen

Oportunidades y desafíos de la publicación académica y la divulgación de la investigación en la era de la tecnología digital y de la inteligencia artificial generativa

La rápida evolución de la tecnología digital ha tenido un profundo impacto en la forma en la que se desarrolla y comunica la investigación. En este artículo se

estudian los cambios en la producción y el uso compartido del conocimiento que están gradualmente transformando el panorama de la publicación académica y la divulgación científica ante el escenario de la digitalización y, especialmente, de la inteligencia artificial generativa (IAG). En primer lugar, se investiga el impacto sobre la comunicación académica y se analizan las oportunidades y los desafíos a los que se enfrentan editores y autores: en concreto, requisitos de la ciencia abierta, géneros digitales, accesibilidad, prácticas depredadoras, redes sociales y métricas alternativas. A continuación, se estudian las herramientas de IAG y las opciones que ofrecen en este contexto. Se presentan sus oportunidades con respecto a la investigación multilingüe, la productividad y la divulgación, y se tratan desafíos relacionados con la voz autoral, el apoyo institucional y la integridad académica y su ética. Las reflexiones finales apuntan a la necesidad de contar con orientaciones claras y oportunidades de desarrollo profesional que faciliten la alfabetización digital y en IAG de los investigadores y las investigadoras.

Palabras clave: Géneros digitales, herramientas de inteligencia artificial generativa, ciencia abierta, integridad de la investigación, comunicación científica.

1. Introduction

Fostered by the tenets of the Open Science movement and, more recently, the affordances of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI), the digital turn has had a tremendous impact on academia and is today reshaping the way research is produced, assessed, and disseminated. Not only has the open digital medium significantly accelerated the speed of publication and dissemination of knowledge but it has also triggered new opportunities and unprecedented challenges for researchers (Bhatia, 2023). While it is true that digital scholarly communication can help researchers gain greater visibility, extend academic networks, showcase their projects, share their work, and disseminate their studies more rapidly and efficiently, in today's context of ongoing digital transformation, and particularly with the advent of GenAI, other opportunities and challenges arise.

This article examines the scholarly publishing and research dissemination practices that prevail in digitally-mediated communication. Particular attention is given to the opportunities and challenges posed by contemporary digital technologies (section 2) and GenAI tools (section 3). Discussion aims to identify best practices in scientific communication as well as to provide insights into how researchers can harness the affordances of

the digital medium to gain greater visibility, promote their studies, facilitate accessibility, and boost research productivity.

2. The digital turn of scholarly publishing and research dissemination

The digitalisation trend has had a big impact on publishing outlets, particularly on academic journals, affecting authors and publishers, and entailing both opportunities and challenges. These are discussed below.

2.1. Opportunities

Journals are today more accessible than they were in the past, and the use of digital platforms along all stages of the publication process has resulted in more efficient reviewing and editing, and swifter publication and dissemination (Paltridge, 2020). Even though the research article can still be considered “the principal site of disciplinary knowledge-making” (Hyland & Jiang, 2019, p. 231), publishing and knowledge dissemination options available to authors today have expanded enormously due to digital technologies and the principles of Open Science.

2.1.1. Open science

A notable consequence of digital communication has been the Open Science movement and, particularly, the development of open access practices. Open Science is “a set of principles and practices that aim to make scientific research from all fields accessible to everyone for the benefits of scientists and society as a whole” (UNESCO, 2023a, n.p). Electronic publishing opens research (publications and data) to readers, facilitating access from any location in the world through five pathways:

- Green open access makes a study available on institutional repositories or personal websites;
- Gold open access entails a fee to publish;
- Hybrid open access offers subscription-based models;
- Delayed open access restricts public access for a period of time (embargo); and,

- Diamond open access, the broadest pathway, does not entail article processing or reading charges. Studies are free for authors and readers.

Open Science practices and open access publications are highly valued by higher education assessment boards for reasons of research visibility, transparency, and credibility. Because institutions encourage authors to publish with the least possible access restrictions, open access journals have become popular in academia across all disciplines and the percentage of open articles, reviews and conference papers (be they in pre-print, post-print, or version of record) has risen from 14% to 40% between 2014 and 2024 (STM, n.d.).

Driven by its commitment to Open Science, the European Union has laid down that publicly funded research outputs be stored in institutional repositories. This mandate has led countries to revise their national open access policies. Likewise, gold and hybrid publishers have been forced to revisit contributor contracts to include specific clauses pertaining to open access and repository availability. Repositories are online platforms where researchers can deposit their research outputs (data sets, publications, conference papers, etc.) so that they are permanently accessible on line and preserved for future use. Repositories can have a general scope and be funded by universities or institutions. Zenodo is a popular open repository for research outputs (papers, data and software). There are also thematic repositories in which research from specific areas can be stored and shared (e.g., Humanities Commons for humanities-related research).

2.1.2. Digital academic genres

The affordances of Web 2.0 have given rise to the emergence and evolution of genres in academic communication. As Harmon (2019) noted, the *webification* of scholarly literature has brought relevant genre changes and a reconfiguration of social relationships between scientific communities and broader publics. Whereas many of these genres are newcomers in academia (e.g., lay summaries, graphical abstracts, crowdfunding proposals), others have resulted from the remediation of traditional genres – that is, existing genres have moved on line and been relocated, transformed and repurposed to fit that new context (Luzón & Pérez-Llantada, 2019, 2022). Online peer reviews, for instance, remediate the traditional peer review genre by making peers' comments and authors' responses publicly available (Breeze, 2019).

Digital tools are also helping to produce multimodal academic texts, facilitate collaborative and intertextual processes, and disseminate information more rapidly at the same time as academics interact with a diversified audience, and additional opportunities for informal scientific communication emerge. Consequently, digital genres entail a flexible form of communication that not only match scholars' social professional and personal needs, but make knowledge more accessible and distributable (Elola, 2025).

A plethora of terms are used in the literature to refer to digital genres: Internet genres, online genres, cyber-genres, web genres, media genres, computer-mediated genres, digitally-mediated genres, or digital-multimodal genres. At the most basic level, digital academic genres are defined as those genres which leverage the affordances of the digital medium (i.e., hyperlinks, audio and video features) and are used by academics, researchers and publishers to engage in science communication, disseminate knowledge, and reach both expert and non-expert audiences. In the extant literature issues of popularisation, intertextuality, hybridity, recontextualisation, dialogicity, hypermodality, multimodality, interactivity, and collaboration prevail in relation to digital genres (e.g., Belcher, 2023; Elola, 2025; Kuteeva, 2026; Lorés & Mur-Dueñas, 2025; Luzón & Pérez-Llantada, 2019, 2022).

Research articles can be enhanced with supplementary multimedia material (multimodal genres) to provide both authors and study with greater visibility, promote the journal, or elaborate theoretical concepts and research findings. Illustrating examples are podcasts and video abstracts. The Sage Podcast Series, for instance, offers further insight into journal content through editor and author spoken commentaries as well as through interviews with article authors and other guests (see <<https://metacast.app/podcast/sage-podcast/vKCtwW7c>>). Many journals also encourage authors to supplement their research article with a video abstract after publication. These are short videos in which authors present and summarise their research meaningfully and engagingly. Then, they are hosted on the journal website and also made available on other multimedia platforms (see examples in this journal's homepage). Besides boosting the visibility of the research piece and the journal, video abstracts help to reach wider audiences, promote researcher-authors, personalise research papers, share complex information visually, and extend the study reach (Dontcheva-Navratilova, 2023).

2.1.3. Accessibility

Digital publishing offers a window of opportunity to make research more accessible and transparent. Alternative (or “alt”) texts, for instance, provide the publication with brief descriptions of images that are vocalised by screen readers. Likewise, many journals embed a “Listen” button above the article title so that the whole text is read aloud, facilitating understanding and improving retention. Both options assist visual impaired readers or researchers with reading disability.

Electronic access also facilitates the inclusion of large sets of supplementary material that otherwise would not be disclosed because of extension limitations. Figure 1 contains an example of how supplementary data can be added to a research article. By clicking the links in the article appendix, readers can access the additional material that has been shared by the authors, from the survey text to detailed summary statistics or anonymised qualitative data. This practice contributes to the transparency, reliability and replicability of the research because data-collection instruments, results and other data are disclosed. It also adds trust to electronic publishing – as of late threatened by illegitimate practices (see section 2.2.1).



Figure 1. Example of linked supplementary data in Andersen et al. (2025, p. 11).

2.2. Challenges

Despite the positive developments noted above, scholarly publishing and research dissemination face three main challenges: the emergence of predatory journals, and the impact of social media and alternative metrics.

2.2.1. Predatory journals

Electronic publishing has also paved the way for profit-generating businesses to prosper. Predatory practices have been reported to cause tremendous reputational damage to individual authors and their institutions, mainly

because they abrogate peer review as the central control mechanism of science, and therefore, erode research ethics, cast doubt on robust science, and undermine good scientific standards (Habibie & Fazel, 2024). At the most basic level, predatory journals are based on a pay-to-publish model; they launch aggressive call-for-submissions based on fraudulent information, conduct deceptive publishing practices, and make use of diverse engagement strategies to resemble legitimate outlets and appear trustworthy (Bocanegra-Valle, 2023a).

In the past decade, predatory journals have flourished across all disciplines – as of February, 2026, 20,274 individual predatory journals have been identified by Cabells, a platform that evaluates journal quality (Linacre, 2026). This pervasive (and abusive) presence has resulted in two damaging consequences: Firstly, the open access movement is discredited because publications resulting from predatory practices are published following that model (Bocanegra-Valle, 2017); secondly, publishing in predatory journals, or giving presentations in predatory conferences that publish their abstracts or proceedings in these journals, fuels pseudoscience, and contaminates the literature with untrustworthy research studies (IAP, 2022), spreads strategies of misdirection (Pecorari, 2021), and impacts on researchers and global scholarship (Bocanegra-Valle, 2023b). By way of example, a fake version of this journal, *Ibérica*, recently appeared on the open journal system (OJS) platform demanding article processing charges – see Breeze and Kuteeva (2024) as well as <<https://revistaiberica.org/index.php/iberica/announcement>>. The challenge is therefore to become aware of these fraudulent practices and avoid predatory publishing outlets.

2.2.2. Social media

Academic journals and authors also need to remain vigilant about their visibility and the impact of alternative metrics. Back in the mid-2010s social media was regarded as a peripheral activity to academics and researchers, and most scientists showed a low level of trust in content received or discovered in social networking sites (Nicholas et al., 2014). Today, however, the situation has radically changed. Social media is viewed as a facilitator for networking and collaboration, and both researchers and publishers are far more likely to engage with these platforms to keep abreast of recent publications and the latest advances in a discipline. Because social media increases the visibility of scholars and scholarship, demonstrates credibility, increases reputation, and offers new vehicles for dissemination (Sugimoto et

al., 2017), academic publishers are increasingly embracing websites, blogs, general social media (e.g., BlueSky, X, Facebook, or LinkedIn), and dedicated academic sites (e.g. Academia.edu, ResearchGate) as part of their workflow to promote their activity on line, and enhance their reputation. As shown in Figure 2, by actively engaging with social media, publishers announce new articles (left), congratulate authors (centre), or share impact factor updates (right) and other news that are deemed relevant for the journal audience.

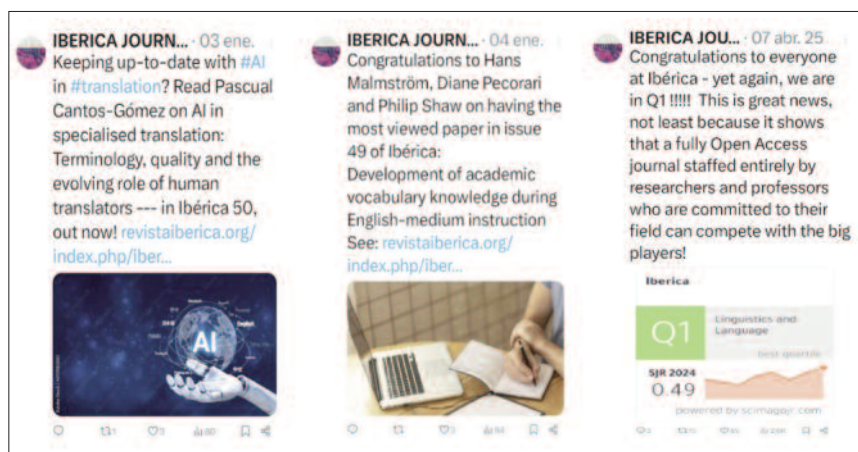


Figure 2. Ibérica's posts on X (aka tweets).

2.2.3. Alternative metrics

Nowadays, the visibility of a journal online (via websites, blogs, microblogging, or social networking sites) is directly connected with its impact. Until recently, the impact of a journal was based on traditional bibliometric indicators like impact factor and citation counts, but now publication success is counted in terms of other metrics (Paltridge, 2020). These alternative metrics (also known as altmetrics) are research indicators based on social media activity and include, among others, number of subscribers, number of downloads and views, level of appreciation (or number of *likes*), share count, or number of references in related sources. These altmetrics favour authors publishing in journals with diamond, gold and green open access options because they offer useful insight into the social impact and public engagement of the research that has been conducted (González, Fors & Torres, 2025).

In many countries, altmetrics serve as measurable traces of research productivity that are highly valued by current assessment boards, review panels, or promotion committees for individual promotion and institutional ranking. By way of example, the Spanish National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA) positively evaluates academics' publications with regard to social influence, visibility metrics, and open access dissemination. Thus, the fundamental challenge for scholars and publishers lies in attaining relevant altmetrics and the expected impact.

3. GenAI for research writing and scientific communication

GenAI is a specific type of artificial intelligence (AI) technology that has been trained on extensive datasets and use large language models to create new content in the form of texts, images, video or audio. The advent of ChatGPT in November 2022 marked a milestone in the adoption of AI in academia, and has had an unprecedented impact on the writing practices of scholars and researchers. In fact, its pervasive use has been understood as “a game-changer” in academic publishing (Belcher, 2024, p. 94) and “an interlocutor in the complex dialogue of academic literacy” (Jiang & Hyland, 2026, p. 3).

3.1. GenAI tools for researchers

GenAI software has evolved very rapidly in the past three years, the number of GenAI tools has grown exponentially, and their affordances have expanded swiftly, generating considerable interest and sparking widespread discussions (Stanford University, 2025). Researchers can use several GenAI tools, each of them offering different capabilities, and their cost of use depending on the features provided. Some tools may be fully or partially free (offering limited capabilities at no cost), while others may provide time-limited trial or extended access through a demo version. Nevertheless, when opting for any of these tools, researchers should first assess their benefits, limitations, and potential risks. Then, they should consider the relevant policies and regulations that are in force for particular disciplines and contexts at institutional, national and international levels.

Even though many of these tools can serve diverse research purposes, in this context GenAI-powered tools can be broadly classified into three main categories: (i) content generators and writing assistance tools; (ii)

information retrieval and research assistance tools; and (iii) multimedia generation tools. Tables 1 to 3 contain examples for each group.

Content generators and writing assistance tools (Table 1) have been mainly optimised for improving text readability and ensuring academic tone, but they show other capabilities, like:

- Drafting essays and reports, summarising, and providing feedback;
- Reviewing sources, finding references, and citing them according to standardised systems (e.g., APA, MLA);
- Translating texts to and from a number of languages (some tools can get accurate translations in more than fifty languages);
- Rewording or reformulating texts (with a particular idea or style);
- Generating texts based on templates, and creating exemplars;
- Planning and organising projects and workflows;
- Polishing academic texts (e.g., checking spelling and punctuation, correcting grammar, suggesting synonyms and appropriate academic/domain-specific vocabulary and phrasing, removing redundancies and checking consistency);
- Avoiding accidental plagiarism (with the aid of a built-in plagiarism checker).

Content generators and writing assistance tools	URL	Content generators and writing assistance tools	URL
AI Docmaker	https://www.aidocmaker.com/	Microsoft Copilot	https://copilot.microsoft.com/
Blackbox AI	https://www.blackbox.ai	Mistral AI	https://mistral.ai
Character AI	https://character.ai	Notta	https://www.notta.ai/en
ChatGPT	https://chatgpt.com/	Otter.ai	https://otter.ai/home
Claude	https://claude.ai	Paperpal	https://paperpal.com/
DeepL Translate	https://www.deepl.com	Paraphrasingtool.ai	https://paraphrasingtool.ai/
DeepSeek	https://www.deepseek.com	Perplexity	https://www.perplexity.ai
EssayFlow	https://essayflow.ai/	Prism	https://prism.openai.com/
Ginger Software	https://gingersoftware.com	ProWritingAid	https://www.prowritingaid.com
Google Gemini	https://gemini.google.com	Read AI	https://www.read.ai/
Grammarly	https://www.grammarly.com/	Ryter Pro	https://www.ryter.pro/
Hivemind	https://teams.hive.com/buzz	Rytr	https://rytr.me/
Ivory Mind	https://www.ivorymind.com/	Scribe	https://scribe.com/
Justdone	https://justdone.com/	Taskade	https://www.taskade.com/
Kimi AI	https://kimi.ai	Trinka AI	https://www.trinka.ai
Language Tool	https://languagetool.org	Writefull	https://www.writefull.com/
Liner	https://getliner.com	Writesonic	https://writesonic.com/
Meta AI	https://www.meta.ai		

Table 1. GenAI-powered tools for research:Content generation and writing assistance.

This first group of tools has been reported to be invaluable in academic and researching contexts, because they not only help to improve the efficiency and quality of academic writing but, most importantly, allow writers to prioritise the critical and innovative dimensions of their research (Khalifa & Albadawy, 2024).

Information retrieval and research assistance tools (Table 2) comprise solutions that:

- Search for academic literature on the Web;
- Identify, organise and analyse relevant research articles and topics;
- Offer comparisons with other publications and perspectives;
- Identify research gaps;
- Explore complex research questions, find answers, and expand on ideas;
- Extract and synthesise key information;
- Provide supporting or contrasting evidence by exploring citation context;
- Analyse data and create insights;
- Generate deep research reports and detailed cited responses from curated datasets;
- Code content and optimise existing coded content;
- Provide visual relationships between studies, create interactive dashboards, flow charts and mind maps to explore data;
- Format references and generate annotated bibliographies;
- Check plagiarism;
- Suggest publication outlets;
- Identify collaborators and topic experts, or even discover funding opportunities.

Information retrieval and research assistance tools	URL
Ask Your PDF	https://askyourpdf.com/
ASReview	https://asreview.nl/
Brainly	https://brainly.com
ChatPDF	https://www.chatpdf.com/
Connected papers	https://www.connectedpapers.com/
Consensus	https://consensus.app/
Coral AI	https://www.theaireport.ai/tool/database/coral-ai
Elicit	https://elicit.com/
Graphext	https://www.graphext.com/
Hix AI	https://hix.ai/
Humata	https://www.humata.ai/
Insight	https://insightai.dev/
Jenni	https://jenni.ai/
Julius AI	https://julius.ai/
Keenious	https://keenious.com/landing
LeapSpace	https://www.elsevier.com/products/leapspace
Litmaps	https://www.litmaps.com/
NotebookLM	https://notebooklm.google/
ProofHub	https://www.proofhub.com
QuillBot	https://quillbot.com
ResearchRabbit	https://www.researchrabbit.ai/
Scholar AI	https://scholarai.io/
Scholarcy	https://www.scholarcy.com/
Scinapse	https://www.scinapse.io
SciSpace	https://scispace.com/
Scite.ai	https://scite.ai/home
Scopus AI	https://www.elsevier.com/products/scopus/scopus-ai
Semantics Scholar	https://www.semanticscholar.org/
Statista Research AI	https://www.statista.com/research-ai/
Wolfram Alpha	https://www.wolframalpha.com

Table 2. GenAI-powered tools for research: Information retrieval and research assistance.

Multimedia generators in Table 3 create audio-visual outputs from texts. They can produce images, illustrations, diagrams, graphs, concept maps, logos, sound effects, music, videos (with or without avatars), podcasts, voiceovers, audiobooks, infographics, or slide presentations from specific instructions (prompts) or from published documents like research articles. They can also help to convert text to speech (and generate the corresponding audio file), or speech to text from existing audio and video files. These tools can be particularly useful when in need of transcribing oral events for analysis (e.g., interviews, podcasts, webinars, recorded lectures) because they provide written scripts of speeches and dialogues shortly after the recording or web link has been uploaded – consequently reducing cost and time. In addition, most of these tools provide additional solutions like dubbing, translation, note-taking, or summaries of the transcribed events.

Multimedia generation tools	URL
Adobe Firefly	https://firefly.adobe.com/
Artist AI Voiceover	https://artist.io/ai/voice-generator
Canva AI Image Generator	https://www.canva.com/ai-image-generator/
Civitai Green	https://civitai.green
Crayon	https://www.crayon.com
Crayon	https://www.crayon.com
DALL·E 3	https://openai.com/dall-e-3/
Deep Dream Generator	https://cgdream.ai/
DeepAI	https://deepai.org
DreamStudio	https://beta.dreamstudio.ai
ElevenLabs	https://elevenlabs.io/
Eraser	https://www.eraser.io/
FlowcastGPT	https://flowcastgpt.com/
Gamma Image	https://gamma.app/
Google DeepMind	https://deepmind.google/
GraphMaker	https://www.graphmaker.ai/
Hailuo AI	https://www.hailuoai.video
Hix AI Presentation Maker	https://hix.ai/ai-slides
HeyGen	https://www.heygen.com/
Ideogram	https://ideogram.ai
InfographicNinja	https://outline.ninja/ai-data-visualization-generator/
Kling AI	https://www.linkai.com
Leonardo AI	https://leonardo.ai/
Microsoft Designer	https://designer.microsoft.com/
Midjourney	https://www.midjourney.com
MyVocalAI	https://www.myvocal.ai/
Napkin	https://www.napkin.ai/
Narakeet	https://www.narakeet.com/
Pixelcut	https://www.pixelcut.ai
Polymer	https://www.polymersearch.com/ai-dashboard-generator
Pollo AI	https://pollo.ai/
Recraft	https://www.recraft.ai
Rotor Videos	https://rotorvideos.com/
Runway	https://runwayml.com/
SlidesGPT	https://slidesgpt.com/
Sonix	https://sonix.ai/
Sora 2	https://sora2ai.io/es
Synthesia	https://www.synthesia.io/
TurboScribe	https://turboscribe.ai/u/convert-audio-to-text
Veo 3.1	https://aistudio.google.com/models/veo-3
Verbit	https://verbit.ai/
Vidnoz AI Music Generator	https://www.vidnoz.com/ai-music.html
Visily	https://visily.ai
WZRD	https://wzrd.ai/

Table 3. GenAI-powered tools for research: Image, visuals, audio, and video generators.

3.2. Opportunities

Besides the particular affordances exhibited by each group of tools and discussed in the previous section, GenAI offers opportunities that enhance

research productivity, support multilingual research, and promote dissemination and visibility.

3.2.1. Research productivity

GenAI use can vary in frequency and scope across disciplines. At its basics, GenAI is perceived as a *work horse*, a *language assistant*, and a *research accelerator* because (i) it can be used as a tool to accelerate, process or assist researchers with technical issues related to their research; (ii) it helps with translations, language polishing and editing; and (iii) it expedites data analysis and research design, therefore boosting productivity (Andersen et al., 2025).

For many, time- and effort-saving is the most prominent benefit. There can be no doubt that GenAI alleviates researchers from some tasks which are repetitive or particularly time-consuming – an important one for scholarly publishing being the review of existing literature that researchers conduct to find a research gap, support a hypothesis, identify research trends or set the research context. It has been estimated that the application of GenAI tools to automate the literature review process can reduce the screening workload by up to sixty percent and save more than eighty hours (Torre-López et al., 2023). Even some solutions promise to accelerate “a year of work into just two weeks” (see e.g. <<https://asreview.nl/>>). As a direct consequence, concerns have emerged on biased and inaccurate systematic reviews resulting from GenAI use (Hampson et al., 2025).

GenAI is widely adopted in research as a *productivity tool* that is able to handle vast amounts of information to optimise academic workflows and improve work efficiency (Khalifa & Albadawy, 2024). As discussed in the preceding section, it helps to generate ideas, structure documents, and guide writing outputs, but it is also a coach for research planning, a data explorer, and a literature reviewer. Existing models have been reported to generate hypothesis, develop and answer research questions, facilitate idea generation and research design, support literature review and synthesis, expand views on research outlines, suggest appropriate methodologies, gather information automatically, explore and interpret a wide range of data and images, propose drafts of literature reviews, suggest revisions, automate parts of data interpretation and evidence synthesis, support editing and review, as well as assisting in communication, outreach and ethical compliance (see e.g., Resnik & Hosseini, 2025; Torre-López et al., 2023; UNESCO, 2023b). All these GenAI uses entail a number of epistemological, methodological and

ethical dilemmas that call for specific principles and frameworks when conducting research (Moorhouse et al., 2026). Some of these dilemmas are addressed as challenges in subsection 3.3 below.

3.2.2. Multilingual research

GenAI provides multilingual researchers with two additional benefits. Firstly, GenAI functions as “a possible leveler” in the English-dominant academic publishing field (Belcher, 2024, p. 101) because it can help English as an additional language (EAL) researchers overcome language barriers by correcting grammatical errors, improving the clarity and coherence of their texts, and enhancing the quality of their writing. Writing for international publication can be particularly daunting for EAL users because English is the language of most international prestigious journals. Therefore, a direct consequence of using GenAI tools is that researchers will be able to “produce papers with higher chances of publication in major scientific journals” and “effectively communicate their research to a wider audience” (Giglio & Costa, 2023, p. 4). For many EAL scholars, GenAI has become “the new omnipresent ‘native speaker’ writing assistant” (Belcher, 2024, p. 101), and “a gateway to inclusion in the global academic community” (Mohebbi, 2025, p. 237).

Secondly, studies published in languages different from English can become more visible, and their authors can increase their impact thanks to the translation options that many GenAI tools offer. It has been estimated that even though English-language publications prevail (with over 33,000 titles), thousands of non-English journals also contribute to global academic conversations (IAP, 2022). Thanks to translations tools, a research piece becomes accessible to a global audience, not only to English readers, and, therefore, known and citable. Multilingual studies which would otherwise remain concealed can be now read by interested researchers even though they do not understand the language in which the study was originally published. It is in this way that GenAI can help multilingual researchers engage with research published in diverse languages (not only English) and participate more actively in knowledge production (Kuteeva & Andersson, 2024). Nevertheless, the extent to which translation tools impact the access of knowledge, modify the way researchers handle multilingual literature or redefine the boundaries of mainstream literature by challenging the perpetuation of English as the dominant language for research and publication purposes are issues that, to date, remain underexplored.

3.2.3. Dissemination and visibility

Multimedia generation tools can assist researchers in creating additional products that will help to disseminate a publication, boost academics' visibility, or bring research to the attention of wider and more diversified audiences. Research groups and project teams can also employ these tools to their best advantage. GenAI can help to convert articles into a podcast-style audio discussion or a slide presentation. It can also generate short video abstracts and movie-style videos from published articles, even create digital talking heads that sum up research highlights or research objectives. Engaging infographics, posters, charts, or graphs that match study content can be rapidly designed. Even study-quality oral narrations can be generated in diverse languages. All these multimedia artefacts can be hosted on personal or institutional websites, or be either used in blogs and social media platforms, thereby enhancing the global reach of the research.

3.3. Challenges

The rapid growth of GenAI across all scientific disciplines has triggered pressing concerns about the loss of authorial voice as a result of the standardisation of academic discourse, and about institutional accountability. Likewise, it has given rise to various ethical dilemmas that impact research integrity.

3.3.1. Academic stance and authorial voice

While GenAI can help multilingual scholars gain increased confidence, negotiate multiple identity positions, and overcome frustration through linguistic support and productivity gains (Hillman & Alhirthani, 2025; Ou et al., 2026), the widespread and recurrent use of GenAI models may also lead to AI-fabricated manuscripts and *cultural nudging* (Moorhouse et al., 2025) – that is, an increased standardisation of academic genres in English. Moreover, it can also lead to a reduction of translingualism, an inhibition of linguistic variation and creativity, a flattened nuance in scholarly writing, a reinforcement (or either a disruption) of dominant language norms, a decline of individual stance, an erosion of authorial voice, and the vanishing of scholars' uniqueness in academic writing (Belcher, 2024; Kuteeva, 2026; Kuteeva & Andersson, 2024; Mohebbi, 2025; Ugwuanyi et al., 2025).

An illustrating example is the study conducted by Comas-Forgas et al. (2024). These authors analysed the presence and trend of a number of verbs in the titles of research articles published across multiple disciplines in the last decade. Findings revealed an increased use of specific verbs to indicate breakthrough or novelty (e.g., *navigating*, *unveiling*, *unlocking*, *leveraging*) and suggested the involvement of GenAI in the generation of titles towards a standardised format. Comas-Formas and colleagues concluded that GenAI writing assistance tools “may be influencing the language of scientific communication” (p. 1), “reshaping scientific discourse, blending creativity with potential standardization” (p. 2) and “reducing the individuality and innovation that are hallmarks of scholarly communication” (p. 10).

3.3.2. Institutional guidance, training, and policy implementation

Inconsistent AI-related policies and unclear guidance have created uncertainty about what is acceptable and what is not in research (Moorhouse et al., 2026). Mohebbi (2025) claims that the institutional regulatory response to GenAI is fragmented and widely variable across institutions and universities, mainly with advisory (rather than binding) initiatives, limited implementation, and differing conceptualisation of AI governance and risks. Several recommendations for responsible GenAI usage have been identified (European Commission, 2025; Gallant et al., 2026; Mohebbi, 2025; Resnik & Hosseini, 2025):

- Accountability and fair attribution of credit must be ensured. Researchers must identify and reduce GenAI-related biases and errors. Likewise, GenAI should not be held responsible, nor should it be credited as an author or copyright holder.
- Transparency and research integrity must be promoted. The contribution of GenAI to a particular study should be transparently acknowledged. Its use, including its limitations, should be clearly disclosed and explained in simple language. Likewise, synthetic data should be distinctly indicated and labelled, and how it was generated and used should be sufficiently justified.
- Social responsibility must be safeguarded. Researchers should engage affected communities to obtain advice and address concerns, particularly regarding bias.

- Ethical practice must be fostered and supported. Responsible conduct and ethical GenAI use should be integrated into research training and mentoring programmes.

As evidence of the concern regarding the potential over-reliance on GenAI in all aspects of teaching and research, many universities and higher education institutions are developing specific policies and drawing recommendations and guidelines for responsible use. Illustrative examples are the set of guidelines developed by the European Commission (2025) to support the European research community in their responsible use of GenAI, the guidance for using GenAI tools safely and responsibly across the University of Oxford (2026), editors’ recommendations for AI use in publishing (ICMJE, 2026), or the analysis of current AI policies conducted by Hsu et al. (2025). Likewise, universities, institutions, associations, working groups, and publishers are providing specific training on the use of GenAI tools by setting up professional development courses and webinars which explore the benefits and drawbacks of AI for conducting research as well as its implications for researchers, authors, reviewers, editors, journals, and publishers. Very often, these webinars are recorded and then made available online (see Table 4), with obvious benefits for interested audiences (e.g., on-demand access and searchable content).

Webinar title	URL
Responsible use of artificial intelligence in research	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2asnFGPmCuo
Ethics and integrity for AI in research	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oc6FMEyqwLs
AI tools for research & writing	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-_krYegxITQ
Artificial intelligence for research design	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrJnY_CJSj4
AI for academic research: Balancing innovation & integrity	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sY14__DLmdl
Using AI in qualitative research	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M-7ZfKWfK8k
Publish with confidence: AI's impact on research and integrity	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Za8AEkt1Jgg
Unlock the power of AI for academic research	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=COlaENiZfY
AI and its impact on the conduct of research	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lthw5HpVqi0
Rethinking research for the AI age	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zNXdkn1q0Q

Table 4. Ten sample webinars providing training on GenAI for research purposes.

3.3.3. Ethical dilemmas of GenAI use

GenAI offers significant benefits for researchers when facing scholarly publishing, however, it also raises significant ethical tensions that challenge authorship, peer review, editorial integrity and, particularly, the professional development of emerging scholars and early-career researchers (Mohebbi, 2025). The most frequent ethical issues raised in the literature regarding the

use of GenAI in scientific research refer to responsible use and privacy; bias, discrimination, and perpetuation of stereotypes; errors and hallucinations; misconduct and plagiarism; and environmental impact. These are briefly discussed below.

Publishers and journal editors have an important role to play in ensuring a responsible use of GenAI tools regarding credit attribution (Hsu et al., 2025; Moorhouse et al., 2025). This may be attained by (i) setting up clear AI-related policies and AI-detection mechanisms; (ii) requesting authors and reviewers to disclose GenAI use; and (iii) sharing if publishers themselves have used AI for the management, editing and publication of a book or journal. It may be difficult for some journals to handle a huge number of submissions efficiently and in a timely manner. Editors might decide to rely on AI software to assess the manuscript for potential peer review, desk rejection or other purposes (e.g. proofreading, compliance with submission guidelines). Reviewers might also decide to use GenAI to polish their language, extend their arguments, or question the article findings. Reviewers and editors need to bear in mind that they cannot upload manuscripts into GenAI because they are confidential documents and authors' explicit permission is needed. Therefore, journals should provide clear guidelines about GenAI use, and ensure AI-assistance disclosure during peer review and editorial processes.

Likewise, authors need to check the terms and conditions of the GenAI tools that they are using in order to safeguard personally identifiable data or copyrighted material. Today, the majority of journals provide clear instructions regarding the use of AI-assisted technologies in the writing, reviewing and editorial processes of articles. They also require authors to explicitly declare the tools that have been used for manuscript preparation, in what sections of the article, and for what purposes (Figure 3 contains an example). Disclosure of writing assistance tools for conducting basic checks of grammar, spelling and punctuation is advisable but not usually required.

AI use disclosure

To write this editorial, I used ChatGPT 5.2 in three ways. First, I submitted de-identified abstracts of the accepted papers to the chatbot to classify them and suggest themes. The three themes presented in this editorial are the outcome of the chatbot's categorization. Second, I used the chatbot to summarize and synthesize the articles cited in this editorial. However, I decided how and where to cite and discuss these articles in the editorial. Finally, I used the chatbot for editing the paragraphs of the editorial. Following this assistance, I performed thorough quality control and content revision as needed, maintaining full responsibility for all aspects of the editorial.

Figure 3. Example of GenAI use statement as declared in Riazi (2025, p. 201).

Because GenAI software is trained on large sets of data already available, racial, ethnic, gender, political, religious and similar biases that dominate in the training datasets can be reproduced or even amplified in the resulting outputs that users receive (Kuteeva & Andersson, 2024) as well as in the systematic reviews that are increasingly conducted (Hampson et al., 2025). The generation of texts or multimedia which perpetuate stereotypes, foster bias, cause harm, or lead to discrimination is a major flaw researchers need to be aware of. GenAI can lead to skewed responses that align with researchers' perceived beliefs over truthful ones. This behaviour, known as *sympathy*, generates misleadingly agreeable or biased outputs (European Commission, 2025) which, combined with AI's lack of moral agency, can lead to dangerous consequences (Resnik & Hosseini, 2025). GenAI tools cannot be held accountable for the data generated or the authenticity of a study; hence, the technology cannot be treated as co-author of a publication (Mohebbi, 2025). This limitation is usually clarified in the guidelines of journals that adhere to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) guidelines on authorship and AI tools, in the understanding that human oversight and control of the generated output must be exerted by authors, and that authorship entails responsibilities for the submitted work (like reliability or replicability) that remain exclusively human.

A major risk for research across all disciplines is the presence of errors (or *hallucinations*) in the generated output. These refer to plausible but entirely fabricated references (Mohebbi, 2025) or factually inaccurate information (Moorhouse et al., 2025) created by GenAI tools. When used in a research piece or project, hallucinations yield random errors that can lead to major financial losses or put human lives at stake (just imagine a hallucinated diagnosis based on misinformed findings and published in a medical

journal). In the case of fabricated or *ghost* references, fake information may spread rapidly, with obvious consequences for research integrity. Figure 4 contains an example of hallucinations and ghost references citing this author.

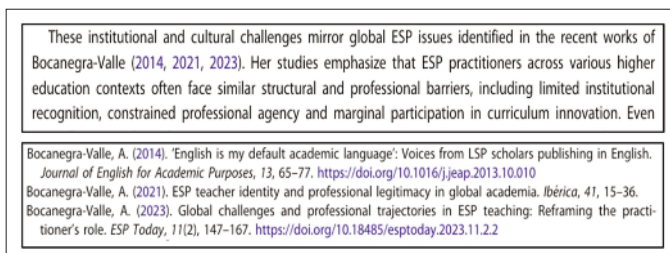


Figure 4. Examples of hallucinations and ghost references attributed to this article author.

Figure 4 top extract shows a discussion about three particular references. The bottom extract shows the 2014, 2021 and 2023 references as given in the final list. The 2021 and 2023 publications are two fabricated studies with fictitious titles that have been linked to existing journals (like this journal *Ibérica*) – hence, the resulting discussion in the main text (top extract) is entirely manufactured. In addition, the 2014 reference is a real one, but does not relate to the discussion because it addresses a rather different topic. It could be argued that researchers are using GenAI strategically to inflate reference counts or to mask the rigour and depth of their work (Mohebbi, 2025). To my understanding, such fraudulent practices (known as *bibliographic padding*) are sufficient grounds for invalidating the research conducted and its resulting publication, and also for claiming more quality control on GenAI outputs.

It is essential to ensure that research submitted to a journal or publisher is original and that over-reliance on GenAI does not undermine scholarly autonomy (Mohebbi, 2025) or lead to potential misconduct. A deep concern is that the misuse of GenAI has blurred the boundaries of plagiarism in connection to the originality and novelty of a research study. As noted by Alnaimat et al. (2026), the easy online access to research documents facilitates the verbatim copying, the paraphrasing, the recycling of a text published by the same author, and *translational plagiarism* – that is, authors publish a text that they have previously published in a different language. There exists specific software (known as *plagiarism checkers* or *AI detectors*, like iThenticate, Turnitin AI Detection, Copyscape, Copyleaks, GPTZero, or

Pangram) that verifies the originality of a study, and detects when a text has been generated by AI and to what percentage a document can be predicted to have been human generated. At the same time recent tools have been developed to circumvent plagiarism detection and rewrite AI-generated texts, humanise them, and make technology use undetectable (e.g., BypassGPT, GPTHuman, Humanize.im). Thus far, none of these tools are fully reliable because they produce inconclusive results that need to be interpreted with caution: false positives may be yielded, distinction between AI-generated and AI-paraphrased content may fail, or human-written texts may be misidentified as AI-generated (Erol et al., 2025). Plagiarism suggests academic dishonesty and constitutes a breach of research integrity. It also adds further pressure to publishers and editorial teams; therefore, GenAI tools must be appropriately used and disclosed (see again Figure 3).

Finally, the environmental cost of GenAI use is also raising serious concerns. The overall power consumption required to train GenAI systems as well as the extensive data analysis conducted by their tools significantly increases the global carbon footprint. This is because substantial heat needs to be generated and brings along the consumption of vast amounts of electricity and huge quantities of water (NEA, 2025; Standford University, 2025). As Pegrum (2026, p. 192) puts it, “[a]ll digital tools are energy hungry and environmentally destructive”. Generating an image, for instance, requires as much power as charging a smartphone to full power, and generating a 100-word text roughly uses half a litre of water (Montero, 2025). Moreover, English is AI’s mother tongue and the use of other languages (particularly those with non-Latin scripts) entails an additional processing that increases computational effort and power consumption (Ahia et al., 2023; Caffoni, 2026). This is because (i) non-English inputs are processed by first translating them into English and then back into the original language; and (ii) AI services are billed in tokens rather than words or characters, with the token count for the same text being usually lower in English. Thus, becoming aware of the environmental implications of GenAI technologies is desirable for a more responsible and sustainable use.

4. Insights gained and future directions

Researchers across disciplines now need to confront the increasing complexities of a changing academic and professional world (Bhatia, 2025).

As a result, understanding the adoption of technology, and particularly the transformative impact of GenAI in research practices, has become increasingly important (Andersen et al., 2025).

In the context of scholarly communication, digital technology has facilitated the rapid dissemination of research, the development of new modes of communication among experts and with new audiences, a more global reach, more participation, collaboration and interaction, and enhanced visibility. Nevertheless, these benefits entail additional demands for scholars' professional development.

Firstly, researchers need to become AI-literate, and also training them on how to use digital media strategically is much needed. Attending “How to build an academic profile online” or “How to get started with social media” sessions are not usually enough to communicate research effectively. Promoting specific training as part of professional development initiatives will help academics become aware of online genres and navigate the complexities of digital and GenAI tools for researching purposes. Universities and institutions need to support researchers in the use of digital solutions by equipping them with the necessary training on digital literacies – namely, exploring the tools that are available, developing strategies for efficient use, and becoming aware of their ethical and regulatory implications. Integrating AI literacy into English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses will help students gradually gain confidence in utilising the technology for academic research and writing practices (Ngo & Hastie, 2025). It will also help junior academic writers (e.g., doctoral students) to gain control over their writing, explore their identity construction, and build an academic disciplinary voice (Ou et al., 2026). In-service researchers can benefit from SciCommHub.eu, a platform which offers open training resources, two massive open online courses (MOOCs), and one short online course with the aim to provide researchers with those digital science communication strategies and skills that are needed to disseminate research beyond the expert scientific community (Villares & Pérez-Llantada, 2025).

Secondly, active and responsible participation is required. Scholars need to align their publication and dissemination practices with the demands of rapidly evolving technologies that assist scientific communication. The dynamic nature of social media puts additional pressure on researchers for creating personal, meaningful and engaging content. Open science

requirements and personal academic profiles also require dedication to play an effective role in scholarship while at the same time reaching non-expert audiences. All these requirements may lead to variable degrees of participation in academia, with scholars who are actively engaged in digital media and use digital communication affordances to their best advantage, scholars who are willing to participate in computer-mediated scientific communication but have no (or limited) access to online tools, and scholars who adopt a more traditional stance and disregard the potential contribution of digital media to their research practices.

Finally, the rapid integration of GenAI tools in academia is rising serious concerns about the production and dissemination of knowledge. At first, GenAI tools were enthusiastically embraced by scholars to assist in the writing process. By using grammar and style checkers, authors expected to improve the writing style of their texts, making them more readable and engaging. Nowadays, GenAI is increasingly used to enhance workflows and facilitate research-related tasks, with GenAI tools becoming round-the-clock assistants for translating, summarizing, reviewing literature, or designing visual and multimedia materials. The challenge, thus, is to ensure that such tools are used ethically, responsibly, and supported by human oversight and expert judgement to ensure that research accuracy is granted, scholarly disciplinary voices are not eroded, and the core values of scholarship are not put at stake.

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Declaration of Generative AI use

GenAI was used in a limited capacity during the writing process. Specifically, Google Gemini was utilised for grammar checking and improving sentence clarity. Content, discussion, and conclusions were independently developed by the author. The author assumes full responsibility for any ethical or academic implications arising from the use of GenAI tools.

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