

CHAPTER 33.

**AI CAN REPLACE WRITING  
INSTRUCTION AND WRITING  
INSTRUCTORS ✦ *TEACH AI  
LITERACY TO EMPHASIZE THE  
HUMAN, MULTILINGUAL, AND  
MULTIMODAL ASPECTS OF WRITING***

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The introduction of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in higher education, in general and specifically in the writing classroom, has sparked controversy, debate, and harmful ideas about writing instruction, student assessment, and academic integrity. As two transnational female writing instructors of color, we approach the practice of teaching writing and the activity of writing itself as embodied processes of thinking, learning, and decision-making, in which our positionalities, experiences, identities, and languages matter in how we write, teach writing, and connect with students. We see texts as translingual (Horner et al., 2011), multimodal, and complex artifacts shaped by several human and nonhuman factors. Therefore, by acknowledging our own diverse backgrounds, we can better connect with students from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds, fostering a more inclusive and empathetic learning environment. The idea that GenAI can replace writing instruction is harmful as it negatively affects writing instructors and students for these reasons: (1) it uncritically works against linguistic justice by privileging standardized English usage while marginalizing other languages and other forms/modes of composition, and (2) it undermines the essential roles played by our embodied presence as humans in the teaching and learning of writing. Instead, our generative idea centers around supporting students and instructors in developing critical GenAI literacy (MLA-CCCC

Joint Task Force on Writing and AI, 2024) that interrogates how our human presence and our diverse linguistic backgrounds are being misused, abused, and/or dismissed from representation in these models. Developing critical GenAI literacy requires us to constantly examine and assess GenAI tools and our use of them to identify their existing and potentially harmful aspects. According to Partha Ray (2023), the presence of dataset bias is one of the present limitations of GenAI models, including ChatGPT. These biases “can have negative consequences in areas such as healthcare, criminal justice, and employment” (Ray, 2023, p. 141). One way to address this limitation is suggested in the MLA-CCCC Joint Task Force on Writing and AI’s (2024) *Student Guide to AI Literacy*, which was written by participants of the Critical AI Literacy for Reading, Writing, and Languages Workshop. In the guide, the authors argue that “developing AI literacy requires that you learn certain basics about how GenAI works, how to use it, and how to evaluate its output. You should also learn when not to use it.” Therefore, we should teach our students how to critically use/not use and engage with GenAI models before GenAI models use them. By using them, we mean that the pressures and underlying reasons that force our students to use GenAI (i.e., product-oriented perceptions, time-management issues, etc.) are also the ones that prevent them from critically engaging with and assessing AI outputs. For example, when a student has the misconception that AI-generated outputs are credible and of better quality than human-composed texts, they will never question that output and will miss out on the benefits of going through the writing process from invention to reflection.

With the introduction of GenAI, some might think that writing instruction can be replaced since GenAI models can write texts for students. This idea has sparked several academic discussions questioning the role of writing instructors and the importance and need for writing courses. For example, in her article, *Eliminate the Required First-year Writing Course*, Melissa Nicolas (2023) calls for eliminating FYC if AI can write for students, saying that these courses do not teach students how to write in other courses and disciplines. In response, we argue that the idea that AI can replace writing instruction—and writing instructors—is a bad idea as it negatively affects writing instructors and students for many reasons under the two broad concerns outlined below.

## **WRITING IS NOT ONLY ABOUT GRAMMATICAL CORRECTNESS**

Arguing that GenAI can replace writing instruction uncritically works against linguistic justice by privileging standardized English usage. Ray (2023) states that “ChatGPT has exceptional language generation capabilities, producing text that is

coherent, contextually accurate, and grammatically correct” (p. 125). As linguistically diverse writing instructors, we emphasize that writing should not be reduced to mere correctness or adherence to standardized English norms. Instead, we value diverse linguistic practices and the nuanced ways in which language is used and understood. For us and other contributors to this collection such as Roger Thompson, who argues that if we commit to writing as a composing act that invents new ideas and thoughts, then the composing act cannot be replaced by GenAI tools. Writing is more than just a technical skill; it involves deep cognitive and emotional processes that allow us to draw upon our complex and diverse linguistic, social, and cultural repertoires as we create knowledge and make meaning.

For example, in one of our class assignments, we ask students to write about their literacy histories, and if their stories include examples of “incorrect” English we welcome those as essential parts of students’ literacies. In fact, those examples of what some might call “accented writing” connect us to our students in ways that inform and benefit our relational-based pedagogical practice (Boncori et al., 2024). Our embodied relational-based approach to writing instruction means that we bring empathy and understanding of students’ diverse backgrounds and individual needs, which GenAI cannot fully offer. This human connection is essential for effective writing instruction, as it supports students’ emotional and intellectual growth. By drawing on our own experiences with writing as diverse transnational female instructors, we know how positive relations between students and instructors enhance learning and vice versa.

Embracing our students’ diverse compositions helps us see the student as a whole human who might have some grammatical genre-specific needs that we can address, if and when needed. Those students’ submissions are more pedagogically valuable than a GenAI, grammatically-refined submission. It is the person behind the product that we value and plan to connect with, not the product itself. A chatbot-generated text would have not helped us learn about our student who has been bullied because of how they spoke English with an accent or about the student who could only process teachers’ feedback by translating the comments in their native languages in the margins, or those who need to create a recorded version of their writing before they actually sit and write it down. Those processes of thinking, struggling, processing, and overcoming challenges cannot and should not be replaced by GenAI tools. Writing is a messy, emotionally loaded, and transformative process that is deeply human.

GenAI models, while currently developing their abilities to use additional languages, are still lacking when it comes to accurate representations of diverse language users. For students to develop their critical GenAI literacy and be able to identify such limitations and other forms of embedded/potential biases, the *Student Guide to AI Literacy*, provides a list of skills that they need to develop.

One of these skills pertains to developing students' ability to "evaluate GenAI outputs for bias in language, culture, gender, ethnicity, and other social biases" (2024). To increase students' awareness about the importance of linguistic diversity and linguistic justice, we used a chatbot for an in-class activity to generate conversations between diverse speakers and used those examples to create an in-class discussion surrounding linguistic bias and its consequences. As linguistically diverse instructors, we started by using our own language as an example. Some of the examples generated laughs on how superficial and stereotypical they were (i.e., using "Jamal" as a name that is representative of African American English dialect speakers more frequently or including only male genders in all the GenAI-generated dialect conversations and erasing all other genders). However, we used that as a teaching moment and invited some of our linguistically diverse students to experiment with their own dialects and examine what kind of bias is being embedded in those GenAI-generated texts. This activity extended to include our monolingual students whose regional dialects' variations enriched our class discussion beyond the GenAI texts. This approach not only increases students' critical GenAI literacy, but it also validates and incorporates students' diverse linguistic resources in ways that GenAI can't replace.

## **WRITING IS A MULTILINGUAL, MULTIMODAL, AND EMBODIED PRACTICE**

An existing limitation in GenAI chatbots such as ChatGPT pertains to its lack of the multimodal dimension, and claiming that they can replace writing instruction suggests that text-based writing is the only form that writing instructors value. It also does not acknowledge the importance of other forms/modes of composition that are needed as we prepare our students for real-world experiences beyond the academic contexts in which they learn. Our embodied presence as writers means that we draw upon our multiliteracies, including linguistic, multimodal, and digital literacies in communicating with others. According to Mary Kalantzis and Bill Cope (2025), GenAI reshapes literacy as a multimodal, dynamic practice and to prepare students for this shift in our understanding of literacy, as composition instructors we must teach our students how to think critically about the social, ethical, and rhetorical dimensions of GenAI-driven communication. Our students engage with multimodal tools and texts in their daily lives and integrating those tools can be facilitated and enhanced by writing instructors. For example, in one of our assignments, we encourage students to design collaborative multimodal projects that shift between multiple audiences. In doing so, students develop their audience awareness and become more adept in understanding how the mode and medium of their compositions are also essential to their development as writers.

For example, in one of our assignments, we ask students to identify a genre that is frequently used in their discipline and analyze its conventions, rhetorical situation, and media/mode. Then, we ask them to choose a multimodal genre as a vehicle for teaching an audience outside of their discipline how to compose that genre. This is followed by a remediation report where students document and reflect on the different linguistic, design, and rhetorical decisions they have made. To help students experiment with GenAI limitations in this regard, we allowed them to insert the assignment prompt to ChatGPT and share their findings. ChatGPT only provided a bulleted list of the conventions and a very superficial genre analysis. It also failed at the reporting part, reflection, and multimodal design. However, through in-class workshops, students received guidance, peer and instructor feedback, and became fully aware of the different decisions they made throughout the writing process. Those collaborations are essential to students' learning and are definitely irreplaceable.

Collaboration is not the only aspect that GenAI models cannot replace; creativity and the vibrant embodied presence of writers in their work are something that GenAI cannot replicate. If we use GenAI to write for us, we would have missed the creative abilities of our students in interweaving their digital/multimodal literacies into their text-based compositions in ways that create a lively conversation between the teacher and their student. For example, in reflecting on their literacy histories, one of our students submitted a narrative that starts by inviting the teacher to experience the same emotions that the student had as they narrate different valuable experiences that shaped their literacies. That invitation used hyperlinks embedded in the student's text to three short musical pieces (one of which is composed by the student) to take the instructor to that emotional state the student was in while reflecting. That piece of writing ended with a link to a recorded conclusion in the student's voice. This level of creative, multimodal, intellectual, and highly personal composition can never be replaced by GenAI.

But why would students give up those collaborations and creative practices and resort to using GenAI? What kind of pressures/expectations drive our students to ask GenAI models to "write for them"? Answering this question takes us back to our approach to writing as an embodied practice where our identities, experiences, physical and emotional states are inseparable from our intellectual practice. Our embodied presence in our writing is something that a writing instructor who has developed a level of understanding of their students' performance or has gone through similar experiences would easily identify and respond to. How often did we come across a student's submission and make inferences regarding the students' work as "rushed," "clever," or "voiceless?" Aren't those inferences signs of students' embodied presence in their work? Don't they indicate the physical, emotional, and intellectual status that the student might be

at when they submitted their work? Our embodiment as transnational diverse writing instructors also means we connect with our students, develop a form of trust, and understand what might be pressuring them to use GenAI. By building relations and communities of trust with our students, we reduce those pressures and integrate pedagogical practices that acknowledge students' struggles/fears and encourage them to trust that their own voice is what we would love to hear and support them to achieve that.

## CONCLUSION

Teaching writing in the era of GenAI is challenging for students and instructors. Throughout this chapter, we argue that the premise that GenAI can replace writing instruction and writing instructors is a bad idea that affects both instructors and students. As transnational female writing instructors of color, we see writing as an embodied process of thinking and learning where our layered positionalities matter in how we write, teach writing, and connect with students. "GenAI can replace writing instruction" is a bad idea as it uncritically works against linguistic justice and dismisses the essential role of our embodied presence as humans in the teaching and learning of writing. Instead, our more generative idea centers around the human aspect of writing and capitalizes on supporting writing instructors and students in developing critical GenAI literacy.

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