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Fake academic writing: ethics during chatbot era

The year 2023 started with the introduction of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered software. This innovation has been received with enthusiasm from the digital audience and its users, as it allows for a faster rate of completion for tasks that were originally devoted to human intelligence. AI-powered software can be categorised based on their function, such as: chatbot, computer vision, recommendation system, natural language processing (NLP), intelligent data processing (IDP) and physical solutions (i.e., logistics, supply chain). In this issue of EJPD, Alberto Capriglio's editorial provides a fresh, interesting perspective on the topic.

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Fake academic writing: ethics during chatbot era

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editorial

"Professor, have you ever seen anything like this?".

Few weeks ago I was asked this question by two young and esteemed specialist in orthodontics of my research group, actually PhD students, who showed me a laptop screen.

"No, I have never seen anything so potentially extraordinary. But doubts arise: is this legal? Or rather, is it ethical for us to use it in the field of research?"

So I asked the questioners, Dr. Serafin and Dr. Bocchieri, to write a short essay on this new form of artificial intelligence, the chatbots, to give me an idea of what they are, what their potential is, and how they can change the veracity of data when an artificial mind replaces a human one.
After "letterally" 5 minutes, they returned to me and let me read the following:

The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) technology has led to a proliferation of AI-powered tools that are having a significant impact in the realm of academic writing to automate various aspects of the editorial process, from research to proofreading and even generating complete high-quality scientific articles. Chatbots are AI-virtual assistants that offer significant benefits but there are also important ethical considerations that must be considered. One concern is related to the accuracy and reliability of AI-generated content, particularly in scientific writing where accuracy is of utmost importance. There are also concerns about the potential for AI to be used to produce plagiarized or fraudulent content, which could undermine the credibility of scientific soundness.
To mitigate this risk, it is crucial to establish clear guidelines and regulations for their use. Additionally, academic institutions and publishers should take steps to verify the authenticity of authors and promote transparency and accountability in the publishing process.
The use of chatbots in academic writing has the potential to revolutionize the way in which research is conducted and written. However, it is important to ensure that the ethical implications of this technology are carefully considered and addressed. This includes ensuring that AI-generated content is accurate, reliable, and trustworthy and that the use of AI does not result in the displacement of human imagination.
To address these ethical considerations, it is recommended that academic institutions and scientific journals work together to establish clear guidelines and regulations for the use of AI in academic writing, ensuring that AI-powered tools are ethical. By taking a responsible approach, we can ensure that the benefits of this technology are realized while minimizing any potential negative consequences. Finally, the most important but missing information is that this editorial is fully written by a chatbot. Therefore, pay attention: the search for health for our patients must go through scientific honesty that produces data and analyzes them "humanly".

I share my amazement, but also my concern. As a university professor, as a clinician, as a researcher, but also as a "father" of future orthodontists, I always have doubts about the message we want to leave, and in this editorial I would like to reproduce an excerpt from a conversation with Marco and Salvo, as if we were discussing the legitimacy of cheating in a card game.