Conversation re: AI in applied linguistics, SLW, TESOL

- Overall, cautious optimism about tool for language learning + perceived need to adopt tool in teaching repertoire (or perish?)
  - Gen-AI cannot be wished out of existence, so question is not whether but how to use it (Pecorari, 2023)
- A central teaching issue → finding ways to use AI for language teaching & learning that are **ethical** & align with **evidence-based practices** (Park & Maloney, 2023, p. 1010)
  - Ethical concern → Teachers who input student work into AI may be violating program T&Cs, institutional & governmental policies and laws re: student privacy
  - Evidence-based practice concern → Comprehensible input + ability to notice differences + meaningful social interaction crucial in SLA
    - Gen-AI may return text far beyond students' current competence → no longer comprehensible input, becomes more difficult to notice differences in L1, L2 → use of gen-AI as "linguistic crutch")
    - How to create *meaningful* social interaction with a chat bot?

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Contradictions in integrating gen-AI in L2 writing

- "Imitation" contradiction (Warschauer et. al, 2023)
  - Imitation remains an L2 writing strategy
  - Imitating too closely may lead to patchwriting/plagiarism accusations
  - Chat-GPT = "imitation on steroids"

- "With or without" contradiction
  - Those who can write better without A.I. better positioned to write better *with* gen-AI
    - E.g., English learners with higher proficiency levels demonstrate deeper engagement with automated feedback provided by tools such as Grammarly, are more selective in which feedback to incorporate. Lower-proficiency students found to overly trust, rely on such feedback (Barrot, 2023; Koltovscava, 2020)

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Points of departure re: AI & international law students:

→ Anecdotally (+ suspicions): gen-AI use is rampant

　→　Responsibility in my role includes keeping up with what students are doing

→ My job is to assist in the development of a better writer, not a better writing

　→　Search for ways to use gen-AI ethically that help develop the writer & not simply produce a better one-off piece of writing

How I have tried to use Gen-AI in my teaching

- Develop activities and prompts
  - Paraphrasing examples
    - Ask ChatGPT to generate X paraphrases of a passage
    - Revise output to demonstrate common issues in student paraphrases
      - Patchwriting, sentence boundary issues, inaccurate paraphrasing, etc.

- Query re: Legal Writing memo problems
  - Memo section selected: Rule
    - Rationale: Section students likely to use AI for, section AI likely to "hallucinate"
    - Result: AI "in the ballpark" for our memo problem on student free speech using SCOTUS cases; far less accurate for our memo problem using PA case law on police-citizen interactions

- Demonstrate use of Chat-GPT as a writing error log
  - Input my own German or Spanish writing & ask Chat-GPT to help me identify errors in my writing
    - Identified global errors (e.g., my German – clarity & flow, terminology, punctuation)
    - Suggested sentence- and word-level edits for each idea (1-3 sentence chunks)

What I have not (yet?) done

- In-class activities using AI in any part of the writing process
  - Still attempting to find activities that foster a *better writer* not just a *better writing*
  - Honor Code concerns
    - (Perhaps because of?) unique positioning both inside and outside curriculum

- Analysis of student work
  - Upside would be: ability to provide both global and local feedback quickly; decisions about what to use gen-AI for, what to focus on as human evaluator/instructor
    - Have explored Automatic Writing Evaluation (AWE) programs in past, but have not found suitable program for adoption with international law students
  - Ethical concerns: violate user terms? Violate student privacy policies or laws? Length constraints of (free) gen-AI. Questions about accuracy, hallucinations, "generic" gen-AI suggestions

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Where to from here?

- Investigate
  - 1) extent to which students using gen-AI
  - 2) how they are using gen-AI
    - Both the ethical and the unethical
- Continue search for activities that develop the writer