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Mapping the Ethical Landscape of GenAI: Insights from Applied Linguistics Publication Policies

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Abstract: The swift rise of generative AI (GenAI) in 2022 has led to extensive acceptance in academic fields; yet, applied linguists have not achieved agreement on its ethical and suitable application in research. This study underscores the urgent necessity for enhanced GenAI literacy among scholars, especially those involved in composing research articles. We analyze 76 papers chosen from 170 high-impact applied linguistics journals to examine the scope and character of GenAI use guidelines. Three fundamental dimensions—authorship, use cases, and human responsibility—were addressed by the seventeen particular elements and four general requirements that comprised the structured checklist. The results indicate substantial discrepancies among journals. Only fifty percent provided guidelines linked to GenAI for authors, and the comprehensiveness and extent of these suggestions differed significantly. Significant discord existed concerning the applicability of GenAI technologies for functions such as idea generation, image or data creation, data collecting, analysis and interpretation, or manuscript composition. Moreover, the inconsistency in the declaration of GenAI usage further complicated ethical interaction with the technology. In light of these concerns, we suggest implementable solutions for journals to improve their GenAI-related policies and encourage responsible usage among authors. A new conceptual framework describing the competencies researchers need to navigate the ethical and transparent use of GenAI is introduced in our study, GenAI-LR, which is central to research article writing. This study offers pragmatic recommendations based on empirical evidence to assist scholars and editors in harmonizing GenAI practices with advancing academic norms.

Keywords: *Research on GenAI; Standards for GenAI Usage; Journals of Applied Linguistics; Publications for Scholars.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

ChatGPT, developed by OpenAI and built using Generative AI and massive language models, was unveiled on November 30, 2022. Its unparalleled success originated from its capacity to generate human-like responses to a diverse range of cues, attracting a million consumers within five days of its launch (Fang & Ren, 2018). Merely one year later, ChatGPT's user base exceeded 180 million, underscoring the swift uptake and significant interest in Generative AI technology. GenAI is capable of producing and interpreting a wide range of multimodal content, such as text (for example, ChatGPT, Gemini), images (for example, Midjourney, DALL·E), and even videos (for example, Sora), unlike traditional AI systems that are frequently task-specific. The adaptability of GenAI has rendered it a primary subject of investigation among researchers across diverse fields, especially in applied linguistics, where academics are starting to evaluate its implications and possibilities. In applied linguistics and other fields, researchers have begun incorporating GenAI into multiple phases of the research process, such as idea generation, hypothesis development, literature review, study design, data analysis, and result interpretation (Baïdak & Parveva, 2008). A 2023 global survey by the journal Nature indicated that of 1600 scholars from disciplines including computer science, biology, humanities, and social sciences, 48% were engaged in AI research, while 30% utilized GenAI tools such as ChatGPT for manuscript writing (Lenchuk & Ahmed, 2024). A further study by (Koizumi, 2024) thoroughly analyzed linguistic indicators of LLM utilization in academic articles, revealing that at least 60,000 pieces—approximately 1% of all scholarly publications in 2023—integrated LLM-generated information.

Additionally, an extensive computational linguistic research conducted by (Caragine & Quevedo, 2024), which assessed 950,965 articles published from 2020 to 2024,

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revealed a notable increase in GenAI utilization following the introduction of ChatGPT. Their findings showed that the utilization of GenAI in academic writing rose from under 6% before 2022 to over 20% with the introduction of ChatGPT, illustrating a significant transformation across several disciplines. These findings demonstrate a rapid incorporation of GenAI into academic workflows, especially in article preparation and research reporting, and suggest an increasing dependence on GenAI throughout different stages of the research process.

Despite this broad adoption, the incorporation of GenAI into academic research has raised several ethical and epistemological issues, particularly about transparency, originality, and integrity of the study. As GenAI integrates into academic practices, it concurrently prompts significant ethical inquiries over its appropriate usage, timing, and breadth. Academics have raised apprehensions regarding the propensity of LLMs to generate biased, misleading, or wholly fabricated content; infringe upon data privacy and confidentiality; enable inadvertent plagiarism; and obscure authorship accountability due to the opaque functioning of the models (Bare, 2023). An early dispute arose when ChatGPT was designated as a co-author on two preprints and two peer-reviewed journal papers within a month of its inception, eliciting concern among the academic publishing community. In January 2023, Nature released an editorial that explicitly addressed these issues, forbidding the inclusion of LLMs as co-authors and asserting that chatbots cannot assume legal or ethical accountability for academic output (Hennebry-Leung et al., 2024). In light of this precedent, several prominent academic groups have made their positions clear, stating that AI tools do not qualify as authors because they lack legal responsibility, accountability, and consent (ICMJE, 2023; COPE, 2023), among other things. To ensure that GenAI tools are used responsibly in research and paper preparation, numerous scholarly publications have started updating their author requirements. The Science family of journals has adopted a zero-tolerance policy, prohibiting the use of GenAI for manuscript content creation and indicating that infractions will be regarded as scientific misconduct (R. Jenkins & Goldfarb, 1993). Other publications have adopted a more permissive yet cautious stance, permitting the utilization of GenAI for specific tasks—such as language correction or summarization—on the condition that such usage is fully stated (J. Jenkins & Panero, 2024). These usage guidelines and ethical limits, however, continue to vary among disciplines and journals, which causes misunderstandings and uneven application.

In light of these complications, it is increasingly evident that academics must cultivate "GenAI literacy" to engage responsibly and successfully with GenAI technologies in academic writing and research (Galloway & Rose, 2018). GenAI literacy extends beyond basic AI literacy by incorporating a sophisticated comprehension of the distinct capabilities, limits, and ethical ramifications of GenAI tools. Although AI literacy is typically characterized as a comprehensive array of competencies—encompassing technical knowledge, practical skills, and moral reasoning (Galloway, 2017) this characterization fails to provide the necessary specificity to address the intricate requirements of Generative AI utilization in academic research. The advancement of GenAI literacy is crucial for applied linguists since language is fundamental to their research and methodologies. Researchers in applied linguistics are investigating the potential of GenAI to enhance their endeavors in language teaching, discourse analysis, and corpus linguistics, among other domains (Galloway, 2013). Nonetheless, the domain has not yet comprehensively defined the competencies and ethical norms that embody acceptable GenAI utilization in research. To further this understanding, it is essential to examine how applied linguistics publications delineate and regulate the proper utilization of GenAI technologies. While specific journals have initiated the formulation of GenAI policies, these recommendations exhibit considerable variability and frequently lack clarity and precision concerning the permissible applications of such technologies.

This work seeks to enhance the understanding of GenAI literacy by a comprehensive investigation of usage guidelines provided by prominent publications in applied linguistics. Some of the prestigious journals whose policy statements are analyzed are Bilingualism, Language and Speech, System, Journal of Second Language Writing, Modern Language Journal, Journal of Pragmatics, Language Testing, and TESOL Quarterly (Rose et al., 2021). The journals were chosen for their academic impact and their representation of several subfields within applied linguistics. The objective is to examine how GenAI is treated in their author guidelines, focusing on whether the journals offer specific policies, general advice, or abstain from addressing the matter altogether (Rose et al., 2021). This review aims to identify patterns, omissions, and disciplinary standards that shape the perception and regulation of GenAI within the field. Examining how these journals explicitly recognize or disregard GenAI usage will elucidate the applied linguistics community's engagement with the difficulties and opportunities posed by GenAI. The study emphasizes the necessity for explicit, discipline-specific rules and contributes to broader academic discussions regarding the responsible integration of AI in research.

Furthermore, it elucidates how journal-level regulations influence academics' choices to utilize GenAI and how these policies may either promote or hinder innovation in academic writing processes. The study examines two primary research questions:

- What proportion of applied linguistics articles provide GenAI recommendations to authors, and what types of general observations are included in these guidelines?
- In what ways do applied linguistics publications articulate the specific aspects of writing and research that the GenAI author guidelines seek to address?

This research addresses these problems to enhance the definition of GenAI literacy in contextually pertinent manners. It suggests a paradigm for reconciling ethical AI actions with disciplinary standards in applied linguistics. The study emphasizes the significance of institutional support and

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journal leadership in directing academics towards the transparent, responsible, and ethical utilization of GenAI tools in their academic endeavors.

II. METHODS

A text analysis of 170 highly regarded journals' author guidelines was done to investigate how applied linguistics publications describe the proper usage of Generative AI (GenAI) in research. Out of these, 76 publications (44.7%) specifically discussed GenAI and provided writers with methodology and ethical guidelines. The investigation identified 21 unique categories of GenAI-related recommendations, indicating varied perspectives on its incorporation into academic writing and research methodologies. The guidelines were classified according to the kind of help or limitation they offered. Tables were created to display the number of journals supporting each guideline category and to highlight key trends and patterns within the dataset.

➢ *Journal Selection*

To ensure the relevance and credibility of our data sources, we began by selecting the top 200 journals listed under the "Linguistics and Language" category in the 2023 SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) database. The SJR score, which is based on citation counts and the prestige of citing journals, is widely recognized as a reliable indicator of a journal's academic influence, visibility, and perceived quality (Rose & Galloway, 2019). It reflects both the number and significance of citations a journal receives, which makes it a strong proxy for scholarly impact and authority. Therefore, using the SJR score to guide journal selection was methodologically sound, as it enabled us to focus on publications that are likely to shape leading-edge discourse in applied linguistics, including debates surrounding the ethical and methodological use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI). There are two key motivations for our use of the SJR ranking. First, it offers a standardized, objective metric for identifying journals of academic significance. Second, it aligns our study with other GenAI-related research conducted in adjacent disciplines—such as medicine, education, and law—which also employed the SJR framework (Nakamura et al., 2018). This alignment allows for meaningful cross-field comparisons and strengthens the generalizability of our conclusions. Following the initial selection of 200 journals, we filtered the list to focus specifically on those within applied linguistics. To do so, we relied on established definitions and disciplinary boundaries. Applied linguistics was defined, per the "Aims" section of the journal *Applied Linguistics* (2024), as the investigation of "language-related problems and solutions in real-world contexts." We further consulted the thematic categories featured in the 2024 American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL) conference program, as well as *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* (Galloway & Numajiri, 2020), to inform our inclusion criteria. Journals were retained if they (1) published research explicitly addressing real-world language issues and (2) aligned with at least one recognized subdomain of applied linguistics. Each journal's scope and aims were manually reviewed via its official website. Journals that lacked a focus on language or failed to address practical linguistic issues were excluded. For example, journals such as *Poetics*, *Cognitive Psychology*, and *Artificial Intelligence* were removed due to their emphasis on general cognition, computational methods, or theoretical AI, rather than applied language-related concerns. This process yielded a final dataset of 170 high-impact journals specifically relevant to applied linguistics.

➢ *Data Collection*

We created a dataset that comprised journal websites, GenAI use guidelines, related publishers, and pertinent external publishing organisations to investigate the present norms surrounding the use of GenAI in applied linguistics research (Rose & Galloway, 2017). We systematically reviewed the websites of all 170 chosen applied linguistics publications to ascertain the availability of GenAI-related material for writers. This required examining frequently used sections, including "Publication Ethics," "Guide for Authors," "Author Guidelines," "Instructions to Authors," and "Journal Policies." To find any references to AI use regulations, we manually browsed the site. Also, we performed keyword searches using phrases like "large language model," "LLM," "AI," "artificial intelligence," "ChatGPT," and "chatbot." Of the 170 journals examined, 32 provided explicit references or directives about the use of GenAI in research or article development. Acknowledging that several journals adhere to the overarching AI policy of their publishers, we also analyzed the GenAI recommendations issued by those publishing entities. In other instances, journals provided direct links to the publisher's AI policy or reiterated it inside their standards. A comparable keyword-based screening method was used to discern pertinent publisher-level criteria.

Additionally, several journals and publishers cited external ethical guidelines established by international publishing organisations. Consequently, we looked at AI-related standards put forth by three distinct organisations: COPE, ICMJE, and STM. The three tiers of guidance—journal-specific, publisher-issued, and organization-based—constituted the foundation of our categorization of GenAI use rules. Data collection was first performed from April 30 to May 4, 2024, and subsequently updated between October 26 and November 1, 2024, to include current policy adjustments.

➢ *Checklist Development and Item Coding*

We looked at the papers from the 76 applied linguistics publications that provide recommendations for AI (Fig. 1). A methodical examination of the existing policies developed a comprehensive collection of AI-related directives. The authors used an inductive coding methodology to examine the collected instructions and discern prevalent patterns. After the preliminary coding, they convened to analyse the outcomes and address minor discrepancies, ensuring consistency and dependability. This joint effort produced a 21-item checklist that encapsulates the many methods journals use to address AI utilisation. The technique used established procedures and significant findings from previous research, including (Galloway & Rose, 2014).

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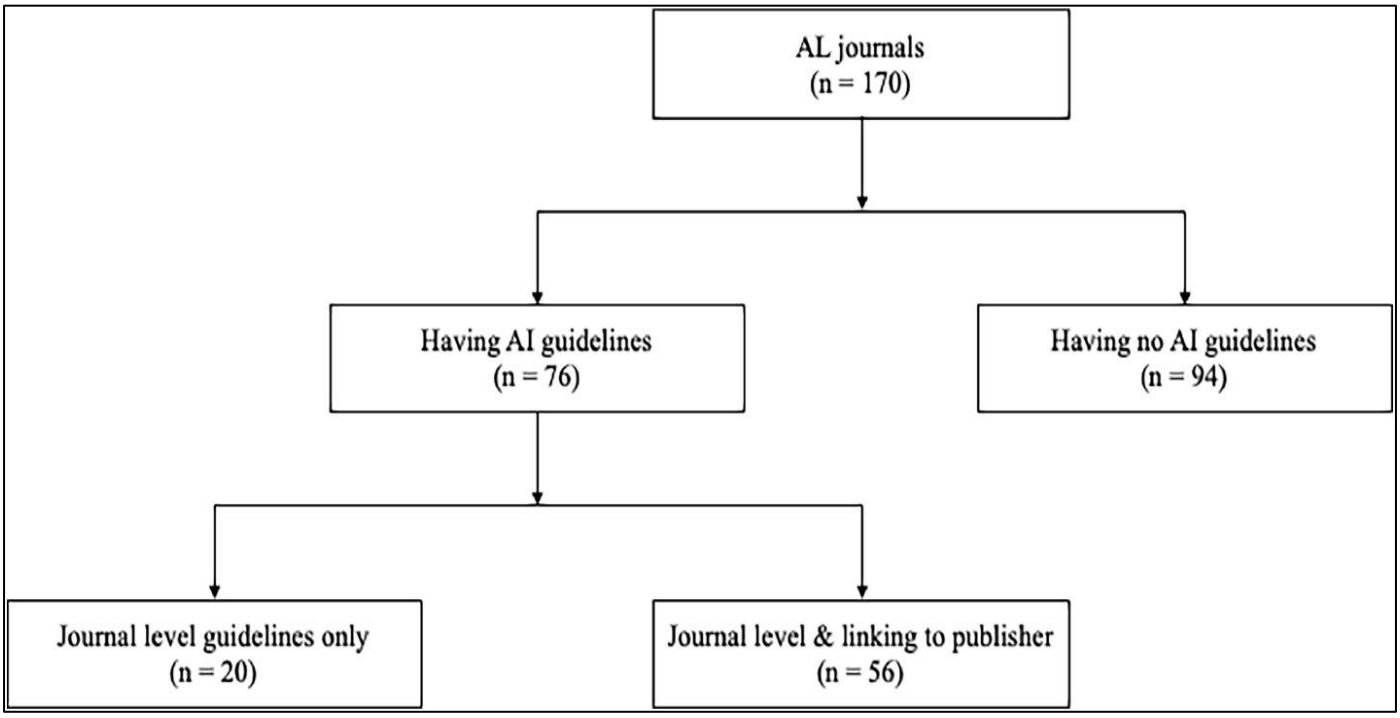

Fig 1 Graph Showing Publications using AI Guidelines.

The 21 elements constituting GenAI standards (refer to Table 1) include both overarching assertions and specific issues identified in the rules of applied linguistics journals. The pieces were classified into three thematic categories: authorship, applications, and human accountability. The four main elements of the standards, in terms of more general claims, were definitions of generative AI, formal acknowledgement of AI, knowledge of the hazards associated with AI, and changes to current recommendations. Journals like *TESOL Quarterly* highlighted possible concerns, cautioning that "AI does not produce identical outputs consistently," which may impact replicability (Rose, 2019). This underscores a significant issue about the dependability of GenAI results in scholarly endeavours. Definitions also show minor variations across publications. For example, there is some miscommunication over the terminology used to define GenAI; *Computational Linguistics* used "tools such as ChatGPT and similar," while *Discourse Studies* chose "AI tools such as ChatGPT or large language models (LLMs)," illustrating the difference in approach.

Table 1 Lists the Standards for AI Content Codes

Category	Code	Item	Rephrased Definition
General Policies	1	Updating AI Policies	States if the AI-related guidelines will be revised as the technology evolves
	2	AI Acknowledgment	Indicates whether the use or influence of AI is recognized in academic publishing
	3	AI-Related Risks	Notes whether potential dangers or challenges of using AI are explicitly mentioned
	4	GenAI Definition	Clarifies whether the "generative" aspect of AI is explained when discussing AI usage
Authorship Rules	1	AI as Author	States if AI can be considered an author or be listed among the authors
	2	Citing AI	Indicates whether AI-generated content can be cited in the manuscript
Permitted Uses	1	General Use Approval	States whether authors are allowed to use GenAI in preparing manuscripts
	2	Use in Study Design	Notes if GenAI can assist in developing the research design
	3	Use for Language Editing	Indicates if GenAI can help with grammar or wording improvements
	4	Use in Drafting Content	States whether GenAI can be used to write or draft sections of the manuscript
	5	Use for Brainstorming	Indicates if GenAI can be used for generating research ideas
	6	Creating Images/Graphics	Notes if GenAI tools are allowed to create visuals or illustrations
	7	Creating Synthetic Data	States whether GenAI can generate new datasets

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	8	Gathering Data	Notes if GenAI can assist with collecting real-world data
	9	Analyzing or Interpreting Data	Indicates if GenAI can be used for data analysis or making sense of results
	10	Writing Code	States whether AI tools can help write or debug programming code
Author Responsibility	1	Checking AI Output	Requires authors to verify that AI-generated content is accurate and reliable
	2	Declaring AI Use	Requires authors to disclose when and how GenAI was used
	3	Disclosure Details	Specifies what exactly needs to be mentioned about AI usage
	4	Disclosure Location	States where in the manuscript the AI usage must be disclosed (e.g., methods section)
	5	Formal Disclosure Statement	Requires a dedicated statement about AI usage in the submission

The classification of AI-related journal rules identified three principal domains: authorship, applications, and human accountability. Two particular criteria were highlighted under the authorship category: eligibility for authorship and the citation of AI tools. Scholarly journals often assert that generative AI, including ChatGPT, cannot be recognized as an author. Language Testing specifically said, "Please note that AI chatbots, such as ChatGPT, should not be listed as authors," thereby emphasizing that only humans have intellectual and ethical responsibility for academic production (Arndt & Rose, 2023). Specific publications, including one focused on AI in research design, mandated authors to "articulate the tool and its intended purpose" when using generative AI in their technique. Likewise, TESOL Journal permitted the use of GenAI apps for producing prompts, instruments, code, analyzing data, and creating simulated data, so facilitating a flexible but supervised incorporation of AI into research processes.

The category of human responsibility had five components: fact-checking, disclosure, the kind of disclosures, the venues for disclosure, and disclosure statements. These standards underlined the need for human supervision and openness in AI engagement. The journal System emphasized the need for human oversight in the use of GenAI, asserting that it "must be applied with human oversight and control, and authors should meticulously review and edit the outcome." All instructions were carefully categorized as "Yes," "No," or "Not Reported (NR)" according to explicitly stated criteria (refer to Table 1). To maintain uniformity, the same coding scheme was used for all policy sources, including journals, publishers, and third parties. This allowed us to compare the existing standards and identify gaps in GenAI policy.

- *Data Analysis*

To answer the first study question, we analyzed 170 applied linguistics journals to identify those including AI-related author guidelines, calculating both frequencies and percentages. We moreover examined overarching assertions to comprehend common policy stances on AI. For the second study question, we concentrated on 17 distinct components of GenAI standards, classified into three fundamental categories: authorship, applications, and human accountability. Each element was evaluated for its existence and frequency within the articles (Arndt & Rose, 2023). After the data was summarized using descriptive statistics, a heatmap was created to show how the identified components were distributed graphically. All analyses and visualisations were performed using R version 4.3 to guarantee precision and repeatability.

III. RESULTS

The findings revealed significant disparities in how major journals approached GenAI use, with some providing comprehensive advice and others offering no AI-related assistance at all. Even among publications that established criteria, the majority inadequately addressed areas of research technique. The comprehensiveness and specificity of these standards often relied on whether the magazine adhered to publisher-level policies or established its own. Moreover, discrepancies were noted in the treatment of AI applications, including data analysis, language aid, and paper drafting, by journals, publishers, and external academic entities, indicating a disjointed approach to GenAI regulation within the applied linguistics publishing domain.

A. Coverage of AI Guidelines and General Statements

Figure 1 indicates that of the 170 applied linguistics publications analyzed, 76 (44.7%) offered writers instruction on the use of generative AI (GenAI). The journals were associated with twelve different publishers, as shown in Table 2. Notably, 20 out of the 76 publications (20.3%) included AI-related advice without referencing or connecting to the AI policies set out by their publishers. These 20 periodicals were affiliated with four publishers. Of the remaining 53.7% of journals, spread across seven publishers, an apparent reference to or adoption of their publishers' AI criteria was made. This trend suggests that several journals are depending on publisher-level regulations instead of formulating their own. Nevertheless, there is a lack of consistency in the alignment of GenAI rules at the journal and publisher levels. Journals like *Computational Linguistics* and *International Journal of Learner Corpus Research*, for instance, provided direct links to the AI guidelines supplied by their publisher. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, for example, did not mention such policies, even though their publishers had them on hand. It is not always apparent whether journals specifically addressed AI in their curation processes; for example, the *Journal of Second Language Writing* had its homepage incorporated into the publisher's platform. These

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findings indicate an absence of standardized communication and collaboration between journals and publishers about AI regulation. The comprehensive overview indicates considerable diversity in the adoption and dissemination of GenAI policy. Of the 170 applied linguistics books from 32 publishers, just 34.4% provided GenAI-specific instructions for writers, underscoring a fragmented and inconsistent approach within the discipline.

Table 2 Quantity of Journals Offering AI Recommendations

No.	Publisher (*n* = 11)	Count of journals (*n* = 76)	Reference to publishers (*n* = 56)	Reference to organizations (*n* = 6)
1	Elsevier	17	17	0
2	Springer	12	12	0
3	Sage	11	11	1
4	Cambridge	11	0	0
5	John Benjamins	10	10	0
6	De Gruyter	6	0	0
7	MIT	3	3	3
8	Wiley	2	2	2
9	Equinox	2	0	0
10	American Psychological Association	1	1	0
11	University of Hawai'i at Mānoa	1	0	0

The four main points made by the 76 publications that offered AI recommendations are summarized in Table 3. In Fig. 2, we can see how many publications that provide recommendations cover generic assertions. Among these publications, 39.5% (n = 30) indicated a willingness to make continuous policy revisions in response to evolving AI technology and ethical considerations. The Journal of Second Language Writing, for instance, said that they were "proactively assessing compliant AI tools and may eventually revise this policy."

Table 3 Presence of General Statements in AI Guidelines Across Journals (n = 76)

General Statement	Reported *n (%)*	Not Reported *n (%)*
Guideline updates	30 (39.5%)	46 (60.5%)
Acknowledgement of AI	25 (32.9%)	51 (67.1%)
Identification of AI risks	31 (40.8%)	45 (59.2%)
Definition of Generative AI	46 (60.5%)	30 (39.5%)

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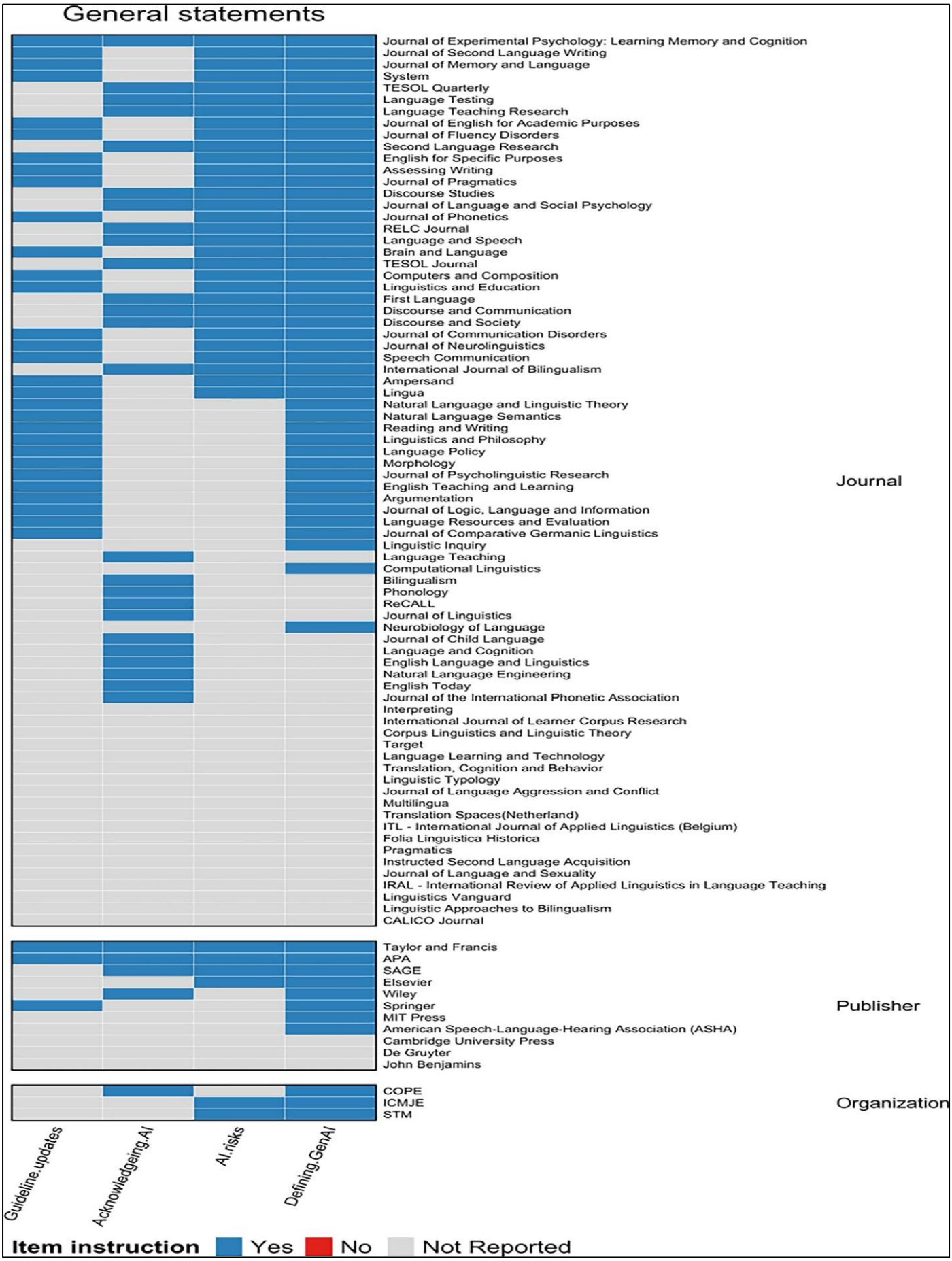

Fig 2 Journal, Publisher, and Organisation Coverage of Generic Remarks

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The incorporation of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) is drastically altering the ever-changing academic publishing landscape. Renowned journals and publishers are constantly updating their policies to account for new technological, ethical, and procedural advancements. Taylor & Francis has pledged to consistently revise its standards in response to technological advancements and growing ethical issues, indicating a commitment to adapt alongside the rapid advancement of AI technologies. Springer similarly underscored a dedication to monitoring AI advancements and adjusting its editorial rules as required, indicating a proactive strategy to maintain relevance and adherence to best practices. The American Psychological Association (APA) has advocated for a more thorough comprehension of the effects of GenAI on scientific publication, expressly recognizing the need to foresee future changes induced by this disruptive technology (Baker, 2015). These remarks indicate a growing acknowledgement among the academic community that AI's impact on scholarly communication is dynamic, necessitating ongoing assessment and policy enhancement to maintain standards of integrity, transparency, and ethical accountability.

About one-third of the journals that provided AI-related recommendations (n = 25; 32.9%) expressly recognized the contribution of AI tools in the research and writing process. Language Teaching Research noted the growing use of AI-assisted writing, asserting, "We recognize that AI-assisted writing has become more common as the technology becomes more accessible." This indicates an increasing recognition that researchers and writers are using technologies like ChatGPT in their workflows for activities like brainstorming, revising, and drafting entire papers. TESOL Quarterly acknowledged that AI algorithms may be beneficial in some settings, suggesting a conditional endorsement of AI's supporting function when well-regulated. Wiley, among publishers, presented a more favorable perspective, asserting that GenAI, when appropriately used, might "enhance productivity and promote innovation in a safe, ethical, and secure manner." The APA emphasized the disruptive potential of GenAI, noting that tools such as ChatGPT have already started to alter academic writing processes, serving as catalysts for significant changes within the publication ecosystem (Division, 2001). These viewpoints reflect a transition among the scholarly community from open skepticism to conditional acceptance of GenAI, contingent upon transparency, proper citation, and the maintenance of scientific rigour.

Simultaneously, apprehensions about the hazards linked to AI use have been extensively articulated, with 40% of publications (n = 31) highlighting significant ethical and procedural dilemmas. The hazards were classified into four categories: plagiarism, falsification of material or sources, violations of privacy and intellectual property (IP), and the repeatability of AI-generated outputs. Discourse Studies, Language and Speech, RELC Journal, and Language Teaching Research were among the publications that cautioned about GenAI's potential to produce plagiarized material by copying lengthy passages from pre-existing sources without giving credit. The possibility that AI could produce outputs that seem authoritative but are flawed, biased, or incomplete was another big worry. Journals like Assessing Writing, Journal of Pragmatics, English for Specific Purposes, Journal of Phonetics, and Journal of Academic English all voiced their concerns about this. These issues reflect broader discussions in academia over the dependability and epistemological validity of machine-generated knowledge (Cogo, 2012). Concerns around data privacy and intellectual property emerged, particularly regarding the training data used by GenAI models. One publication that stressed the need for writers to be watchful about the potential impact of AI tool use on participant anonymity and private data was the Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition. The issue of repeatability was a significant point of dispute, particularly due to the stochastic outputs of GenAI. TESOL Quarterly and TESOL Journal emphasised that the erratic characteristics of AI-generated writing restrict its use in research settings where replicability is crucial, therefore undermining established tenets of scientific investigation.

The vocabulary used by journals to characterize AI differed significantly, indicating diverse conceptual frameworks. Approximately 60.5% of publications (n = 46) used particular terminology such as "generative AI" or referenced tools like "ChatGPT," highlighting the generative and transformational characteristics of these technologies. Conversely, 39.5% (n = 30) selected more expansive terms such as "artificial intelligence" or "machine learning." Supplementary phrases including "LLMs," "AI bots," and "chatbots," although terminology like "tools," "technologies," "platforms," and "software" was often used to describe AI in functional contexts. The discrepancies in terminology highlight variations in the framing of GenAI across publishers—some see it as a unique and transformational category requiring specific legislative responses (Chen, 2022). In contrast, others include it within broader debates about algorithmic help. This language variation indicates persistent discussions on the optimal conceptualization and regulation of AI within academic publishing, underscoring the need for clarity, standardization, and cooperative engagement among stakeholders.

B. Specific Aspects of AI Guidelines

The scope and specificity of AI-related behaviours documented in journals exhibited significant variance. Some publications offered extensive instruction, while others focused only on some aspects of AI use. Table 4 delineates 17 critical domains about authorship, utilisation, and human accountability, illustrating the many methodologies used. Figure 3 depicts the disparate allocation of guidelines. At the same time, Table 5 provides a comprehensive overview of the directives issued for each domain, highlighting both deficiencies and points of alignment in existing journal policies.

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Table 4 Distinct Elements Among Journals with AI Standards

Category	Aspect	Reported (n, %)	Not Reported (n, %)
Authorship	Eligibility for authorship	73 (96.1%)	3 (3.9%)
	AI citation requirements	50 (65.8%)	26 (34.2%)
AI Usage	Permission to use AI	74 (97.4%)	2 (2.6%)
	Role in research design	16 (21.1%)	60 (78.9%)
	Language editing	41 (53.9%)	35 (46.1%)
	Manuscript drafting	61 (80.3%)	15 (19.7%)
	Idea generation	17 (22.4%)	59 (77.6%)
	Image or graphic creation	59 (77.6%)	17 (22.4%)
	Data generation	13 (17.1%)	63 (82.9%)
	Data collection	6 (7.9%)	70 (92.1%)
	Data analysis and interpretation	15 (19.7%)	61 (80.3%)
	Coding or programming	13 (17.1%)	63 (82.9%)
Human Responsibility	Fact verification	29 (38.2%)	47 (61.8%)
	Disclosure of AI use	74 (97.4%)	2 (2.6%)
	Details to disclose	44 (57.9%)	32 (42.1%)
	Location of disclosure	70 (92.1%)	6 (7.9%)
	Formal disclosure statement	17 (22.4%)	59 (77.6%)

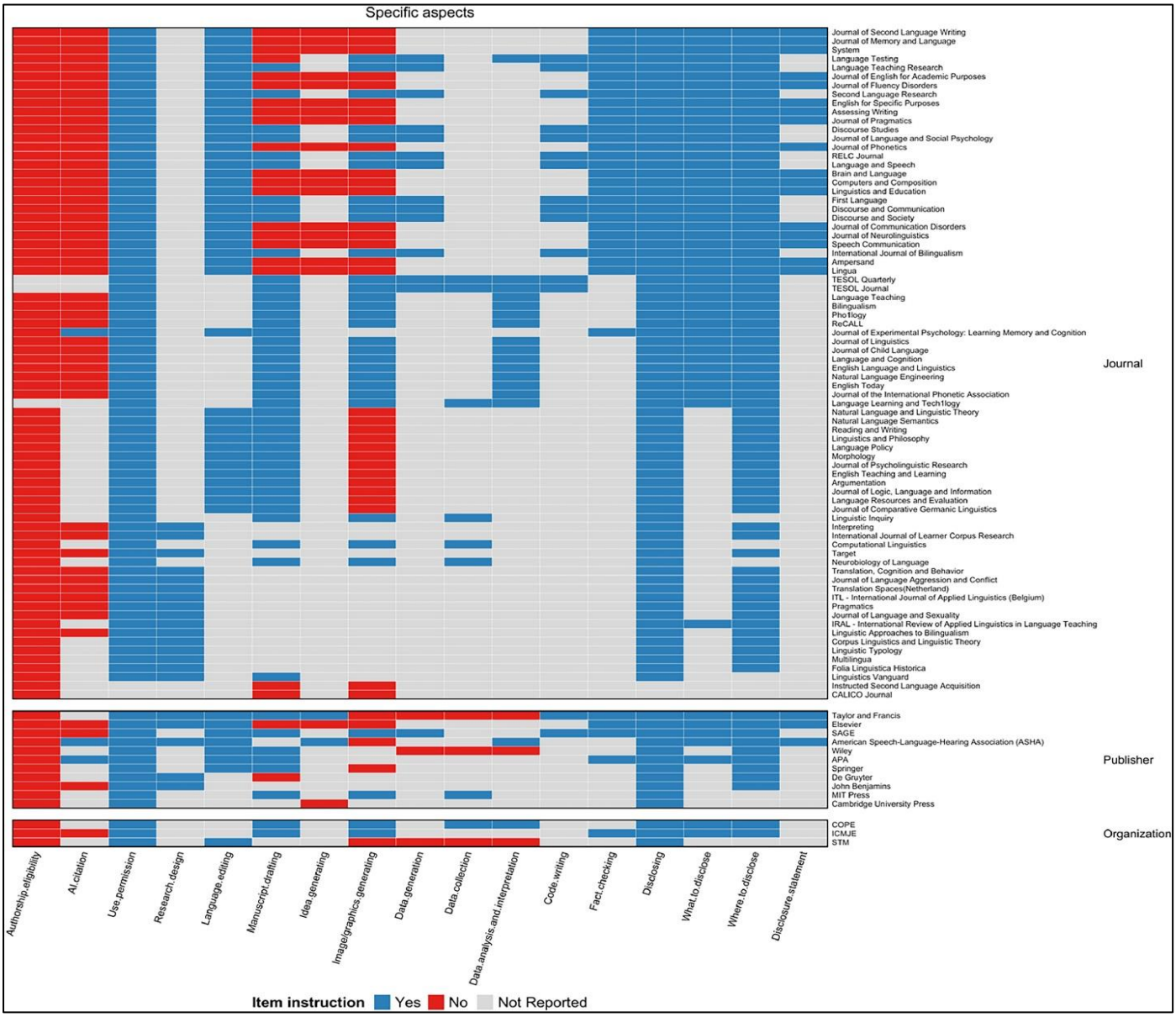

Fig 3 Coverage of Some Aspects Among Journals, Publishers, and Organisations

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Table 5 Utilize Directives Among Journals Detailing Certain Elements

	Yes ***n*** (%)	***No*** ***n*** (%)
Authorship		
Authorship eligibility	–	73 (100 %)
AI citation	1 (2 %)	49 (98 %)
Uses		
Usage permission	–	74 (100 %)
Research design	–	16 (100 %)
Language editing	–	41 (100 %)
Manuscript drafting	41 (67.2 %)	20 (32.8%)
Idea generating	–	17 (100 %)
Image/graphics generating	28 (47.5 %)	31 (52.5 %)
Data generation	13 (100 %)	–
Data collection	6 (100 %)	–
Data analysis and interpretation	15 (100 %)	–
Code writing	13 (100 %)	–
Human responsibility		
Fact checking	29 (100 %)	–
Disclosing usage	74 (100 %)	–
What to disclose	44 (100 %)	–
Where to disclose	70 (100 %)	–
Disclosure statement	17 (100 %)	–

➢ *Authorship*

A significant majority of journals (n = 73, 96.1%) discussed authorship concerning generative artificial intelligence (GenAI), articulating a definitive and uniform position that AI tools cannot be acknowledged as authors under any circumstances. This prevalent agreement arises from essential issues of accountability, legal liability, and ethical authorship. The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) asserts that authorship encompasses duties like the management of intellectual property, the declaration of conflicts of interest, and the acceptance of copyright and license terms—obligations that AI technologies are fundamentally incapable of fulfilling. COPE explicitly said that "AI tools cannot meet the criteria for authorship," since they lack legal status and cannot be held accountable for the work they produce. The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) asserted that AI models such as ChatGPT should not receive authorship credit due to their absence of human agency, inability to verify or assume responsibility for their outputs, and incapacity to guarantee the originality or accuracy of the information generated. Elsevier reiterated this perspective by emphasizing that authorship entails duties and obligations that are distinctly human, including ethical responsibility, peer engagement, and legal permission.

Although journals achieved agreement about authorship, considerable variance was seen in their methodologies for referencing AI-generated material. Approximately two-thirds of the journals (n = 50, 65.8%) provided some advice on the issue, while a significant majority advised against mentioning AI as a source. The American Psychological Association (APA) allowed AI citations under stringent restrictions, including the usage of a software citation form and the provision of comprehensive methodological details about the timing, manner, and degree of AI use. Additionally, APA papers require the inclusion of comprehensive AI-generated outputs as supplemental resources. The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) permitted citation, necessitating both an in-text parenthetical citation and a matching reference list item, for example: OpenAI (2023). www.chat.openai.com/chat (ChatGPT, version March 14, "Large Language Model"). Despite these caveats, the majority of publications and journals—including Wiley and publications like Language Teaching and Language Teaching Research—suggest against directly crediting AI outcomes. Authors were urged to identify and reference the original human-authored sources from which AI may have derived its replies. These restrictions indicate a persistent apprehension about the epistemic legitimacy and traceability of knowledge created by AI. In summary, whereas the academic publishing community has mostly converged in dismissing AI authorship, its stance on AI citation remains disjointed, with ongoing developments in interpretations and policy applications across various journals and fields.

➢ *Uses*

An examination of journal procedures indicated that AI tools were mostly authorised for article drafting (80.3%), picture generation (77.6%), and language editing (53.9%), reflecting a widespread acceptance of generative AI in auxiliary editorial functions. However, the use of AI for idea development (22.4%) and data-related activities, including data collection (7.9%), production (17.1%), and analysis or interpretation (18.4%), was far less prevalent, which is indicative of concerns over the accountability and integrity of research. Likewise, AI-assisted code generation was referenced in just 17.1% of instances. A consensus among journals endorsed the utilisation of GenAI for language

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editing, study design assistance, and coding support; however, stringent prohibitions were maintained against permitting AI to compose complete manuscripts, generate graphics autonomously, or handle data tasks, thereby reaffirming the principle that human researchers must retain primary accountability for scientific content.

- *GenAI use in the Writing Process*

The way that journals discuss the use of Generative AI (GenAI) at various phases of the writing process varies greatly, particularly in terms of idea creation, manuscript drafting, and language editing. The most common use of GenAI is language editing, which is covered in around half of the journals assessed and approved without exception in all of them. According to this acceptance, GenAI techniques may help with readability, grammar, and sentence clarity without compromising academic integrity. Journals, however, take a more careful and diverse approach when it comes to manuscript drafting (Rogers & Revesz, 2019). A considerable percentage (n = 42, 68.9%) of journals indicate whether GenAI-assisted draughting is appropriate, and more than 80% (n = 61) of journals provide recommendations on the subject. Citing worries about the validity of AI-generated material and the possible decline of academic authorship, several publications place restrictions. Some programs have made it clear that they do not want AI to create their materials due to concerns about inaccurate or flawed translations. This includes *CALICO* and *Instructed Second Language Acquisition*. Disclosure is a key need for journals that permit GenAI in drafting. For example, *Computational Linguistics* mandates that writers notify editors about the employment of AI and describe its function in manuscript preparation in the text of the document. In a similar vein, *Language Teaching* requires that writers give a thorough acknowledgement in the text along with legitimate sources if AI is used to create material. Language Teaching Research, Second Language Research, and Discourse Studies are among the periodicals that emphasize the need to cite authentic sources rather than GenAI tools, which cannot be considered primary sources, and that highlight the necessity for transparency (Rose & Mckinley, 2022). There is a noticeable policy divide in the area of idea production, which includes activities like brainstorming and outlining. As long as the AI's contributions are appropriately recognized and the final product captures the author's original ideas, ASHA and Taylor & Francis expressly endorse the usage of GenAI in these early phases. For openness, ASHA even suggests including the original GenAI result within the article. Some publishers, like Cambridge University Press, forbid the use of artificial intelligence (AI) for ideation entirely. Elsevier journals like *Journal of Second Language Writing* and *English for Specific Purposes* take a more stringent stance, stating that GenAI should only be employed to enhance language quality and readability.

- *GenAI use in Visualization*

A salient subject in AI-related journal recommendations is the production of visuals by artificial intelligence. About 75% of journals with AI policies have offered clear directives about the use of AI for generating visual material, including tables, figures, pictures, and videos. A notable disparity in regulations is evident: 52.5% of journals categorically forbid AI-generated images, whilst 47.5% permit them under specific stipulations, mainly necessitating complete disclosure and evidence. Language Teaching Research requires writers to detail any AI technologies used for picture creation explicitly and to recognize this in figure captions appropriately. Publishers like Springer and Elsevier have taken further steps by allocating specific sections to the matter. Springer's "Generative AI Images" section emphasizes unsolved legal and ethical dilemmas, especially about copyright and research integrity; hence, Springer forbids the use of AI-generated pictures in articles. Elsevier's segment, "The use of generative AI and AI-assisted tools in figures, images, and artwork," also prohibits the production or modification of images using generative AI. This encompasses editing operations such as enhancement, blurring, scaling, or alteration of any attributes of figures.

Furthermore, Elsevier permits the use of detection technology to identify altered or dubious graphics in submissions. Taylor & Francis prohibits the use of AI in visual material, asserting that visuals and figures—such as charts, tables, and formulas—must remain unaltered by AI technology (Arndt & Rose, 2023). These constraints signify increasing apprehensions about legitimacy, reproducibility, and legal adherence in academic publication. The present agreement among prominent academic platforms is to emphasize openness, ethical rigour, and the protection of scientific integrity. This is particularly true in the field of visual representation, wherein manipulation can significantly impact the trustworthiness and validity of research results. Nevertheless, there are still publishers that are receptive to the possible future applications of AI in research.

- *GenAI use in Data-Related Practices*

Fewer than 20% of academic publications provide specific instructions for the use of generative AI (GenAI) for data-centric research tasks, including data collecting, data production, and data analysis. Among them, less than 10% of the reference data collection demonstrates a distinct lack of emphasis in editing procedures. The guidelines issued by journals and publishers differ substantially, leading to disparate practices within the academic publishing domain. Specific publications, like *TESOL Quarterly* and the *TESOL Journal*, maintain a liberal approach, permitting the use of GenAI for rapid creation, instrument or code design, data analysis, or simulated dataset generation. These publications also advocate for optimal methods to mitigate risks, including documenting the AI tool and its version, as well as re-executing studies to ensure output consistency.

In contrast, publishers such as Taylor & Francis and Wiley have a stricter stance. Wiley's instructions explicitly forbid the use of GenAI for the creation, modification, or manipulation of original study data or outcomes (Rose et al., 2021). The need for more precise, uniform guidelines and the general ambiguity and continuous discussion in academic publications about the proper use of AI in empirical research are reflected in these policy differences.

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➢ *Human Responsibility*

The incorporation of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) in contemporary academic publications has required a substantial alteration in disclosure policies to ensure research openness and sustain ethical standards. More than 90% of journals now want authors to indicate the location of their AI-related disclosures, and an impressive 97.4% demand clear statements about the utilisation of GenAI in any aspect of the study or submission preparation (Boonsuk et al., 2021). Although just 22.4% of journals mandated a disclosure statement, a more substantial proportion—57.9%—provided comprehensive guidelines about the kind and extent of the material to be disclosed. Moreover, 38.2% of journals mandated that writers critically assess and validate AI-generated material, recognizing the potential for misleading, biased, falsified, or plagiarized results. These regulations indicate an increasing agreement that full disclosure is vital for upholding the integrity of academic communication and sustaining the confidence of readers, editors, and peer reviewers. Journals such as Linguistic Inquiry have adopted a definitive position, requiring authors to reveal the use of GenAI in their manuscripts and inform editors of its involvement, thereby promoting openness in the research process and enhancing understanding of AI's role in the work's development. Elsevier has emphasized that publicly disclosing GenAI use not only fosters institutional and legal responsibility but also promotes trust and transparency throughout academic communities. The specificity of GenAI disclosure standards significantly differs among journals and publishers. Some give simply ambiguous recommendations, such as including the disclosure inside the primary text, but others—like Language Teaching—offer comprehensive and organized templates. These often consist of five essential components: (1) the GenAI tool's name and version; (2) its URL or location; (3) any private information utilized in connection with the tool; (4) any changes made by the authors; and (5) the dates of tool use. Taylor & Francis instructs writers to include such remarks in either the Methods or Acknowledgements section, including the tool's complete name, version, purpose, and functionality. The Acknowledgements, Materials and Methods, Methods section, figure captions (particularly for AI-generated graphics), cover letters, and the sections before the References are standard places for disclosure across journals.

In addition to openness, precision is of utmost importance. Verifying the results of Generative AI is widely seen as an essential precaution. A growing number of publications, including the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), have begun to stress the need to check GenAI-generated content for bias, errors, and even falsification. Publications like System, Journal of Pragmatics, and Computers and Composition require writers to thoroughly examine and edit any text that utilizes GenAI, regardless of whether it's employed for purely stylistic or grammar-related purposes (Fernández & Jáuregui Arriondo, 2023). Publishers such as Sage emphasise the need for authors to be vigilant, cautioning that GenAI technologies may inadvertently reproduce significant information from other sources, hence posing a danger of unintended plagiarism. Authors are thus encouraged to verify the originality and factual accuracy of every content generated by AI. As GenAI advances and integrates into academic workflows, these disclosure and verification processes provide a developing ethical framework that reconciles innovation with fundamental academic principles of transparency, accountability, and integrity.

IV. DISCUSSION

These results show that academics in the field of applied linguistics are becoming more conscious of the potential benefits and drawbacks of using Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) in their work. The area is still mostly uncontrolled, even though an increasing number of academics are exploring the use of GenAI for jobs including data analysis, article drafting, language editing, and creating visual content. Fewer than fifty percent of high-impact applied linguistics publications have offered clear guidelines on the usage of GenAI, resulting in a significant number of scientists lacking formal instructions. This absence of guidance leads to a disorganised and erratic use of AI tools, especially in instances when researchers must rely on their interpretations of ethical AI usage. The outcome is a landscape of ambiguity, which (Milliner & Dimoski, 2019) figuratively refer to as a "Tower of Babel," where different contributions may follow different practices due to conflicting interpretations of GenAI principles. This discrepancy not only causes researchers unnecessary work, but it also damages the credibility and reproducibility of published results, particularly in cases when researchers have to resubmit rejected articles to journals with contradictory rules on AI deployment. Authors are becoming entangled in a web of journal-level, publisher-level, and third-party organisational requirements, often manoeuvring through a convoluted landscape of conflicting or redundant instructions.

A prominent illustration of this misconception is the persistent discourse around the citation of AI-generated material (Fernández & Jáuregui Arriondo, 2023). Applied linguists, like academics in other disciplines, depend significantly on citations to establish provenance, exhibit scholarly rigour, and properly acknowledge intellectual contributions. However, by making it harder to distinguish between an author and a tool, GenAI has upended conventional citation conventions. Is GenAI only a facilitator of ideas or a contributor whose output requires specific attribution? The APA has addressed this dilemma by suggesting that algorithmic products, not intellectual sources, should be used to describe AI outputs like ChatGPT (Rahimi & Ruzrokh, 2016). APA asserts that chatbots cannot be regarded as writers due to their inability to assume responsibilities and their failure to fulfill authorship requirements based on responsibility and intellectual property. Nonetheless, this stance has not been uniformly embraced . Numerous publications have not clarified how, or whether, AI-generated material needs to be credited. As a result, applied linguists encounter varied and sometimes conflicting guidelines, complicating the determination of whether and how GenAI-generated text should be included in the reference list. This has prompted extensive

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epistemological and ethical enquiries around transparency, authorship, and the demarcation between human and computer contributions in academia.

Furthermore, while the use of GenAI for language editing is increasingly embraced, its function in document composition remains debatable. Over 80% of evaluated journals acknowledge drafting as an AI-assisted activity; however, not all explicitly enable it. Some journals maintain a neutral position, whereas others, including those published by Sage and Elsevier, adopt contrasting viewpoints—Sage deeming AI-assisted draughting unacceptable unless restricted to editorial revisions, and Elsevier requiring mandatory disclosure irrespective of the degree of utilisation. This mismatch engenders misunderstanding about both legal actions and disclosure obligations. The same instrument, used in the same manner, may be permissible in one publication and disqualifying in another. In the lack of a globally recognized procedure, writers may either excessively disclose, detailing every trivial interaction with GenAI, or insufficiently disclose, to incur potential allegations of wrongdoing or noncompliance with ambiguous expectations. Moreover, language editing, often seen as a benign use of AI, is likewise characterized by discrepancies in disclosure (Bolger & Laurenceau, 2013). Some publishers mandate complete disclosure, whilst others, such as Sage, propose that disclosing GenAI use for grammar or syntax correction is unnecessary. Conversely, Elsevier asserts that disclosure is always necessary, especially for editorial work, emphasizing the need for uniform standards throughout the profession.

In addition to text, the use of AI in picture generation—such as tables, graphs, figures, and videos—provokes significant controversy. Approximately 77.6% of journals now possess rules regarding the use of image-related AI; however, these policies are polarized: 52.5% of journals categorically forbid its usage, whilst 47.5% permit it under certain circumstances. The ethical and legal concerns surrounding AI-generated visual content—especially the risks of copyright violation, misrepresentation, or fraudulent alteration—have rendered editors cautious about accepting visually-oriented contributions that largely depend on GenAI techniques. AI-generated photos sourced from extensive pre-trained datasets present concerns about the incorporation of copyrighted or sensitive content without appropriate credit or informed permission. Researchers like (Phakiti, 2014) caution that using datasets that are not publicly accessible or include private information may subject researchers and journals to legal responsibility. Furthermore, insufficient disclosure of such material may violate academic integrity, raising issues of data fabrication, misrepresentation, or ethical misconduct. As GenAI capabilities advance and become more available, the likelihood of such violations increases, highlighting the need for comprehensive and open regulations about permitted behaviours.

The apprehensions include data acquisition and examination. Although GenAI can transform data processing and discovery via pattern identification, bias mitigation, and predictive modelling, it concurrently presents considerable ethical and technological hurdles. Fewer than 20% of publications provide advice on the use of GenAI in data-related research, and less than 10% discuss AI-assisted data collecting. The exclusion is notable considering the importance of data in academic research. A significant danger pertains to data security: uploading secret or sensitive datasets to cloud-based GenAI systems may contravene privacy legislation or institutional review board (IRB) guidelines. Researchers like (Ke & Cahyani, 2014) indicate that many scholars lack insight into the mechanisms of GenAI models, complicating the evaluation of data flow, processing methods, and retention practices. The opaque structure of GenAI compromises openness and reproducibility—two fundamental tenets of reputable academic research.

Furthermore, if GenAI adds latent biases or produces erroneous results, researchers may have limited capacity to identify or rectify these inaccuracies. (Jindapitak et al., 2022) assert that in the absence of explain ability procedures, studies powered by GenAI may become opaque and irreproducible. Proponents contend that the benefits of GenAI—such as expedited data analysis, the development of novel discoveries, and the democratization of intricate methodologies—may surpass the disadvantages when used judiciously (McKinley, 2019). This optimism must be moderated with care, since unrestricted adoption may compromise research integrity.

At the structural level, discrepancies across journals, publishers, and external organizational policies exacerbate the regulatory landscape (Rose & Galloway, 2019). Our analysis found several instances of these conflicts, such as differences in AI standards from Linguistics Vanguard, TESOL Quarterly, TESOL Journal, and Language Testing. Both TESOL Journal and TESOL Quarterly cited AI standards from the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) and their publisher Wiley; however, COPE's more lenient position conflicted with Wiley's limitations on image production and data-related activities (Cohen et al., 2002). Likewise, Language Testing—issued by Sage—offered writers its particular GenAI guidelines while also referencing wider publisher and organizational norms. Sage mandates that writers acknowledge any use of GenAI for content creation and forbids the usage of such technologies for whole paper composition. Nonetheless, COPE guidelines—although cited—permit some generative applications under conditions of transparency and credit. These discrepancies indicate underlying conflicts between the aspiration to foster innovation and the need to uphold ethical and academic standards. When journals concurrently implement publisher rules and those of external ethical organisations without resolving disputes between them, it leads to a convoluted and often conflicting framework that authors must traverse with little institutional assistance. (Matsuda, 2003) discovered in their analysis of medical journals that these conflicts are not exclusive to applied linguistics but reflect broader issues confronting scientific publication in the GenAI age.

This comprehensive evaluation identifies five essential areas for improvement in GenAI policy within applied linguistics publications (refer to Table 6A). Initially, GenAI recommendations are available in approximately 50% of

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relevant articles. This void results in several researchers lacking formal direction and intensifies uncertainty around what defines acceptable use. Journals and publishers must prioritise the establishment or adoption of complete policies, either by referencing reputable frameworks such as those from COPE or by formulating internal standards in collaboration with their editorial boards and peer communities. Secondly, several current GenAI regulations are too limited, concentrating primarily on language editing and text composition, while overlooking data collection, analysis, and the development of visual content. As AI capabilities broaden, rules must include a wider array of applications, particularly those pertinent to empirical research. A detailed checklist delineating permissible AI applications in writing, technique, graphics, and citation might facilitate the standardization of expectations across journals. Third, diversity in intra-field policy is a substantial problem. Equivalent applications of GenAI may be seen variably based on the journal, publisher, or editorial perspective. The rapidly advancing nature of AI may partially account for this, although it does not justify the absence of clarity. Journals must clearly articulate their stances to eliminate uncertainty and guarantee fair consideration of submissions.

The inconsistencies across journals, publishers, and external entities such as COPE must be addressed. When journals implement rules from many sources, they must integrate them into a cohesive structure to avoid inconsistencies (Cohen et al., 2002). This requires editorial leadership and collaboration with stakeholders to synchronise language, scope, and expectations. Lastly, journals must confront the ambiguity around GenAI disclosure. There is a need for standardised procedures delineating the circumstances under which disclosure is mandated, the information to be supplied, and the appropriate locations for its inclusion (e.g., methods, acknowledgements, or distinct GenAI use declarations). Discrepancies in disclosure requirements, particularly about language modification, provide gaps that compromise openness. A standardised, tiered disclosure framework—predicated on the intensity and kind of AI utilization—could augment accountability and repeatability.

The incorporation of GenAI into applied linguistics research and publishing offers significant prospects and considerable hurdles. GenAI technologies have transformational potential—enhancing writing speed and broadening methodological options—yet they also provoke ethical, technical, and legal issues that need resolution via clear, consistent, and comprehensive legislative frameworks (Canagarajah, 2016). In the absence of synchronized efforts across journals, publishers, and professional organisations, the applied linguistics community jeopardises the continuation of misunderstanding, facilitates abuse, and undermines faith in the academic record. Going ahead, a collaborative effort to align norms, enhance openness, and instruct researchers on the proper use of GenAI is crucial to safeguarding academic integrity while fostering innovation.

Table 6 A Suggestions for Advancement of GenAI-LR by the Writers

Area	Refined Recommendation
Understanding GenAI in RA Work	Develop a clear awareness of what GenAI can and cannot do within academic research and writing contexts.
Practical Use in Research Tasks	(1) Rigorously check and verify GenAI-generated content for accuracy. (2) Clearly indicate where GenAI has been used in the research process.
Ethical Considerations	(1) Consult available GenAI-related author guidelines provided by journals. (2) Reach out to journal editors when unsure about proper GenAI usage. (3) Follow all journal policies carefully and use GenAI responsibly.

Table 6 B presents two main proposals for applied linguistics. The field must first address fundamental enquiries about AI governance, including the entities responsible for defining journal rules and the processes by which choices are made. Secondly, coherent and transparent protocols for AI use are required. These have to be designed collectively to guarantee equity and lucidity. Enhancing stakeholder engagement in these talks would facilitate the resolution of inconsistencies and promote the proper incorporation of AI into applied linguistics research and publishing methodologies.

Table 6 B Reframed Recommendations for the Applied Linguistics Community

Area	Refined Recommendation
Development of Guidelines	Tackle foundational questions related to the formulation of AI policies in research, such as: Who defines the standards, and through what processes are these decisions made?
Collaborative Engagement	Promote broader community involvement to help resolve existing discrepancies and ensure more consistent AI usage guidelines.

V. CONCLUSION

By reviewing the policies of top applied linguistics journals, their affiliated publishers, and pertinent external publishing organisations, we conducted an in-depth analysis of GenAI guidelines. The goal of this work was to identify the present regulatory environment that controls the use of generative AI in scholarly publications and research. Our results indicate many significant issues: uneven and fragmented rules across journals, inadequate coverage of

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ethical norms, and insufficient consideration of the range of research approaches used in applied linguistics. These deficiencies provoke apprehensions about the integrity and repeatability of AI-assisted study findings. Consequently, we support the continuous formulation of policies to guarantee that GenAI applications in this domain are executed ethically and transparently. We provide practical tips for writers seeking to use GenAI successfully and ethically in their endeavours. We present and detail the innovative idea of "GenAI literacy," which includes the competencies, knowledge, and ethical considerations necessary for researchers to use AI technologies in academic settings effectively. Advancing GenAI literacy necessitates the engaged involvement of the applied linguistics community to cultivate informed use and a collective comprehension of ethical AI activities. This research has limitations. The scope was limited to a specific cohort of publishers, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, GenAI rules are swiftly evolving with technological advancements, indicating that the present circumstances are subject to change over time. We therefore advocate for ongoing surveillance of advancements in AI policy to maintain conformity with evolving norms and guarantee the integrity of future research.

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