



FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S DESK

Coding the Mind: Joy as a State of Being, Science as a State of Academic Writing

Joy and academic writing may seem unrelated, but they connect through mindset. Both require intention over impulse, focus over distraction, clarity over noise, and, importantly, honesty over pretense. A joyful mind can produce better science, and honest writing helps develop a grounded mindset. Joy isn't something you find deliberately; it's something we cultivate through mindful effort. Academic writing isn't spontaneous; it results from disciplined thinking and effort. It's not just a collection of citations or a formulaic layout; it demands clarity, precision, and the courage to face uncertainty. When we write, we're not merely recording data; we're shaping knowledge and bridging the gap between discovery and understanding. Our secondary goal is not only to achieve pure scientific results but also to publish findings in a desired journal, which brings additional joy.

I believe academic writing suffers when rushed, ego-driven, or lacking depth. Today, artificial intelligence seems to speed up the process. AI has quickly become part of academic fields, providing tools for literature synthesis, data interpretation, and manuscript drafting. While AI can improve efficiency, its misuse poses serious risks. In the last three months, the Turkish Journal of Surgery has received many manuscripts generated by AI without verifying their accuracy. Our editorial team has dealt with fabricated drafts containing incorrect journal names, mismatched authorships, and even non-existent articles. This demonstrates that overreliance on AI risks reducing authors' accountability for their content and weakening scientific rigor. "Shortcut culture" is too dangerous, especially when encouraged by AI, because it leads authors to skip reading the primary literature and lose critical thinking. Therefore, we now require authors to fully disclose AI use; failure to do so is a serious ethical violation. This insight reveals an interesting parallel: AI is programmed by humans, and humans are "programmed" by their mindset.

As we near the end of the year, my words might sound like a complaint. However, my intention is not to vent frustrations as an editor, but to reflect on our current situation with our readers.

I conclude this year's final issue by wishing everyone a productive and joyful 2026. As always, I thank our readers.

"Happy New Year and Merry Christmas".

 **Prof. M. Umit UGURLU**

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