DOI:10.30404/FLS.202512_(42).0001

Foreword:

Artificial Intelligence and Writing

From workplace communication to academic assessment, artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping how we read, write, and evaluate texts. For language teachers and writing researchers, this shift is both exciting and unsettling: AI tools can scaffold idea generation, feedback, and evaluation, yet they also raise questions about authorship, equity, and the future of literacies. This special issue of *Foreign Language Studies*, guest edited by Yachao Sun and Ge Lan, brings together four studies that probe these tensions empirically and pedagogically. Together, they explore how AI is being taken up in writing classrooms and assessment contexts, and how educators might respond with nuanced, evidence-based designs.

The first paper examines how L2 English writers in a Professional Writing course collaborate with ChatGPT on an email assignment. Focusing on emails to prospective graduate advisors, the study traces how students revise an AI-generated draft and how L1 and L2 English-speaking professors evaluate the resulting texts. Content analysis and reader interviews show that while AI greatly reduces vocabulary and grammar errors, it tends to produce overly long emails, and student writers often overlook redundancy, personalization, and formatting conventions that matter to human readers. The study argues that instructors need to explicitly address these new problem areas and revise rubrics to account for human–AI co-authored texts, offering practical guidance for designing assignments and evaluation criteria in AI-mediated professional writing instruction.

The second paper provides a timely synthesis of empirical research on GenAI in automated writing evaluation from 2022 to 2024. Using thematic analysis of 18 studies, the review identifies three major strands: the effectiveness of GenAI tools in automated essay scoring, their capabilities in generating written feedback, and the limitations and concerns that accompany their use. The authors highlight both promising alignment between GenAI and human ratings in some contexts and persistent variability in others, as well as issues of inaccuracy, redundancy, and over-reliance in feedback. They outline how tools such as ChatGPT might support teachers in scoring and formative assessment

while emphasizing the need for cautious, theory-informed integration, and propose a forward-looking research agenda for GenAI-assisted writing evaluation.

The third paper shifts the focus to translation pedagogy in French departments in Taiwan, where neural machine translation (NMT) tools like Google Translate and ChatGPT are now ubiquitous. Comparing three types of translation exercises—traditional "manual" translation, translation with access to NMT, and post-editing of machine translation inspired by the MTPEAS taxonomy—the authors analyze how these tasks reshape students' engagement with source texts and their revision practices. They argue that, rather than banning NMT, translation courses should systematically incorporate machine-translation post-editing (MTPE) to harness AI's strengths while cultivating critical, professional competencies. The study positions MTPE as a way to reorient translation courses from language-drill exercises toward realistic training that foregrounds error detection, justification of choices, and awareness of NMT's limits.

The fourth paper investigates whether a customized ChatGPT-based chatbot can automate writing assessment in a compulsory English course at a Hong Kong university. To mirror teachers' practice, the chatbot is "trained" by feeding it assignment prompts, rating scales, and sample scripts before it scores 100 narrative essays written by Chinese L1 undergraduates. The study reports slight agreement across broad grade bands and a moderate positive correlation between chatbot scores and teacher scores, revealing both the potential and the constraints of deploying GenAI for large-scale assessment. The authors discuss how such tools might alleviate marking load while underscoring the need for careful calibration, bias awareness, and continued human oversight in high-stakes contexts.

Taken together, these contributions illustrate the breadth of current work at the intersection of AI and writing—spanning professional email, translation, feedback, and large-scale assessment—and move the field toward more grounded, context-sensitive evidence. They show that AI is neither a simple solution nor a simple threat: its value depends on how instructors, students, and institutions design tasks, interpret outputs, and share responsibility for quality and ethics. By foregrounding human–AI

collaboration, critical literacy, and pedagogical redesign, this special issue invites readers to rethink writing as a socio-technical practice and to imagine futures in which AI is integrated thoughtfully into language education.

Special Issue Guest Editors,
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