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It Takes Real Intelligence to Use Artificial Intelligence Intelligently

I recently came across an article in my favorite online news source, The New York Times, about the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in interviewing job applicants.[1] This got me wondering how else AI touches our lives. Alexa and Siri have created countless music playlists, organized appointments, arranged daily schedules, and activated numerous robot vacuums worldwide. We haven't even started on the use of AI in manufacturing these devices before they reach our households. AI's impact has been significant and ever-increasing the past two decades.

This brings me to the advent of ChatGPT (Chat Generative Pretrained Transformer) and its use in research. This Large Language Model (LLM) has made quite a splash since its launch in 2022, being used to generate resumes, reports, images, homework, and alas, research protocols and papers. Grammar and spelling checkers that used to elicit wonder some decades ago are now seen as rudimentary and archaic. Now, an entire "research" can be generated within seconds, complete with the occasional bogus references—note the recently retracted report from the health department of a certain North American nation. In response, the scientific community has scrambled to address the increasingly common use of this tool.

The World Association of Medical Editors (WAME) has issued guidelines on the use of AI in scientific papers,[2] the salient points being: 1. Chatbots cannot be authors; 2. Transparency about its use is demanded; 3. Authors are responsible for verifying content that is Chatbot-generated; and 4. Editors must be able to screen for AI-generated content. The Philippine Journal of Orthopaedics editorial board has adopted these guidelines (available on our website), and all submissions are now screened, not only for plagiarism but also for AI contribution. A transparency statement and a statement of responsibility on the use of AI are now required before submissions are processed and sent to review. These steps are an initial response to the widespread use of this technology and will evolve further as we, editors, scientists, researchers, and the discerning public acclimate to this new world of AI.

Before you assume that I am calling for the eradication of AI, allow me to clarify. AI, specifically LLMs, makes many tasks easier. These include writing, editing, translation, summarizing, generating ideas, and creating outlines, to name a few. It will continue to improve and expedite even more tasks. It will continue to grow in popularity, and the day will come when it will be taken for granted. This is a good thing, especially for scientists and researchers. Efficiency in one task frees up time that can be used for other tasks. This is something we will benefit from.

So, how should the scientific community react to the rise of the chatbots? As readers and consumers of scientific research, we need to ensure that what we read is real. This brings the role of "real intelligence" or human intervention to light. AI users need to verify the output of these programs to check to see if the information and references are indeed real. Users need to be transparent about the contributions of AI and accountable for their work.[3] This way, we can regard it as truly just a tool and not the maker. Artificial intelligence is a huge wave that is going to hit us no matter what—we can either scramble for an umbrella or put on our swimsuits. Now, where's my Speedo...

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