

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Statement for Term Papers and Theses in General Linguistics

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This preliminary statement is intended to provide guidance to students, instructors, and supervisors on the appropriate, transparent, and learning-oriented use of AI tools in the context of term papers and final theses.

General Statement & Objective

Artificial Intelligence (AI) should neither be demonized nor used uncritically in the academic context. The objective is to empower students to engage with AI applications in a competent, responsible, and critically reflective manner. The use of AI must not replace the development of academic skills but can, when integrated thoughtfully, serve as a supportive tool in this process.

Instructors are encouraged to incorporate AI tools into their teaching to prepare students for the responsible use of modern technologies. A key aspect of this integration is fostering students' ability to critically assess AI-generated content by recognizing biases, inaccuracies, and potential errors – particularly when working with historical sources, literary texts, or empirical data.

At the same time, appropriate assessment formats and control mechanisms are to be established to ensure the responsible use of AI and to prevent misuse. We aspire a close alignment between didactic strategy, transparent communication, and fair evaluation.

Core Competencies That Must Not Be Replaced by AI

The use of AI must not substitute the development of essential academic skills. Students are expected to independently acquire the following competencies throughout the process of writing term papers and theses:

- The ability to engage in written academic form critically with linguistic research questions
- The capacity to present complex issues precisely and in a logically structured, argument-driven manner
- The development of independent research interests and methodological competence
- The ability to critically assess and contextualize theories, methods, and data
- Competence in fact-checking and literature research, particularly on controversial topics
- Mastery of academic writing conventions, including stylistic and formal requirements (e.g., argumentation, structuring, citation style, formatting)

Beneficial Use of AI Tools

AI applications can be used to support the research and writing process on the understanding that **the final responsibility for all content and form of a text lies with the student**. Potential areas of the beneficial use of AI are:

- **Linguistic and stylistic revision**

AI can assist with spelling, grammar, sentence structure, or stylistic refinement in English (comparable to proofreading). At the same time, the student is encouraged to develop their own unique style of expressing themselves in academic writing.

- **Linguistic support with foreign-language sources**

Translation tools can be used to gain an initial understanding of foreign-language texts. However, the original sources must be consulted and cited appropriately.

- **Learning aid and exam preparation**

AI can be used as a study aid (e.g., for flashcards, generation of test questions, concept review, etc.). However, such use must not replace critical engagement with primary literature or personal reflection.

- **Support with linguistic data**

AI can assist with coding and the processing and structured analysis of larger amounts of data like, for example, with basic descriptive statistics.

- **Idea generation**

Using AI to brainstorm or outline basic ideas for structure or content can be beneficial, if the academic development and reasoning are carried out independently.

- **Support with literature search [limited]**

AI-generated suggestions for possible sources may be used in addition to proper literature research, but all bibliographic references must be independently verified, as AI-generated content may include factual errors or hallucinated sources.

Don'ts

The following **unmarked** uses of AI are considered violations of academic integrity:

- The generation of whole texts or text passages by AI (ghostwriting)
- Substantive content creation or logical structuring of arguments by AI
- Automated summaries of texts without critical engagement with the content
- Copying AI-generated reference lists without verification

Always double-check: AI-generated content **must never be adopted without careful verification!** Blind trust in AI output is academically irresponsible and contradicts academic integrity.

Disclosure and Citation Requirement

Any use of AI tools in the preparation of written assignments, presentations, or final theses must be documented transparently.

Mandatory disclosure

Students are required to clearly indicate where, how and which AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, etc.) were used in their work. This includes specifying:

- The name and version of the tool used (e.g., "ChatGPT 4.1 nano")
- The type of task the tool was used for (e.g., translation, stylistic editing, brainstorming)
- The prompt or query provided to the tool (dependent on the task type)

Example disclosure

“To translate the passage from Smirnova (1999: 12), ChatGPT (version 4.1 nano) was used with the following prompt: [Translate from Russian to English in a neutral academic tone].”

Where to include disclosures

Disclosures could be included either in a designated section of the work (e.g., in the introduction, method section or statement of authorship) or in footnotes or endnotes. For oral presentations, a verbal note, a note on the slide or a separate slide suffice.

Undeclared use of AI tools

The use of AI without proper disclosure as indicated under >>Don'ts<< is considered an attempt at fraud and will be handled according to §15, Abs. 5 of the Allgemeine Prüfungsordnung (<https://www.uni-bamberg.de/fileadmin/abt-studium/Pruefungs-Studienordnungen/APO/GuK-HuWi/APO-BAMA-Guk-Huwi-28.pdf>).

Ethical and Legal Considerations

Students are requested to critically reflect on the ethical implications of using AI tools, especially when working with sensitive topics or politically contested material. Instructors should support and encourage students to do so by educating on the beneficial and critical use of AI tools in class.

The use of AI must comply with applicable copyright laws and data protection regulations. Materials uploaded to AI platforms (e.g., essays, transcripts, raw data) must not infringe on the intellectual property or privacy rights of others.

AI tools must not be used to process or upload content that contains personal or sensitive information (e.g., interview transcripts, personal data) without prior anonymization and consent.

Environmental sustainability

The use of AI technologies contributes to substantial energy consumption and carbon emissions, particularly with large-scale models and frequent usage. Both students and instructors are encouraged to reflect on the environmental footprint of their digital practices and to use AI tools purposefully rather than routinely.

This statement is subject to further discussion between all parties involved and will be refined, if necessary.